

# Global Partnership Monitoring Reform

Analytical paper on Linkages to the 2030 Agenda [June 2021]

This paper, produced by the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team with guidance from the Global Partnership Co-Chairs, assesses linkages between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG reporting, follow-up and review with the aim to provide guidance on how these linkages could be maintained and further strengthened as part of the comprehensive, ongoing efforts to reform the Global Partnership's monitoring exercise. Three specific links are explored in depth: the link between the monitoring and indicator frameworks of the Global Partnership and the SDGs; linkages across global-level processes; and, linkages within country-level processes. The analytical work reveals important considerations regarding how these linkages could be strengthened or maintained and provides a valuable input to the ongoing reform of the Global Partnership monitoring.

## Contacts:

Ms. Rebekah CHEW, e-mail: [Rebekah.CHEW@undp.org](mailto:Rebekah.CHEW@undp.org)

Mr. Yoshinori ASADA, e-mail: [Yoshinori.ASADA@undp.org](mailto:Yoshinori.ASADA@undp.org)

Ms. Valentina ORRÙ, e-mail: [Valentina.ORRU@oecd.org](mailto:Valentina.ORRU@oecd.org)

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## Executive summary

This paper assesses linkages between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG reporting, follow-up and review with the aim to provide guidance on how these linkages could be maintained and further strengthened as part of the comprehensive, ongoing efforts to reform the Global Partnership's monitoring exercise. Three specific links are explored in depth: the link between the monitoring and indicator frameworks of the Global Partnership and the SDGs; linkages across global-level processes; and linkages within country-level processes. The analytical work on each link reveals important considerations regarding how these linkages could be strengthened or maintained and provides a valuable input to the ongoing reform of the Global Partnership monitoring.

**The monitoring framework.** The paper looks at the link between the Global Partnership monitoring framework and the SDG indicator framework, and assesses how Global Partnership monitoring can maintain its link to the three SDG indicators for which it currently generates data. In essence, the only way to generate data on SDG indicator 17.16.1 is for the Global Partnership monitoring exercise to take place as this is a composite indicator that requires participation in the monitoring exercise to be reported on. For SDG indicator 17.15.1 and 5.c.1, there are two possible options (generating data through the monitoring exercise or independently generating data through country level processes). Embedding SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 5.c.1 into national systems may not be feasible for all partner countries; particularly for 17.15.1 given its complexity. However, the Global Partnership could look to provide greater support and guidance to countries that wish to do this in future. In terms of changing or adding SDG indicators, the adoption of new indicators to the SDG framework is unlikely. Proposed substantive changes to existing indicators undergo thorough review, and if new data is not available on the three SDG indicators generated through Global Partnership monitoring prior to the 2025 comprehensive review of the SDG indicator framework, these indicators could be at risk of replacement or removal.

**Global level processes.** The paper then turns to global-level processes to ensure that existing links between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG follow-up and review are maintained and points to opportunities where these links could be strengthened. This section of the paper ties closely to the options presented in the paper on occurrence<sup>1</sup>. If the monitoring exercise is undertaken by all countries at the same time but less frequent compared to the past (e.g. every three or four years), there should be no issue with continuing to report SDG data and inputs to the UN Statistics Division and other UN processes. However, if data are available every five years or longer, it may raise concerns during the next comprehensive review of the SDG indicator framework in 2025. Alternatively, if the exercise is carried out in waves, with sufficient capacity the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team would be able to continue to regularly report; providing country data after each wave and global aggregates on a rolling basis. The benefit of this type of rolling data is that once there is a majority of countries, the global data set can be updated after each wave. This would allow for reporting fresh data more regularly than current practice but without the need for all partner countries to participate in every wave.

**Country level processes.** The final link that the paper explores is the extent to which Global Partnership monitoring is integrated with country-level SDG architecture and reporting processes, and whether this could be strengthened. While some countries use their Global Partnership monitoring results to inform their VNR on SDG implementation, it is not clear if countries wish to strengthen the link between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG monitoring in terms of the different processes, mechanisms and actors involved. There are some considerations that the paper highlights when exploring whether it is strategic to strengthen the link to VNRs. Beyond VNRs, greater flexibility in terms of when countries can do Global Partnership monitoring will allow for greater institutionalization of the monitoring process and its results at country level. This would provide opportunity for countries to improve the timing of the exercise so

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<sup>1</sup> The analytical paper on the occurrence of the monitoring exercise is available [here](#)

that Global Partnership data can feed into national SDG monitoring and review, as well as other relevant national processes.

**Looking forward.** Beyond the existing links explored in this paper, the ongoing reform of the Global Partnership monitoring, which is expected to be wrapped up in time for the Global Partnership's next High-Level Meeting in 2022, provides opportunity for new and stronger linkages to the SDGs. This could include, for example, better reflecting the commitment to leave no one behind, strengthening statistical capacities in developing countries, or greater emphasis on the whole of society approach to development co-operation and mutual accountability. Whichever existing linkages are strengthened and new ones might be made, as the monitoring reform progresses, the Global Partnership, taking also into consideration the findings of the broader review of the Global Partnership, will need to consider the type of political narrative that it wishes to develop and communicate on its links to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. This will need to be a concise and compelling pitch that clearly frames how Global Partnership monitoring links to the SDGs so that this message can be clearly broadcast to stakeholders following the monitoring reform.

## (1) Context

### (1.1) Objective

Under Strategic Priority 3 of the 2020-22 Global Partnership Work Programme, a reform of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise is underway. The ongoing reform is looking at what the Global Partnership monitors (i.e. the monitoring framework), how it monitors (i.e. the monitoring process) and what can be done to ensure that the monitoring results lead to behaviour change and strengthened partnerships for sustainable development. As this paper is being developed while the reform is ongoing, it takes as a basis the monitoring framework and process as it was carried out in the last monitoring round in 2018 as a basis to assess links to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

As part of the reform efforts, this paper aims to assess linkages between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG reporting with a view to providing guidance on how these linkages could be maintained and further strengthened. Due to the ongoing reform, the paper picks up on the monitoring framework and process as it was carried out in the last monitoring round in 2018 as a basis to assess links to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This paper looks specifically at linkages between Global Partnership *monitoring* and the SDGs monitoring and review. Linkages between the Global Partnership more broadly and the SDGs are expected to be addressed in the review of the Global Partnership that is led by the Global Partnership Co-Chairs and currently underway. However, it is clear that stronger linkages between the monitoring and the SDGs will reinforce the positioning of the Global Partnership with respect to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

**What is a 'linkage'?** How many exist between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG follow-up and review? If a 'linkage' is defined as any area where there is overlap – possible or existing – between the two, there are indeed many existing and potential links between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG follow-up and review. To cite a few examples, some countries use data generated through the Global Partnership monitoring exercise to inform their Voluntary National Review. Global Partnership data informs global reporting on three SDG indicators. Global Partnership data can also feed into regional architecture and processes related to SDG reporting, follow-up and review. Two of these three SDG indicators fall under SDG17, which is under review at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum every year. And so, the list, or the linkages rather, go on.

In light of the vast number of possible linkages and drawing on the premise for why this paper is needed (i.e., to inform the ongoing reform of Global Partnership monitoring), the Global Partnership Co-Chairs directed the scope of this paper to focus on three specific linkages:

- The first is the link between the Global Partnership monitoring framework and the SDG indicator framework. This section assesses how Global Partnership monitoring can maintain its link to the three SDG indicators for which it currently generates data.
- The second looks at global-level processes to ensure that existing links between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG follow-up and review are maintained and points to opportunities where these links could be strengthened.
- The third is country-level processes, to explore the extent to which Global Partnership monitoring is integrated with country-level SDG architecture and reporting processes, and whether this could be strengthened.

This is not to suggest that other linkages are not important. They are and could be useful to further explore going forward. The linkages explored in this paper were deemed critical to address *at this time* because they have direct and immediate implications for the ongoing monitoring reform.

## **(1.2) Background on aligning Global Partnership monitoring to the 2030 Agenda**

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (the 'Global Partnership') decided in 2015 to refine its monitoring framework to reflect the new development agenda and ensure its relevance for SDG follow-up and review.

The following year, in 2016, at the Partnership's second High-Level Meeting in Nairobi, the mandate of the Global Partnership was updated, with calls for greater support to making development co-operation more effective at country level and targeted policy dialogue, data and evidence for global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>2</sup> In addition to emphasising that effectiveness is "a means to achieve the universal and inter-related Sustainable Development Goals", the Global Partnership's monitoring framework was recognized as a unique instrument for mutual accountability that can directly contribute to the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).<sup>3</sup> The Nairobi Outcome Document further called to "update the Monitoring Framework to reflect the challenges of the 2030 Agenda, including the pledge to leave no-one behind". To this end, stakeholders committed to evolve and strengthen the Global Partnership monitoring exercise to deepen mutual learning, mutual benefit and mutual accountability.

To guide the work needed to reflect the challenges of the 2030 Agenda, the Steering Committee established a Monitoring Advisory Group in 2015 to review the monitoring framework. The Group was composed of 12 high-level experts from developing country governments, development co-operation providers, think tanks and civil society organisations<sup>4</sup>. In 2016, the Monitoring Advisory Group proposed a set of recommendations<sup>5</sup> for the Global Partnership to adapt its monitoring to the 2030 Agenda. The key suggested orientations were to build on the linkages with SDG indicators and expand the monitoring framework to better capture the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda by covering a broader range of development actors, modalities and finance.

## **(1.3) Feedback and expectations from Global Partnership stakeholders on the current reform**

At the end of 2020, a series of consultations was held to discuss how the Global Partnership monitoring process could be improved by building on the experience and lessons of past monitoring rounds (2014, 2016 and 2018).<sup>6</sup>

Several key challenges linked to the monitoring process emerged during the consultations.<sup>7</sup> These ranged from the need for stronger partner country support during the process; better alignment between the timing of the monitoring process and national processes; and also, questions linked to how to better utilize the results of the monitoring process to ensure that they inform SDG review, national development plans and strategies, national dialogue processes, and domestic policy reform. Issues linked to the occurrence and flexibility regarding the timing of the monitoring process were also a main focus of the discussions<sup>8</sup>. Another key takeaway of the consultations was that monitoring should not be undertaken without being tied to a robust plan for using the results to motivate and guide change to achieve the SDGs, and followed by a concrete action plan to achieve stronger partnerships.

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<sup>2</sup> GPEDC (2016). "[Nairobi Outcome Document: Annex 1](#)". Nairobi: GPEDC.

<sup>3</sup> The UN-HLPF is the global platform for follow-up and review of the SDGs.

<sup>4</sup> More information on work of the Monitoring Advisory Group can be found [here](#).

<sup>5</sup> GPEDC (2016). "[Monitoring Advisory Group: Final Report](#)". Technical Report. Paris/New York: GPEDC.

<sup>6</sup> Various stakeholders took part to the consultations that included partner countries (10 African countries, 5 Latin American countries, 4 Asian countries and 3 Pacific Islands countries), development partners (World Bank, African Development Bank, UN Women, UNDP Country offices, International Labour Organization, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Offices, United Nations Development Cooperation Office, Inter-American Development Bank), Private Sector representatives (CIPE) and CSOs representatives (CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness).

<sup>7</sup> *Listening Up: Consultations on Global Partnership Monitoring Reform* (November 2020), available [here](#).

<sup>8</sup> The Analytical paper on the occurrence of the monitoring exercise is available [here](#)

Partner countries agreed that the Global Partnership's monitoring exercise is an important source of data for global processes and the SDGs more specifically. Some countries pointed to the need to strengthen the links between the monitoring and the SDGs; calling for clearer alignment and communication between the measured indicators and the SDGs. Some suggested to have a dedicated platform following the implementation of the measured SDGs and progress on the monitoring indicators to ensure that the monitoring process is followed by concrete actions.

#### ***(1.4) Analytical framework for assessing SDG linkages with Global Partnership monitoring***

As outlined in the above objective, this paper will look at three linkages: the monitoring framework itself, followed by processes at global and then country level. To assess each of these linkages, consider how they could potentially be strengthened, and if there are any implications or risks relevant to the reform of the Global Partnership monitoring framework and process, the following approach will be used to drill down on each of these in turn:

- **State of play:** For each linkage, a brief overview is provided with contextual information and an explanation of the current status.
- **Existing link:** A description of the existing linkage is outlined.
- **Maintaining/strengthening this link:** An assessment of the actions needed to maintain the link is provided. In terms of strengthening the link, the paper explores whether it is strategic for the Global Partnership to strengthen each link, and if so, what are the opportunities and challenges. Where relevant, a brief discussion on the expected impact, complexity, feasibility, investment requirements and other relevant factors is included.
- **Key considerations:** The main points that are particularly relevant to the monitoring reform are summarized at the end of each section.

**(2) SDG linkages**

**(2.1) The monitoring framework**

**i. State of play**

- The Global Partnership monitoring framework

The Global Partnership monitoring framework consists of ten indicators – or 13 if counting the three indicators that contain two sub-indicators. Following the internationally-agreed Busan Partnership Agreement<sup>9</sup>, the Global Partnership monitoring framework was developed by the multi-stakeholder Post-Busan Interim Group and endorsed in June 2012 at the final meeting of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness<sup>10,11</sup>. Table 1 lists the indicators of the framework alongside the four effectiveness principles that were also agreed in Busan.

**Table 1: The Global Partnership monitoring framework (current as of the 2018 monitoring round)**

Principle	Indicator
Focus on results	Countries strengthen their national results frameworks (1b)
	Development partners use country-led results frameworks (1a & SDG 17.15.1)
Ownership of development priorities by developing countries	Development cooperation is predictable: annual predictability (5a)
	Development cooperation is predictable: medium-term predictability (5b)
	Quality of countries’ Public Financial Management Systems (9a)
	Development partners use country systems (9b)
	Aid is untied (10)
Inclusive development partnerships	Quality of Public-Private Dialogue (3)
	Civil society organisations operate within an environment that maximises their engagement in and contribution to development (2)
Transparency and accountability to each other	Transparent information on development cooperation is publicly available (4)
	Mutual accountability among development actors is strengthened through inclusive reviews (7)
	Development cooperation is included in budgets subject to parliamentary oversight (6)
	Countries have systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment (8 and SDG 5.c.1)

Source: 2018 Monitoring Guide, page 8; SDG indicators are in red font

The monitoring framework has evolved since its establishment in 2012. As outlined in the background (above), prior to the 2018 monitoring round, the framework was refined in 2017 to build on lessons learned from previous monitoring rounds and the recommendations of the Monitoring Advisory Group.<sup>12</sup> Six expert reference groups along with online consultations guided the refinement of the indicators to

<sup>9</sup> Read the Busan Partnership Agreement [here](#).  
<sup>10</sup> Making Development Co-operation More Effective: 2014 Progress Report, [here](#).  
<sup>11</sup> The Working Party on Aid Effectiveness was a multi-stakeholder group, established in 2008 to improve the effectiveness of development efforts, tasked by the Busan Partnership agreement to convene representatives of countries and stakeholders to agree on the working arrangements and monitoring framework of the Global Partnership. After its final meeting in June 2012, the WP-EFF gave way to the new Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.  
<sup>12</sup> The Global Partnership Monitoring Framework for 2030, [here](#).

address information gaps and strengthen the indicator methodologies. Given that this work was aimed at refining the monitoring framework, the framework used in the 2018 monitoring round did not differ greatly from that which had been used in the 2016 round<sup>13</sup>; as the indicator methodologies were strengthened and adapted to align with the 2030 Agenda where possible. Otherwise the number and focus of the indicators remained the same.<sup>14</sup>

It is also worth noting that several indicators predate 2012. Around half have roots in the indicators used to track Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.<sup>15</sup> These include the indicators that have a focus on the partner country government and development partner relationship (e.g. alignment, use of country systems, predictability, united aid and mutual accountability).

- The SDG indicator framework

The global indicator framework for the SDGs contains 247 indicators – or 231 counting only the unique indicators, as 12 indicators repeat under two or three different targets.<sup>16</sup> Each indicator is categorised under a target, and each target falls under one of the 17 SDGs.

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, the SDG indicator framework was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs<sup>17</sup>) and agreed upon at the 48th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission held in March 2017. The framework was later adopted by the General Assembly in July 2017.<sup>18</sup>

The SDG indicators vary in terms of quality, which is assessed by conceptual clarity, strength of the methodology, and data availability. As a result, each indicator is assigned a tier (see Box 1). As of July 2020, there are 123 Tier I indicators, 106 Tier II indicators and two indicators that have multiple tiers that relate to different components of the indicator.

### Box 1: SDG indicator tiers

The SDG indicator tiers reflect the quality of the indicator and its data, as defined below:

**Tier I:** Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data are regularly produced by countries for at least 50 percent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant.

**Tier II:** Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries.

Prior to 2020, some indicators were classified as Tier III, which was defined as: no internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested. However, in an ongoing effort to continually strengthen the quality of SDG data, Tier III indicators have been phased out either by removing some indicators or strengthening them to be reclassified as Tier II. As of the 51st UN Statistical Commission in 2020, the global indicator framework no longer contains any Tier III indicators.

Source: [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators\\_17%20July%202020\\_web.v2.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators_17%20July%202020_web.v2.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> This was a deliberate and delicate balance to strengthen the indicators while retaining data comparability.

<sup>14</sup> 2016 Progress Report, see Table 1.1, page 17, [here](#).

<sup>15</sup> Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, [here](#).

<sup>16</sup> SGD indicator list, [here](#).

<sup>17</sup> SDG indicator framework, [here](#).

<sup>18</sup> UN General Assembly resolution 71/313, [here](#)

## ii. Existing link

The Global Partnership monitoring exercise supports countries to generate data on three SDG indicators. Box 2 describes the methodology of each of these indicators, but in brief these are:

<b>SDG indicator 5.c.1</b> (public allocations for gender equality)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Global Partnership indicator 8</b>
<b>SDG indicator 17.15.1</b> (alignment with country results frameworks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Global Partnership indicator 1a</b>
<b>SDG indicator 17.16.1</b> (progress on multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>All Global Partnership indicators</b>

Country-level data are generated for SDG indicators 5.c.1 and 17.15.1 when completing Global Partnership indicators 8 and 1a respectively. SDG indicator 17.16.1, however, is not generated by completing one indicator but rather by participating in the Global Partnership monitoring exercise. It is a composite indicator that determines that a country has made 'progress' if a majority of indicators that the country reported on show an improvement. Under SDG indicator 17.16.1, whether individual countries have made progress or not is reported<sup>19</sup> in addition to the one global figure obtained by tallying up all the countries that made 'progress'.

### Box 2: The Global Partnership methodology for generating data on three SDG indicators

The Global Partnership monitoring exercise generates data on three SDG indicators: 5.c.1, 17.15.1, and 17.16.1. All three indicators are classified as Tier II. This means that the indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries.

**Goal:** 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

**Target:** 5.C. Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

**Indicator:** 5.c.1. Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment

**Methodology:** the indicator measures government efforts to track budget allocations for gender equality throughout the public financial management cycle and to make these allocations publicly available. To do this, the indicator measures three criteria:

- The first focuses on the intent of a government to address gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) by identifying if a country has gender responsive policies/programs and corresponding resource allocations to support their implementation.
- The second criterion assesses if a government has mechanisms to track resource allocations for GEWE throughout the public financial management cycle – from introduction of the budget through to evaluation of impact of expenditures.

<sup>19</sup> Countries do not generate individual data for this indicator automatically from completing the monitoring as additional calculations are necessary to generate the indicator value.

- The third criterion focuses on transparency by identifying if a government has made information publicly available on allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

**Metadata:** <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-05-0c-01.pdf>

**Goal:** 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

**Target:** 17.15. Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development

**Indicator:** 17.15.1. Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation

**Methodology:** the indicator measures the alignment of development partners with country-defined development objectives and results; as well as their progressive reliance on countries' own statistics and monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress in achieving the intended results. The indicator is calculated by averaging the three sub-indicators:

- Alignment at objectives level: percentage of development interventions whose objectives are drawn from country-led result frameworks
- Alignment at results level: percentage of results indicators contained in development interventions which are drawn from country-led results frameworks
- Alignment at monitoring and statistics level: percentage of results indicators which will be monitored using government sources and monitoring systems

**Metadata:** <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-17-15-01.pdf>

**Goal:** 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

**Target:** 17.16. Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries

**Indicator:** 17.16.1. Number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

**Methodology:** this is a composite indicator that draws on the results of all indicators in the Global Partnership's monitoring framework that are relevant to partner countries and bilateral development partners, including indicators collected at country level and those available from existing global assessments. Specifically, the indicator reports on the number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In essence, this means that progress is reported when there is a greater number of indicators (among the relevant indicators in the monitoring framework) that show a positive trend (current monitoring round versus past monitoring round) than the number of indicators that show a negative trend.

**Metadata:** <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-17-16-01.pdf>

Source: 2019 Progress Report, UN Metadata repository (last updated March 2021)<sup>20</sup>

While a handful of partner countries have embedded some of the Global Partnership indicators in their national systems, Cambodia provides the only known example where a partner country is generating data on 17.15.1 independent of Global Partnership monitoring. Other partner countries that have embedded Global Partnership indicators, including El Salvador, Kenya, the Philippines and Rwanda, have picked the indicators on predictability and use of country systems to embed in their national processes.

<sup>20</sup> 2019 Progress Report and UN Metadata repository, [here](#). Global indicator framework for the SDGs, [here](#).

**Case Study – Cambodia**

Cambodia’s development planning consists of a number of key strategies; from Cambodia Vision 2030 and 2050 through to the [Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency – Phase IV](#) and the medium-term [National Strategic Development Plan](#). Cambodia also has a [Development Co-operation and Partnerships Strategy 2019-2023](#) that links development planning to resources by setting out how different forms of development finance will be mobilized and managed, through effective partnerships mechanisms and tools, to achieve Cambodia’s development goals.

Figure 1. Cambodia’s development and partnerships policy framework



Source: Author

In 2018, Cambodia incorporated several indicators from the Global Partnership monitoring framework into its development policies and monitoring systems to track progress on these indicators. Five Global Partnership indicators are embedded in the results framework of the Development Co-operation and Partnerships Strategy 2019-2023. These include the Global Partnership indicator on use of country results frameworks (SDG 17.15.1), as well as the indicators on use of the country’s Public Financial Management and Procurement Systems, aid on budget, annual and medium-term predictability. Cambodia monitors these indicators through its Aid Information Management System (AIMS), namely the Cambodia ODA Database, and reports on progress on an annual basis.<sup>21</sup> The Global Partnership indicator on gender-responsive budgeting (SDG 5.c.1) is included in the Cambodian SDG Framework as one of the SDG indicators on which the country tracks progress. However, this gender indicator is not included in the monitoring and evaluation framework of the National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023 so its progress is not currently tracked as part of implementation of that plan. In the meantime, the Royal Government of Cambodia is in the process of preparing regulations and guidelines for line-ministries and government agencies to implement program-based budgeting which includes gender. Moreover, through its National Strategic Plan “[Neary Rattanak V](#)” 2019-2023 for Strengthening Gender Mainstreaming and Women’s Empowerment, the Royal Government plans to support selected line ministries to develop and apply specific tools and methods to track gender responsive budgeting. For coherent and co-ordinated follow-up on SDG implementation and progress toward national development priorities, the connection between follow-up and review of the Cambodian SDG Framework could be streamlined or co-ordinated with the national policy and planning structures.

Annual reporting on these Global Partnership indicators in Cambodia is possible because the indicators are embedded in the country’s ODA Database.<sup>22</sup> Data generated through this ODA database is the main source of inputs for the annual report on development co-operation and partnerships. For the ODA

<sup>21</sup> The latest report from March 2020 can be found directly [here](#) or downloaded [here](#)

<sup>22</sup> ODA Database, Cambodia, [here](#).

database to provide accurate and timely information, development partners are required to report their data at a project level to the database twice a year, usually at the end of the first quarter (on development co-operation from the previous year) and in the third quarter (to confirm the year’s disbursements and provide projections for following years). The data, including information on loan provision, is consolidated with budgeting processes. As a result, the database allows the government to analyse ODA trends and alignment to national priorities, by development partner, through its own country-sourced data.

**Figure 2. Cambodia’s ODA Database**



Source: <http://odacambodia.com/>

Cambodia’s strong political commitment to the principles of effective development co-operation is a key factor in the success of integrating Global Partnership indicators into national policies and processes. Building on this political will, strong relationships with development partners are needed to ensure that these partners report and update the data in the Cambodia ODA Database regularly. Timing also appears to be critical. Cambodia decided to integrate the Global Partnership indicators in 2018, right before the commencement of the National Strategic Development Plan and the Development Co-operation and Partnerships Strategy – both of which were launched in 2019. These elements of Cambodia’s experience could be useful for other partner countries that are considering embedding Global Partnership indicators into national policies and processes.

Embedding Global Partnership indicators into country-level processes, however, does not necessarily equate to a stronger link to the SDGs. While the Global Partnership indicator and SDG indicator 17.15.1 on use of country results frameworks is embedded and reported in the context of Cambodia’s Development Co-operation and Partnerships Strategy, it is not reflected in the results framework of the National Strategic Development Plan or the Cambodian SDG Framework.<sup>23</sup> It is instead a key performance indicator in the Rectangular Strategy – Phase IV and the National Strategic Development Plan. Since timing matters, the Cambodian SDGs Framework was endorsed in 2016 while the Global Partnership indicators are incorporated in the Rectangular Strategy – Phase IV, National Strategic Development Plan, and Development Cooperation and Partnerships Strategy in 2018.

**iii. Maintaining/strengthening the link**

<sup>23</sup> The Cambodian Sustainable Development Goals can be found [here](#) and the indicators that Cambodia tracks under Goal 17 can be found [here](#). In addition, the Cambodian SDG Framework is [here](#).

This section looks first at maintaining/strengthening the link with the current three SDG indicators that the Global Partnership monitoring exercise generates data on, and then assesses the feasibility of changing these indicators or adding new indicators.

a) The current indicators

For Global Partnership monitoring to maintain the current link to SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 5.c.1, it is necessary for:

- These indicators to be retained within the Global Partnership monitoring framework, and the monitoring exercise to resume and generate data on these indicators (new data should be available prior to 2025 – see below on adding new indicators), or
- Country-level data to be generated independently of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise and then aggregated and reported by the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team of the Global Partnership.

To maintain the link to SDG indicator 17.16.1, the Global Partnership monitoring exercise would need to resume. There is no other way to generate data on this indicator as it is calculated through participation in the monitoring exercise and reporting on the indicators in the framework.

In terms of generating country-level data outside of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise, it is technically feasible for countries to generate data on SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 5.c.1 without participating in Global Partnership monitoring.<sup>24</sup> As with Cambodia, partner countries can choose to embed these two indicators within national systems and generate regular data on them. However, aside from Cambodia, partner countries have previously only generated data on these two indicators as part of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise.

An unprecedented data collection exercise is planned to collect data on SDG indicator 5.c.1 in 2021. Data on this indicator was last collected during the 2018 Global Partnership monitoring round. With the Global Partnership monitoring exercise not expected to take place before the Global Partnership High-Level Meeting in 2022 due to the monitoring reform, UN Women, together with institutional support from OECD and UNDP, are seeking to fill this data gap by undergoing a data collection exercise (solely on SDG indicator 5.c.1) in 2021. For the first time, data for this indicator will also be collected for OECD countries. This process will take place independently of the Global Partnership. For some partner countries, this data will be collected in conjunction with other work on SDG financing, including the development of Integrated National Financing Frameworks. For OECD countries, data will be collected through the OECD Senior Budget Officials Network Expert Group on Gender Budgeting. However, the intent is that data will be collected independently on this occasion only, and then continue to be collected as part of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise once it resumes. There is a possibility that collecting data on this indicator independently is successful and continues to be collected in this manner beyond 2021. This could be a positive development if countries embed this indicator into national systems/processes, independently generate data, and are able to report the latest results to the Global Partnership as part of the monitoring exercise.

While it is possible for countries to generate data outside of Global Partnership monitoring for SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 5.c.1, the role of the custodian organisation remains the same and they need to continue to uphold their responsibilities (see Box 3). Custodian organisations are United Nations entities and other international organizations that are responsible for compiling and verifying country data and metadata, and for submitting the data, along with regional and global aggregates, to the UN Statistics Division. There is at least one custodian organization per SDG indicator. For SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 17.16.1 it is OECD and UNDP; for SDG indicator 5.c.1 it is UN Women in collaboration with OECD and UNDP. Custodian agencies need to maintain compliance with the methodology set out for the

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<sup>24</sup> While it is feasible for countries to generate data outside of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise, the role of the custodian agency remains the same – see the Global Processes section.

indicators in line with internationally agreed standards, even if data are not regularly produced by countries.

### Box 3. Responsibilities of SDG indicator custodian organisations

The main duties of custodian agencies responsible for SDG indicators, as defined by the IAEG-SDGs, are to:

- collect data from countries under existing mandates and through reporting mechanisms,
- compile internationally comparable data in the different statistical domains,
- support increased adoption and compliance with internationally agreed standards and to strengthen national statistical capacity.

Other responsibilities of a custodian agency include:

- communicating and coordinating with national statistical systems in a transparent manner, including on the validation of estimates and data adjustments when these are necessary;
- compiling the international data series, calculating global and regional aggregates and providing them, along with the metadata, to the UN Statistics Division;
- preparing the storyline for the annual global progress report; and
- co-ordinating on indicator development with national statistical systems, other international agencies and stakeholders.

Source: Para 28 <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/48th-session/documents/2017-2-IAEG-SDGs-E.pdf>

#### b) Adding new indicators or changing existing ones

In addition to continuing to report on the three SDG indicators generated through Global Partnership monitoring, Global Partnership stakeholders have raised the possibility of developing new Global Partnership indicators that are also SDG indicators. With less than a decade until 2030, however, adding new SDG indicators is on an exceptional basis only. Moreover, a substantive change to the meaning of an SDG indicator can be challenging to have approved; it requires an intergovernmental review through the IEAG-SDGs, followed by endorsement at the UN Statistical Commission. If it is deemed that the indicator does not meet agreed standards, it could potentially result in an indicator being deleted from the SDG indicator framework. However, adjustments (non-substantive changes) to the indicator metadata require no formal approval process (see Box 1 in Global Processes).

The IAEG-SDGs oversees any changes to the SDG indicator framework. It does this through both annual reviews and comprehensive reviews of the SDG indicator framework every five years.<sup>25</sup> The annual reviews cover minor, non-substantive changes while the comprehensive reviews allow for additions, deletions and replacements of indicators (see Box 1). The first comprehensive review was in 2020, and the next is in 2025. The outcomes of these reviews are submitted by the IAEG-SDG for consideration of the UN Statistical Commission.

In terms of broad direction, the review process by the IAEG-SDGs has become increasingly rigorous over time. Following the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, the focus was on developing and sourcing data for indicators that could track progress on the goals and targets. The quality of these indicators varied (see Box 1). Over time, particularly since the first comprehensive review conducted by the IAEG-SDGs in 2020, any changes to the SDG indicator framework are under increasingly intense scrutiny from the IAEG-SDGs in an effort to consolidate and strengthen the quality and robustness of the indicator framework.

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<sup>25</sup> Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017, [here](#).

Specifically, with regards to adding, deleting or changing indicators, the 2020 comprehensive review concluded that:

- An **additional indicator** may be considered only in exceptional cases when a crucial aspect of a target is not being monitored by the current indicator(s) or to address a critical or emerging new issue that is not monitored by the existing indicators, or when a whole Goal has very few Tier I or Tier II indicators for the follow up;
- A **deletion** will be considered when the methodological work of a Tier III indicator has stalled or has not produced the expected results, and a replacement will be proposed if the deleted indicator is the only indicator monitoring the corresponding target;
- **Adjustments or replacements** will be considered when the indicator does not map well to the target or does not track the target well;
- The proposed indicator must have an **agreed methodology and available data** (Tier III indicator proposals will not be considered) and be suitable for global monitoring; and
- The aim of the review will be to maintain the same number of indicators currently in the framework in order **not to alter significantly the original framework**, which is already being implemented in most countries and not to increase the reporting burden on national statistical systems.

#### **Box 4. Revisions to the SDG indicator framework**

##### **Comprehensive Review (every five years)**

The IAEG-SDGs agreed on several principles to guide the first comprehensive review in 2020.

These included that:

- The review needs to take into account investments already made at the national and international levels and should not undermine ongoing efforts
- The revised framework should not significantly impose an additional burden on national statistical work
- There should be space for improvements, while at the same time ensuring that the changes are limited in scope and the size of the framework remains the same
- The focus of the Group's common work should remain on the implementation of the framework in countries for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

During the comprehensive review, IAEG-SDG members were able to make proposals to add, delete, refine or adjust an indicator can be made on the basis of the following:

- (a) Indicator does not map well to the target
- (b) Additional indicator(s) is needed to cover all aspects of the target
- (c) New data sources are available
- (d) Methodological development of tier III indicator has stalled or has not produced expected result
- (e) Indicator is not measuring progress towards meeting the target.

One of the outcomes of the 2020 comprehensive review was that the IAEG-SDGs proposed 36 major changes to the SDG indicator framework. These were subsequently approved by the 51st UN Statistical Commission in March 2020, and included:

- 14 proposals for replacements of existing indicators
- 8 proposals for revisions of existing indicators
- 8 proposals for additional indicators
- 6 proposals for deleting indicators

##### **Annual Review (every year)**

Annual refinements of indicators can be initiated by members of the IAEG-SDGs through the annual review for the following reasons:

- (a) Specifying or correcting a unit of measurement
- (b) Clarification of terms used in the indicator
- (c) Spelling or other editorial changes
- (d) Any other minor issues that do not substantively change the meaning of the indicator.

As part of the annual review in 2020, the IAEG-SDGs agreed on 20 refinements, which were subsequently endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission.

Source: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/2020-2-SDG-IAEG-Rev-EE.pdf>;  
<https://undocs.org/E/CN.3/2017/2>

#### **iv. Key considerations**

For the current Global Partnership indicators, as the monitoring reform moves forward with consideration for what is collected through the monitoring framework and how it is collected through the monitoring process, it is important to be cognisant of how the existing links to these three SDG indicators can be retained. To generate data on SDG indicator 17.16.1, the monitoring exercise would need to take place. For the other two, there are two possible options (generating data through the monitoring exercise or independently through country level processes). Embedding SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 5.c.1 into national systems may not be feasible for all partner countries; particularly for 17.15.1 given its complexity. However, given other known challenges with the monitoring process, including the need for greater institutionalisation, it could be a strategic opportunity for the Global Partnership to provide greater support and guidance to countries that wish to do this in future.

In terms of changing or adding SDG indicators, the adoption of new SDG indicators is unlikely; substantive changes to existing indicators will undergo thorough review; and, if new data is not available on the three SDG indicators generated through Global Partnership monitoring prior to the 2025 comprehensive review, these indicators could be at risk of replacement or removal from the SDG indicator framework.

With these considerations in mind, the Global Partnership monitoring reform can have a meaningful impact to strengthen its relevance and visibility with regard to the SDGs. By updating the Global Partnership monitoring framework to capture relevant and useful data that drives political momentum for more effective development co-operation, in effect, the relevance and use of SDG indicator 17.16.1 (which is a composite indicator of the entire Global Partnership monitoring framework – see Box 1) will also improve.

## **(2.2) Global level processes**

### **i. State of play**

- Global Partnership monitoring process

With regard to the global aspects of the monitoring process<sup>26</sup>, since the establishment of the Global Partnership, three monitoring rounds have been conducted; 2014, 2016 and 2018. Participation has increased over time with 86 countries participating in the most recent monitoring round in 2018.<sup>27</sup> While the process is country-led, it is the Global Partnership Co-Chairs, together with the Steering Committee and support of the Joint Support Team, that decide when to start a new monitoring round. To instigate

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<sup>26</sup> The country level aspects of the monitoring process are detailed in the section below on country level processes. Greater detail on the monitoring process can be found in the occurrence paper.

<sup>27</sup> [2019 Progress Report](#)

the start of a new monitoring round and gauge interest in participating, the Co-Chairs send official invitation letters to all stakeholders. Partner country governments are invited to lead the exercise, and other stakeholders are invited to engage and participate. Each monitoring round - from initial outreach through to reporting on the results (a global progress report and country profiles) - takes around 14 months.<sup>28</sup>

- Global SDG follow-up and review

The United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (the 'UN HLPF') is the central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs at the global level. It provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations for SDG implementation. Mandated in 2012 by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development<sup>29</sup>, the UN HLPF meets annually in July under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment. Every four years, the UN HLPF is convened under the auspices of the General Assembly at the level of Heads of State and Government for two days.<sup>30</sup>

The UN HLPF provides “an opportunity for countries, organizations of the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, civil society and businesses to highlight the efforts they are taking to achieve the SDGs and helps translate the vision of the SDGs into reality by looking at what is working and what is not at global, regional, national and local levels.”<sup>31</sup> It is positioned as an “exchange of experiences in implementation of the SDGs, identifying gaps and lessons learned” and a “forum for rallying further action and solutions to this end by all stakeholders”.<sup>32</sup> It may be useful to note however, that as with most UN platforms, the UN HLPF is geared toward serving its members (197 governments). And it is the Member States that participate in negotiating the political declarations that are adopted by the UN HLPF. There is external participation from development partners (including multilateral development banks), civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders built into the programme; though there is limited seating and participation possible for non-governmental stakeholders if they are not a speaker in the programme.

## ii. Existing link

One of the main tangible links between the Global Partnership monitoring exercise and the global SDG follow-up and review through the UN HLPF, is that the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team reports annually to the UN Statistics Division on the SDG indicators for which it generates data. In the first quarter of every year, the Joint Support Team provides country level, regional and global level data on SDG indicators 17.15.1 and 17.16.1, as well as data storylines for inclusion in the annual UN Secretary General's report on progress toward the SDGs.<sup>33</sup> This annual report is the substantive basis of the UN HLPF each year.<sup>34</sup> SDG indicator 5.c.1 is reported by UN-Women.

Given that the Global Partnership monitoring exercise has been conducted roughly every 2.5 years while SDG reporting takes place annually, when there is no new data to report, the Joint Support Team constructs and reports on nuanced storylines that draw on interesting disaggregation of the data (e.g. fragile contexts, Least Developed Countries). This is to maximise the use of Global Partnership data and ensure that reference to effective development co-operation remains in the Secretary-General's

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<sup>28</sup> See Table 1 of [the 2018 Monitoring Guide](#) for an overview of the six phases of the Global Partnership monitoring process (page 11, 12).

<sup>29</sup> This was the Rio+20 conference and the outcome document, General Assembly resolution 66/288, is titled "The Future We Want", accessible [here](#)

<sup>30</sup> The format and organizational aspects of the Forum are outlined in General Assembly resolution 67/290; accessible [here](#). General Assembly resolution 70/299 provides further guidance on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs; accessible [here](#).

<sup>31</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020#about>

<sup>32</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

<sup>33</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/#>

<sup>34</sup> For example, see the documentation page for the 2020 UN HLPF [here](#)

report, and on the political agenda, in years when there is no new data. Submitting inputs does not guarantee inclusion. Reports of the UN Secretary-General are limited to 8,000 words, which means that inclusion in the report is quite competitive given the volume of indicators that the report has to cover. The Joint Support Team has found that inputs are more readily included when the data are recent. This reflects a push in recent years within the UN to report on more up-to-date, timely data.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to the global SDG indicator database and the annual report of the UN Secretary-General on the SDGs, the Global Partnership receives an addition request for inputs on the annual theme of the UN HLPF. While the theme and the SDGs under review each year change, Goal 17 is reviewed on an annual basis. As a result, the Joint Support Team, under the guidance of the Co-Chairs, submits relevant inputs each year on effective partnerships.<sup>36</sup>

Beyond the global SDG indicator database and the annual report of the UN Secretary-General on the SDGs, there are several other processes and events that the two institutions that support the Global Partnership as the Joint Support Team contribute to each year to maximise the use of Global Partnership data and evidence. This includes the annual report of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development, which is the substantive report of the annual Financing for Development Forum held in April.<sup>37</sup> For example, the 2021 Financing for Sustainable Development Report references Global Partnership data in discussion on the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation in a COVID-19 world<sup>38</sup>.

### **iii. Maintaining/ strengthening the link**

To maintain this link, both in terms of the data reported annually to the UN Statistics Division and the substantive inputs to UN processes and reports, at a minimum, data collection would need to resume. As set out in the previous section, this could be as part of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise or country-level data could be generated independently by countries (e.g. like Cambodia) and then aggregated and reported by the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team of the Global Partnership.

Focusing first on the former – data collection through a resumption of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise – several options on the occurrence of the monitoring are being explored<sup>39</sup>. Without repeating the analysis in that paper, in broad terms there are two branches around which different occurrence options can be developed:

- Rigid: all partner countries participate in the monitoring exercise in a specific year/ time period (e.g. all partner countries invited to participate in a 2023 monitoring round and have the same timeline for completing the exercise; though this would be a longer timeframe compared to the previous monitoring rounds in order to allow for some flexibility within the timeline).
- Waves: over a period of 3 to 4 years<sup>40</sup>, partner countries participate in a monitoring wave and at the end of each wave data could be aggregated (resource dependent) as well as at the end of the monitoring round and the completion of all waves (e.g. partner countries are invited to participate in a monitoring wave in either 2023 or 2024).

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<sup>35</sup> There is no rule as to what is considered ‘timely’, but as a general guideline data collected more than two years prior (that refers to a reference year an additional year prior to the collection year) would not be considered up-to-date or recent.

<sup>36</sup> Goal 5 was last reviewed in 2017. The thematic review can be found [here](#)

<sup>37</sup> Information on the IATF can be found [here](#)

<sup>38</sup> The 2021 Financing for Sustainable Development Report can be downloaded [here](#)

<sup>39</sup> See the corresponding analytical paper on the occurrence of the monitoring exercise [here](#).

<sup>40</sup> While in practice this could be longer, 3 or 4 years is likely to be the most feasible if the monitoring round is timed for completion before a High-Level Meeting.

The timing of the past three monitoring rounds have all been rigid<sup>41</sup>, and new SDG data was generated twice in the five years from 2015 to 2020. However, separate to SDG reporting needs, the past frequency is not considered viable for future monitoring exercises. Feedback from partner countries and other stakeholders demonstrates that more flexibility is needed in terms of the timing and duration of the exercise. Furthermore, the current capacity of the Joint Support Team is not able to support the same or a larger number of countries participating in the monitoring within the previous timeframe<sup>42</sup>.

Sticking with a rigid timeframe but extending the frequency to respond to partner countries concerns is a possible option. For example, the monitoring round could be held every three or four years instead of every 2.5 years. If the frequency was extended to three or four years, and the data made available within this period, it should not present a problem for SDG reporting. However, if the frequency were extended to five or more years, this would be problematic as concerns might be raised by the IAEG-SDGs on the regularity of the data at the next comprehensive review in 2025. Moreover, older data tends to get less visibility and traction when submitted as an input to UN processes. Aside from SDG reporting, political momentum is also a consideration.

If the monitoring exercise was carried out in waves, the UN Statistics Division confirmed that there is no concern with the timing of data collection. In fact, it was noted that there are other SDG custodian agencies that are collecting data in this manner. The global SDG database, maintained by the UN Statistics Division, accepts data for any country pertaining to any year. Global and regional aggregate data can be updated as data become available as long as adequate standards for accuracy and reliability are maintained. This means that if the monitoring exercise starts to generate rolling or “waves” of data collection, country data can be reported for the year it was collected, and then aggregated data for a period of time when majority of partner countries are covered<sup>43</sup>.

For example, countries may participate in a wave in 2023 while others participate in 2024. Country data that is completed in 2023 could be reported in 2024; citing 2023 as the year of collection. Once the 2024 wave is also completed, the country data could be reported in 2025, and if a majority of countries are covered by this stage, the aggregate global data could be calculated and reported; the reference year would refer to when the data were collected (e.g. 2023-2024). To continue this example, if the monitoring round concluded in 2025 (e.g. to coincide with a High-Level Meeting) and a new round kicked off in 2026 with a wave planned in 2026 and one planned in 2027, the global aggregate data could continue to be updated annually (e.g. in 2026 and 2027) and would not need to wait until the end of the ‘round’. This is because once the majority of countries has been reached, the global and regional aggregates can be updated annually (e.g. years of reference 2023-2024; 2024-2025; 2025-2026). This is an example only, and the dates provided may not be feasible; duration<sup>44</sup> and other factors need to be taken into account. An SDG indicator working group is being established to discuss the calculation of global and regional aggregates and the group may develop good practices on the calculation of aggregates for rolling data. The Joint Support Team will follow the work of this group once it is established.

With regard to the latter mentioned method of resuming data collection – through country-level data generated independently of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise – it is unlikely that this type of data collection would lead to data from a majority of countries (at least in the short term as there are only a handful of countries that have embedded Global Partnership indicators into national policies and

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<sup>41</sup> In practice, this has meant that at a time determined by the Co-Chairs of the Global Partnership, partner countries have been invited to undertake the monitoring exercise, and encouraged to complete it within 6-7 months. While some partner countries might start the exercise a few months later than others, all participating partner countries in previous monitoring rounds started and completed the exercise within a few months of each other.

<sup>42</sup> The 2018 monitoring round saw 86 partner countries successfully lead the exercise in their country. There were about half a dozen additional countries that started the exercise but were unable to complete it in the given timeframe.

<sup>43</sup> There is no standard rule that guides what constitutes the ‘majority of countries’ for tier 2 indicators; it depends on the indicator and its agreed methodology.

<sup>44</sup> For simplicity, 12 months is used in this example but 18 months might be more realistic.

processes). The concern with regard to SDG reporting is that there would not be a majority of countries to report on the regional and global aggregates.

**iv. Key considerations**

If the exercise is undertaken by all countries at the same time but less frequent compared to the past (i.e. every three or four years), with sufficient capacity the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team would be able to continue report SDG data and inputs to the UN Statistics Division and other UN processes. However, if the frequency of reporting only allows for data to be available every five years or longer, it may raise concerns during the next comprehensive review of the IAEG-SDGs in 2025.

If the exercise is carried out in waves, with sufficient capacity the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team would also be able to continue to regularly report. It is possible to report country data after each wave, and global aggregates can be provided on a rolling basis. It may be that more than one wave is needed to collect data on a majority of countries, which is required for reporting global and regional aggregates. However, once this is reached, so long as geographic representation is balanced, the global and regional aggregates would be able to be updated regularly, as the rolling country data are received. The benefit of this type of rolling data is that once there is a majority of countries, with each wave the data can be updated; this would allow for reporting fresh data more regularly than current practice but without the need for all partner countries to participate in every wave.

Maintaining the link to global SDG processes with completely flexible timing is similar to waves. However, other factors may make this option less desirable. For example, without more formal ‘waves’, partner countries may not prioritise the exercise if there is not a set timeline for participation and completion.

**(2.3) Country level processes**

**i. State of play**

A brief overview of the Global Partnership and SDG monitoring processes at country level is outlined below. Table 2 summarises several key elements of these two processes. It is important to note however that neither process is standardised across countries, but is determined by country context, institutional setup, and national preferences.

**Table 2: Global Partnership and SDG monitoring processes at country level**

	<b>Global Partnership monitoring</b>	<b>National SDG monitoring and review</b>
<b>Origin</b>	Busan Partnership Agreement	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
<b>Focus</b>	Effective partnerships	Global development agenda – spanning 17 SDGs
<b>Frequency</b>	Biennially, since 2014	Annually, since 2016
<b>Lead government Ministry</b>	Often the Ministry of Finance, or Planning	Often the Office of the Prime Minister/ President with support from a cross government, multi-stakeholder committee
<b>Political oversight</b>	Letter to participate in the monitoring sent from Global Partnership Co-Chairs to government Ministers, who then confirm in writing intention to participate in the monitoring round	There is often lead ministry charged with leading/coordinating SDG implementation

<b>Technical focal point</b>	A national coordinator, within the lead Ministry is appointed to lead the monitoring efforts	Usually several layers, consisting of an intergovernmental task force at technical level; Office for National Statistics in charge of data collection; and possibly also a monitoring working group to support the statistical office.
<b>Primary reporting to</b>	OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team of the Global Partnership	UN-DESA Statistics Division and a variety of SDG custodian organisations
<b>Secondary reporting/ inputs to</b>	UN-DESA Statistics Division; UN High-Level Political Forum; UN Financing for Development processes	Voluntary National Reviews; Regional SDG follow-up and review

- Global Partnership monitoring process

Global Partnership monitoring is a country-led, voluntary, multi-stakeholder process to report on the indicators within the Global Partnership monitoring framework. At the start of each monitoring round, an invitation letter is sent from the Global Partnership Co-Chairs to partner countries inviting them to participate. Once a partner country government has indicated that they would like to participate, they assign a government focal point; known as the National Co-ordinator. The National Co-ordinator is typically situated in a government ministry that manages development co-operation and partnerships (see Table 3 below for a handful of the National Co-ordinator titles and Ministries during the 2018 monitoring round).

**Table 3: Examples of National Co-ordinators that led Global Partnership monitoring in 2018**

Title of National Coordinator	Government Ministry	Country
Aid Management Director	Ministry of Finance	Afghanistan
Deputy Secretary, Development Effectiveness Wing, Economic Relations Division	Ministry of Finance	Bangladesh
Director	Presidential Agency for International Cooperation	Colombia
Director of Cooperation and Aid Cooperation	Ministry of Planning and Development	Côte d'Ivoire
Director of External Resources Coordination Directorate	Ministry of Planning	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Director of the Information and Analysis Office for Development Cooperation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	El Salvador

Source: OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team

The National Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring exercise in country. In brief, this means leading data collection on the Global Partnership indicators through an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process, which can include several workshops to engage stakeholders at the outset of the exercise, through to validation and review of the final results once completed. Partner countries are encouraged to use national processes and mechanisms to generate and gather the data on the indicators. There are several countries that have embedded some of the Global Partnership indicators in their national processes.<sup>45</sup> For the majority though, the data are not independently generated and they start to collect the data once the country has committed to participating in the monitoring round. National Co-ordinators use an excel tool provided by the Global Partnership to assist with data

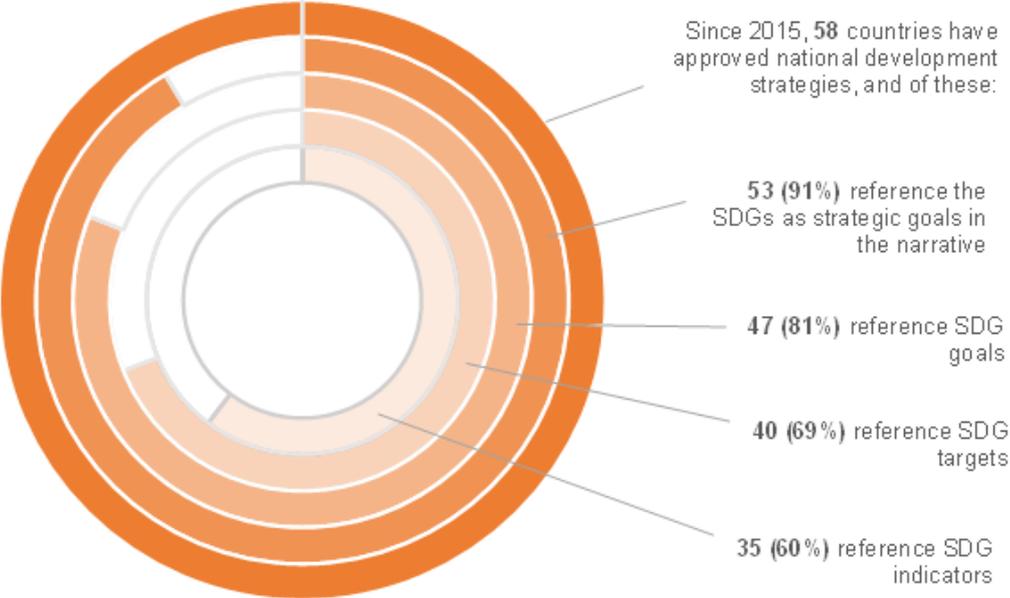
<sup>45</sup> Several partner countries independently collect data on the Global Partnership indicator on use of country systems, predictability and whether development co-operation is included in the national budget.

collection. Once collected, there is a process to validate the data and following final validation and review of the data at country level, the Joint Support Team aggregates and analyses the data. In the 2016 and 2018 monitoring rounds, the monitoring results were published in a set of country profiles and a global progress report.<sup>46</sup>

- SDG monitoring and review processes at country level

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, countries have taken steps to nationalise the SDGs and update institutional arrangements in order to make and track progress toward the SDGs. Results from the 2018 monitoring round show that the majority of partner countries have incorporated the goals, targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda into their national development plans and strategies (see Figure 1). This seems to be a work in progress as the data suggest more work is needed to move beyond reference to the goals alone to specific SDG targets and indicators.

**Figure 3: Partner country governments that incorporated the 2030 Agenda and/or the SDGs in their national development strategy**



Source: 2019 Progress Report

In addition to embedding the SDGs, targets and indicators within national strategies, countries have also adjusted or set up national institutional arrangements to annually track and report on SDG implementation. These institutional arrangements are typically made up of several layers.

At the top, many countries have a layer of political oversight. This is often a high-level inter-ministerial committee, or a national council/commission on sustainable development that can include stakeholders beyond government, and is headed by a senior official like the Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister.<sup>47</sup> Supporting this layer of political oversight, there is often a lead ministry charged with leading and/or co-

<sup>46</sup> See the 2019 Progress Report and country profiles [available online](#)

<sup>47</sup> For example, this type of set up exists in Andorra, Armenia, Albania, Australia, Bahrain, Bhutan, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Egypt. The examples here are not exhaustive. For more examples and further detail, see [Microsoft Word - Compendium 2018 update 18 03 2019 \(un.org\)](#)

ordinating on SDG implementation. In some countries, this is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>48</sup>; in others it is the Ministry of Planning and Development<sup>49</sup> or Ministry of Finance.<sup>50</sup>

It is common for countries to have a middle layer made up of an inter-ministerial task force that brings together all the relevant government ministries and country stakeholders at technical level to co-ordinate SDG implementation efforts.<sup>51</sup> Some countries split the work of the task force into thematic working groups.<sup>52</sup> These can be convened along broad themes like 'social', 'economic', 'environmental' and 'institutional'.

The foundation of this institutional setup typically rests with the Department/Office for National Statistics. This Office can have designated responsibility for SDG data collection and analysis.<sup>53</sup> To support the Department/Office/Institute for National Statistics, some countries have established the creation of a monitoring working group specifically focused on evaluating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>54</sup> For others, the lead Ministry overseeing SDG implementation is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of SDG implementation with support from the National Institute for Statistics for data collection and reporting.<sup>55</sup>

The institutional arrangements for SDG follow-up and review vary from country to country. Table 4 below provides a snapshot to highlight a few country examples.

**Table 4: National institutional arrangements for SDG follow-up and review**

Country	Political oversight	Lead entity	Technical coordination	Data collection
Bhutan	The Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC), chaired by the Prime Minister and Finance Minister as the Vice-Chair; and attended by the Secretaries for each Ministry, the Cabinet Secretary, the Secretary to the National Environment Commission, and the Secretary to the GNHC Secretariat	The Secretariat of the GNHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A dedicated SDG Working Committee, led by the Director of the GNHC Secretariat, for implementation of the 2030 Agenda</li> <li>- The GNHC is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs, through the national M&amp;E system. The National Statistics Bureau, in collaboration with the secretariat of GNHC, is responsible for incorporating relevant SDG indicators into the National Statistical System.</li> </ul>	Through the National Statistical System
Egypt	The National Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, situated in the Prime Minister's Office	The Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform (MoPMAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through the National Committee, which includes representatives from 17 Ministries</li> </ul>	The Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) within the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS)
Jamaica	Cabinet and Parliament, assisted by the National	Not applicable; it is divided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (including</li> </ul>	Official statistics are produced by

<sup>48</sup> For example, Andorra.

<sup>49</sup> Or variation of this name, like the Ministry of Children, Families and Social Development in Canada. Other examples of countries with a similar named ministry that supports the national SDG council include Benin, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt.

<sup>50</sup> For example, Cape Verde.

<sup>51</sup> For example, Albania, Armenia, Cape Verde, Colombia.

<sup>52</sup> For example, Cape Verde.

<sup>53</sup> For example, Albania, Andorra, Bahrain.

<sup>54</sup> For example, Andorra.

<sup>55</sup> For example, Ecuador.

	2030 Agenda Oversight Committee	between the technical co-ordination entities	government, civil society and private sector); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The National SDGs Core Group (policy and technical support comprised of Planning Institute of Jamaica, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica);</li> <li>- Thematic Working Groups of Vision 2030 Jamaica; and</li> <li>- The SDGs Secretariat within the Planning Institute of Jamaica</li> </ul>	several government bodies, with co-ordination from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica
Senegal	The President of the Republic	The Ministry of Economy, Finance, and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The planning and study units within each ministry plan the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through concrete programs and initiatives.</li> <li>- Review of progress on the SDGs is tied to the Harmonized Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies</li> </ul>	The National Statistical System including National Council of Statistics etc. is defined as the institutional mechanism to produce and disseminate statistical data
Uruguay	The Office of the President and the Council of Ministers oversee high-level strategy and policy for the 2030 Agenda	The Office of Planning and Budget through its Bureau of Management and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One or several line ministries are responsible for the implementation of specific SDGs</li> </ul>	The National Institute of Statistics produces and analyses statistics and indicators, with a special working group created to focus on data related to the SDGs

Source: [Microsoft Word - Compendium 2018 update 18.03.2019 \(un.org\)](#)

Given that SDG implementation requires a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach, in many countries annual SDG monitoring and review is a combined effort across the above-mentioned layers.

## ii. Existing link

At present, the link between Global Partnership monitoring and national SDG monitoring is that some partner countries use the Global Partnership monitoring results to feed into their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Box 5 provides some background information on the VNRs.

### Box 5. Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)

VNRs are **mandated** by paragraph 79 of the 2030 Agenda, which encourages UN Member States to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven". As the name suggests, VNRs are voluntarily conducted by any UN Member State that wishes to do so and presented annually at the UN HLPF with the **aim** to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a

view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs.

The **scope** of the VNRs is very broad, reflecting the comprehensive nature of the 2030 Agenda. Member States are encouraged to report on actions and progress related to SDG implementation. The **frequency** of how often a country presents a VNR at the UN HLPF varies. In 2021, 44 countries will present; 10 for the first time, 24 for the second time, and 10 for the third time. In total, 168 VNRs have been presented since 2016. There is no set **format** for presenting a VNR; some countries submit a video while others present a technical report. At the UN HLPF, countries are allotted 15-20 minutes to present their VNR and respond to any questions. In terms of **follow-up** actions after presenting a VNR, there is no mechanism or guidance on use of results. At global level, the highlights of VNRs presented are compiled in a synthesis report. And at country level, countries are “encouraged to continue engaging in the peer-learning exercises within relevant VNR networks, fostering an environment of mutual support, and to apply lessons learned to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at their national and local levels”.

Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>;  
[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27024Handbook\\_2021\\_EN.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27024Handbook_2021_EN.pdf);  
[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27144QA\\_VNR\\_2021.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27144QA_VNR_2021.pdf)

According to the post-monitoring survey among National Coordinators of the 2018 Global Partnership monitoring round<sup>56</sup>, more than 20 countries planned to utilise Global Partnership monitoring results in their VNR. In 2020, seven countries referenced the 2018 Global Partnership monitoring results in their VNR. Some countries independently make this link at country level and utilise their Global Partnership monitoring results in their VNR. To support countries to maximise the use of their results, each year the Joint Support Team also actively provides countries that have committed to doing a VNR with their latest Global Partnership monitoring results to use in their VNR if useful.

Beyond the inclusion of Global Partnership monitoring results in the VNRs, there is no established or systematized link between the two processes. The two are separate processes that engage different actors, structures and mechanisms, and the timing is not synchronised.

### iii. Maintaining/ strengthening the link

It would require fairly minimal effort to maintain the link between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG monitoring through use of Global Partnership results in a country's VNR. At a minimum, Global Partnership monitoring would need to resume, and the monitoring exercise would need to retain its current link to SDG indicators. In addition, the Joint Support Team could continue to send monitoring results to countries that are presenting a VNR. As in the past, if country profiles are produced following the monitoring round, the Joint Support Team can prepare and communicate these results with countries without significant additional burden.

Beyond this existing link between the two processes through the VNRs, there are other possible links that might be useful for some countries. For example, if a country's Global Partnership monitoring results are available to feed into the mid-term or final evaluation of the national development plan, this could assist the country to evaluate progress toward development goals and develop new priorities for the next plan. Or if the monitoring results were available in time for a country's high-level review with development partners, the results could be strategically used guide this discussion and establish agreed actions for the future.

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<sup>56</sup> The post-monitoring survey among national coordinators of the 2018 monitoring round is available [here](#).

As highlighted in the occurrence paper, partner countries have mentioned the timing of the Global Partnership exercise as an issue and the Global Partnership data not being available in a timely manner to feed into national SDG processes. Whether a country wishes to strengthen the link between the two processes so that they can use Global Partnership monitoring results to feed into their VNR, national development or development co-operation policies and processes, a more flexible monitoring process would allow countries to time the exercise to best suit their needs and country context. Greater flexibility in terms of when a country wishes to do the monitoring exercise would enable greater institutionalization. This provides space for countries to embed the monitoring process into existing processes and mechanisms if desired. In addition, a stronger inception phase of Global Partnership monitoring would allow countries to strengthen political buy-in and better align the monitoring to SDG processes should they wish to do so.

#### **iv. Key considerations**

It is not clear if countries wish to strengthen the link between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG monitoring in terms of the process, mechanisms, and actors involved. Some countries, however, are linking the results by using Global Partnership monitoring to inform their VNR on SDG implementation. There are some considerations worth noting when exploring whether it is strategic to strengthen the link to VNRs. Box 5 points to some of these. One of the main issues is that there is no clear path to follow-up on a VNR once it has been presented. In terms of political momentum and use of results once a VNR has been presented, there is no established path forward. As a result, it may be adequate to maintain the current link to the VNRs and not seek to devote resources to strengthening this link.

Beyond VNRs, greater flexibility in terms of when countries can do Global Partnership monitoring will allow for greater institutionalization of the monitoring process and its results at country level. This would provide opportunity for countries to improve the timing of the exercise so that Global Partnership data can feed into national SDG monitoring and review, as well as other relevant national processes.

### (3) Looking forward

The ongoing reform of the Global Partnership monitoring, which is expected to be wrapped up in time for the Global Partnership's next High-Level Meeting in 2022, provides opportunity for new and stronger linkages to the SDGs. This paper focussed on the existing linkages between Global Partnership monitoring and SDG reporting. As mentioned in this paper, new and stronger links could be through adjustments to the timing of the monitoring exercise, which in turn allows partner countries to time the exercise to feed into country-level SDG processes.

Beyond what is mentioned in this paper, there could also be new linkages through greater focus in the framework on other issues that are woven into the ambition of the 2030 Agenda. This could include for example better reflecting the commitment to leave no one behind. Although the Global Partnership monitoring contains some elements that reflect the commitment to leave no one behind such as the current indicator on gender equality and women's empowerment, feedback from consultations held in early 2021 suggest that this could be better reflected. Exploring ways to track this universal commitment is particularly important in the context of building forward better from the COVID-19 pandemic. Other areas around which there could potentially be stronger linkages to the SDGs include strengthening statistical capacities in developing countries or greater emphasis on the whole of society approach to development co-operation and mutual accountability.

Lastly, as the monitoring reform progresses and it becomes clearer which existing linkages will be strengthened and which new links might be sought, the Global Partnership, taking also into consideration the findings of the broader review of the Global Partnership, will need to consider the type of political narrative that it wishes to develop and communicate on its links to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. It will need to be a concise and compelling pitch that clearly frames how Global Partnership monitoring links to the SDGs so that this message can be clearly broadcast to stakeholders following the monitoring reform.