

WORKING TOGETHER: INTEGRATION, INSTITUTIONS AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

World Public Sector Report 2018



United Nations

World Public Sector Report 2018

Summary for policy makers

Two years ago, Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which ambitions to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030. The Agenda emphasizes the importance of the interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Acknowledging possible synergies and trade-offs between the sustainable development goals and targets will make it much easier to achieve the SDGs. It will enhance allocation of resources and help avoid unwanted side effects of actions aiming to accelerate progress in one area on the realization of targets in other areas. It will support more balanced development trajectories by ensuring more coherent action on various dimensions of sustainable development.

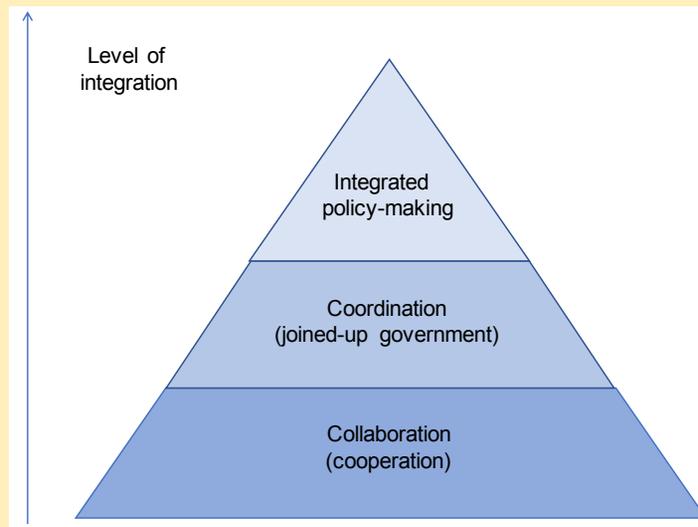
It is recognized that the national level will be critical for the achievement of the Goals. At the national level, understanding how to adapt institutional frameworks to deliver integrated policies that effectively address existing interlinkages among the SDGs will be critical to achieving progress; it will also have important implications for national public administrations and public service. Broadly speaking, promoting integration implies finding ways to foster cooperation and common approaches among institutions at all levels dealing with closely interrelated issues. This may entail putting in place adequate institutional arrangements, public administration practices, mechanisms, capacities, budgetary arrangements and resources. It also encompasses various modalities of engagement of non-state stakeholders in decision-making.

Defining and measuring integration

Broadly speaking, policy integration concerns “the management of cross-cutting issues in policy-making that transcend the boundaries of established policy fields and do not correspond to the institutional responsibilities of individual departments”. The term “integration” itself is used in at least three slightly different meaning in the literature. The first and most common usage refers to integration as a variable or dimension, with policies in specific issue areas being more or less integrated or coherent. In this respect, integration is a continuum, which goes from least coherent to fully coherent. Alternatively, integration can refer to the process of making policy around a specific issue more coherent. Lastly, integration can also refer to the ideal of policies that achieve a high or the highest degree of coherence. A variety of related concepts and terms are often used in the literature.

Figure E.1.

Degrees in policy integration and related concepts



Source: Stead and Meijers (see footnote 29).

The World Public Sector Report 2018 aims to inform efforts by all countries to foster policy integration for the SDGs, highlighting the challenges and opportunities that exist for public institutions and public administration. It illustrates how different types of interlinkages that exist among the SDGs can be addressed from an institutional perspective, based on examples. Through this, the report aims to sketch areas where public institutions need to work closely together; the types of tools that can be used to this effect; and the broader implications for public institutions and public service. The report aims to assist national policy makers, especially those working in institutions entrusted with SDG implementation as well as in planning, finance and sector ministries and in local governments, to implement the SDGs in an integrated fashion.

In this report, the term “integration” is considered in a broad sense. Integrated policy-making is used to refer to policy processes that: (i) systematically identify relevant and important linkages of issues across the SDGs and consider those linkages in design of policies; (ii) are consistent across scales of implementation (and in particular, from the local to the national); (iii) involve the relevant stakeholders in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and (iv) provide adequate resources for implementation at all relevant levels.

To analyse integration efforts from an institutional perspective, this report considers three standard dimensions of integration: horizontal integration, i.e. integration across sectors or institutions; vertical integration, i.e. how the actions of national and sub-national levels of government can be aligned to result in coherent outcomes; and engagement of all stakeholders in the realisation of shared objectives. Taken together, these three dimensions of integration cover all the relevant categories put forward by the literature such as, among many others, participation, partnerships, and coherence, as well as the two commonly used notions of whole-of-government approaches and whole-of-society approaches.

Sustainable development, integration and institutions: what do we know?

The interdependence among sustainable development issues has been recognized for a long time and is perhaps the most fundamental tenet of the concept of sustainable development. Fundamentally, while the consideration of multiple linkages across sectors adds constraints to decision-making, integrated policy-making allows for a broader definition of problems that enlarges the policy space, potentially yielding socially superior solutions that cannot be found by focusing only on sector-specific policies. Other potential benefits of integration include the production of shared visions across sectors and actors.

Hence, potential benefits of integrated policy-making are clear. The costs of lack of policy coherence are also apparent. Yet, fostering integration in practice has proven difficult. Many agree that a major cause of the observed shortcomings is an inability to both mainstream sustainable development principles in the work of existing institutions and achieve the degree of coordination among institutions that sustainable development requires.

Among the many challenges documented in the literature, perhaps the main obstacle to integration in the past was the lack of political legitimacy of sustainable development as a paradigm. For decades, sustainable development competed on an unequal footing with the traditional development approach and with better resourced sectoral frameworks. On the institutional side, the adoption of sustainable development without renunciation of other paradigms often resulted in the creation of parallel institutions, which coexisted with older, stronger institutions focusing on business as usual.

Despite these difficulties, experiences of the 25 years since the Earth summit offer a rich body of lessons in terms of institutional setups and arrangements and public administration management efforts that aimed to foster integration and coherence. For example, national strategies for sustainable development (NSDS), national councils for sustainable development (NSDC) and local Agenda 21s were instruments put forward in Agenda 21 in 1992 to promote integration. At the sectoral level, attempts at integration in many sectors have also resulted in the development of integrative concepts and institutional experiments, the lessons of which could be harnessed for the benefit of SDG implementation. The report aims to take a first step in this direction.

The 2030 Agenda and the prospects for integration

There are many reasons to think that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda may significantly change the prospects for integration, including at the national level. In a nutshell, the Agenda and the SDGs have elevated the status of sustainable development on the international policy agenda, increasing the legitimacy and relevance

of integrated perspectives and approaches. In addition, the explicit focus of the Agenda on institutions provides an impetus for governments to devote more attention to finding institutional models and public administration approaches that effectively support integrated approaches. These positive changes in legitimacy and relevance are further supported by progress in the scientific understanding of interlinkages among sustainable development issues on the one hand, as well as by the development of analytical methods, tools and information systems that support integration in public institutions in practice.

Five reasons why the adoption of Agenda 2030 may be a game-changer for integration

1. With the 2030 Agenda, sustainable development and its integrated perspective become the mainstream approach to development, increasing the political salience of integrated approaches, including in developed countries due to the universality of the SDGs.
2. The SDGs provide a common map of sustainable development, clearly showing the interdependence among goals and targets and the scope for inter-agency collaboration.
3. Scientific knowledge and evidence on interlinkages among SDG areas have progressed tremendously since 1992.
4. Institutions are an integral part of the SDGs on par with other goals, not an afterthought or a component of an “enabling environment”
5. Methodologies that support integrated approaches in public institutions are being developed, including analytical methods, managerial tools and information systems.

The World Public Sector Report 2018

The report is organized around three broad overarching questions. First, what are challenges to and opportunities for policy integration at different stages of policy cycle at the national level, from the institutional perspective? Second, what are examples of institutional and administrative arrangements that can foster integrated approaches to the 2030 Agenda? And lastly, what are challenges and opportunities for public institutions and public administration to deliver integrated approaches in different SDG or groups of closely related SDGs (nexus areas)?

Methodology for the World Public Sector Report 2018

The focus of the report is on the national level, including the sub-national and local levels. The methodological approach chosen by the report is generic and can be applied to any issue or sector. It consists in identifying important interlinkages between the issues being examined with the rest of the SDGs, and assessing how national public institutions and public administration in different country contexts have addressed those linkages. In order to analyse institutional frameworks and administrative practices in a consistent way, the report and all its chapters use a grid of analysis that is based on the three dimensions presented above (horizontal integration, vertical integration, and engagement). The report is purposely empirical and does not aim to build or test a theory of policy integration. Rather, it aims to point to a broad range of relevant examples of institutions and administrative arrangements for integration at the national level, distilling key features of those.

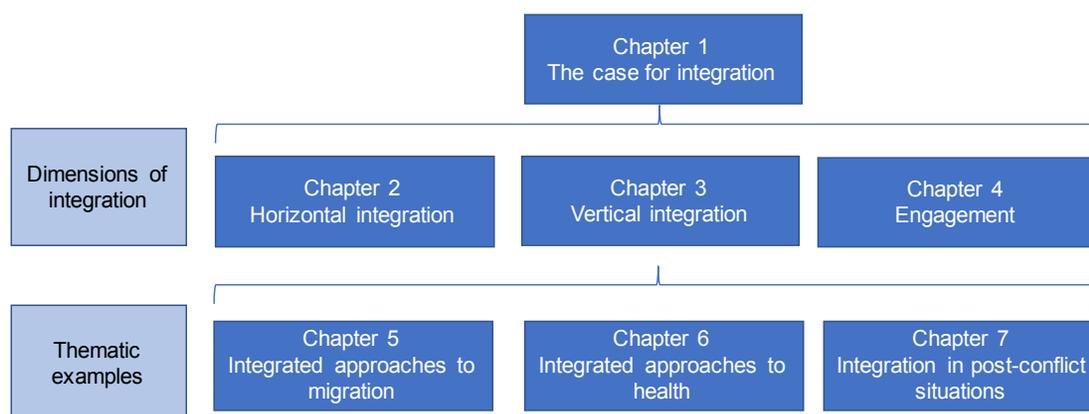
As is common in the literature on policy integration, the report features examples of institutional attempts at integration at two levels. The first level can be called systemic or “whole-of-Agenda”. It refers to the institutional and public administration arrangements that are made to implement the Agenda and the SDGs. These types of high-level arrangements are those that have received most attention in official presentations made by countries at the UN in the context of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda (see chapters 2, 3 and 4). The second level of inquiry relates to integrated approaches in specific sectors, themes, issues, and areas. This encompasses sectors that have their “own” SDG, such as health or education, lower-level issues such as freshwater management (addressed in several targets under SDG 6), as well as cross-cutting issues such as

migration and youth. Integrated approaches at those levels have been tried and codified in many sectors or areas, often to the point of becoming coined and recognized in national and international law.

The first chapter of this report presents the case for integration and introduces the methodological framework. The next three chapters each focus on one of those dimensions used to structure the analysis of integration: horizontal integration, vertical integration, and engagement. The second part of the report applies the framework to three current challenges that are - among many others - relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: integrated approaches to international migration; integrated approaches to health; and integration of peace, security and development in post-conflict situations. The last chapter synthesizes the lessons from the report that are relevant to policy-makers. Figure E.2 illustrates the structure of the report.

Figure E.2.

Structure of the World Public Sector Report 2018



Horizontal integration in the context of SDG implementation

Chapter 2 looks at horizontal integration for the implementation of the SDGs. Effective horizontal integration across sectors is critical for addressing the interconnected nature of the SDGs, including synergies and trade-offs across different goals and targets. It is well recognized, however, that overcoming sectoral boundaries to achieve horizontal integration remains a challenge. Nevertheless, governments have concrete opportunities to facilitate integration in their structures and processes and the report identifies some of those.

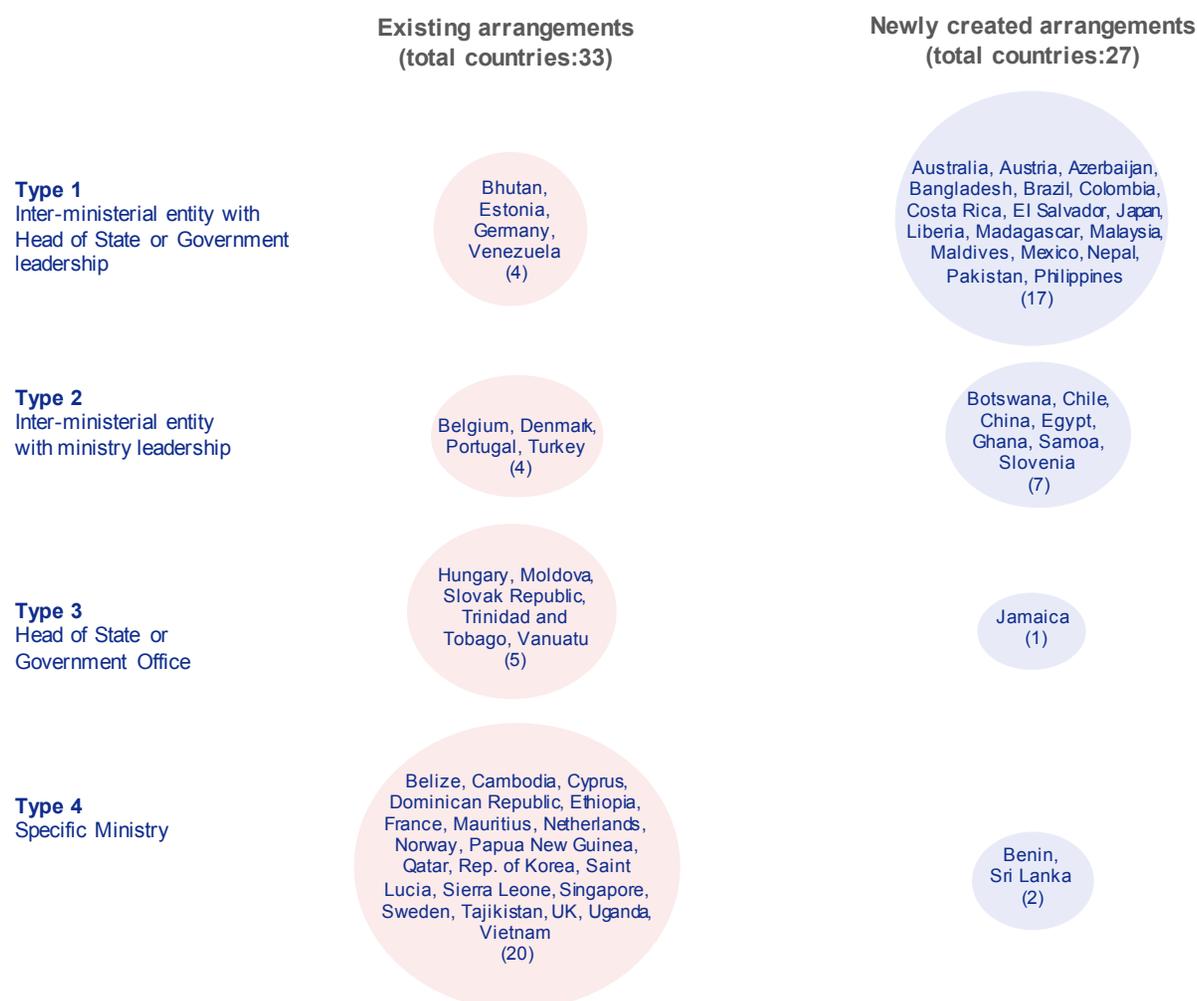
An increasing number of countries around the world are integrating the SDGs into their national policies and putting institutional frameworks in place. Some countries have given new mandates to existing mechanisms or are setting up new coordination bodies and mechanisms for SDG implementation (e.g., high-level commissions). Arrangements are being made to ensure continuing leadership in SDG implementation, which may come from the heads of state and government or from line ministries.

In a sample of 60 countries, 27 had created a new structure for SDG implementation (including 17 new cross-sectoral entities). SDG implementation is chaired, coordinated or led by Heads of State and Government in 27 countries. Leadership at the highest level is often considered conducive to successful implementation of national policy, and expresses a commitment to SDG implementation in many countries. Out of the 60 countries examined in the chapter, 32 have institutional arrangements in place for SDG implementation that span across sectors. This may be an indication of countries' interest in addressing the integrated nature of the SDGs and determination to rally all parts of governments around the SDGs.

No single approach to institutional innovation seems more likely to facilitate integration independently from country context. Adapting the SDGs to national contexts while ensuring buy-in from stakeholders both within and beyond government is a delicate, political task. Beyond stated needs to enhance cross-sectoral integration and efficiency, factors influencing the choice of institutional arrangements include the dynamics and balance of power and resources in the country, as well as the prevailing political and institutional systems.

Figure E.3.

National institutional arrangements to coordinate and lead SDG implementation



Beyond institutional arrangements, other instruments are available to governments to enhance integration. The report examines five of them: national sustainable development strategies, budget processes, incentives within public institutions, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and the role of oversight institutions.

National strategies and plans provide a long-term vision that functions as a common reference for integrated approaches. This common reference enables a shared understanding across sectoral boundaries of the government's broad policy objectives. It allows different parts of the government to see how various interventions play together towards attaining the SDGs. Many countries have mapped the SDGs against their national development strategies, and a significant number of them, especially developing countries, have explicitly aligned their development strategies with the SDGs. Sierra Leone's integrated strategy within the framework of the Agenda for Prosperity (A4P) 2013-2018 illustrates this approach. Such exercises need to consider the ambition and integrated nature of the SDGs.

The budget process can help implement national strategies at the level of programs and activities, and budget allocations for cross-sectoral priorities can encourage programs to align with the SDGs. Budgets can be used to track support to specific targets, identify opportunities for adjustment and constitute an incentive for alignment and integration of programs with the SDGs. The cases of Mexico and Norway show how the budgetary process can be utilized to advance cross-sectoral integration and the 2030 Agenda.

It is the public service that implements the national strategies and plans and plays an important role in the practical, day-to-day implementation. Hence, public servants need to have the understanding, incentives and mandates to work towards the realization of the SDGs. Based on the research undertaken for the report, few countries seem to be systematically mobilizing public servants around the SDGs, although public administration ministries are sometimes part of inter-ministerial committees. That said, there exist practices that aim to provide incentives for better integration, such as performance pay based on horizontal initiatives, or systems that make public servants move across departments for a limited period.

Periodic monitoring and evaluation and review of progress towards the SDGs will help make early adjustments and prevent veering off course. They are critical for integration and need to be an integral part of SDG implementation strategies. Monitoring and evaluation should be seen not as an exercise in reporting, but as an active management tool that helps adjust the strategy along the way. A challenge is that monitoring and evaluation frameworks tend to target specific policy interventions (e.g., a single policy or the program in a particular sector), whereas it is important to assess overall progress towards interrelated goals and targets.

Parliaments and Supreme Audit Institutions have an important role to play in facilitating integration. Parliaments, through their oversight and budgetary functions, can help ensure that policies are supportive of the SDGs and integrated. Supreme Audit Institutions can play a key role in examining the overall, cross-sectoral effects of policies and providing oversight on governments' efforts to deliver on the SDGs, including success in terms of integration.

While this chapter focused on opportunities for horizontal integration within national government processes and structures, the actions of development partners, both bilateral and multilateral, can support or hinder governments' efforts in relation to the adoption of integrated approaches. Differing agendas, lack of coordination and integrated policy approaches among the partners themselves, including lack of information exchange among the partners and with countries, may seriously hinder or even counteract countries' effective horizontal integration. As underlined in chapter 7, this problem tends to be especially acute in post-conflict situations, where external partners often provide a major portion of governments' budgets and can exert a strong influence on policy choices. As illustrated in the report, countries in different contexts have strived to address this issue. Hence, development partnerships may need to be reviewed in light of their impacts on horizontal integration.

Going forward, countries may be able to enhance horizontal integration by actively leveraging various means and instruments. For example, combining revised, integrated budget processes, incentives for integrated work in the public service and strengthening of the capacity of public institutions to track and monitor progress on the SDGs may reduce the likelihood of efforts from individual institutions being "stranded" in the face of challenges in other parts of government.

Progressing towards horizontal integration will require strong leadership, appropriate strategies, institutional arrangements, processes and enabling cultures, but also understanding and collective commitment. It should be clear across the government that ministries, offices and individuals depend on each other to meet specific targets and the SDGs as a whole. In a sense, achieving the SDGs is not an exercise in achieving a collection of individual targets, but rather an exercise in collaboration and joint efforts within government, to a level that has not been seen before.

Vertical integration for the implementation of the SDGs

The realization of the SDGs requires the coordination of actions of different levels of government. Action at the local level is critical to realise most of the targets. Vertical integration efforts aim to create synergies and enhanced consistency across levels of government through mutually reinforcing and supportive actions. Chapter 3 analyses existing efforts to ensure effective vertical policy integration in the planning, implementation and follow-up and review of the SDGs. It examines approaches and tools that countries are adopting to advance vertical integration at different stages of the policy cycle, highlighting some of the innovative solutions and practices emerging from countries' efforts to implement the 2030 agenda.

Vertical integration has many potential benefits, but also entails costs and presents multiple challenges. Whether benefits outweigh costs will depend on context. In practice, how far vertical integration should be pursued is going to depend on a country's specific context and circumstances, as well as on the policy area

in which integration takes place. The potential costs (financial, economic and fiscal) as well as the goal to be pursued through vertical integration should be considered before adopting vertical integration tools and approaches. Systematic evaluations and assessments as well as external audits (for example, conducted by Supreme Audit Institutions) could provide relevant information on costs involved in vertical integration efforts.

Collaboration between government levels is affected by the structure of the State (federal or unitary), by the actual functioning of intergovernmental and multi-level governance systems and by the capacities of different levels of government. Decentralization reforms, political economy considerations and organizational factors, which are related to the country context, may create specific opportunities for and barriers to vertical integration.

An increasing number of initiatives are being promoted by national and subnational governments to foster vertical integration across levels of government to implement the SDGs. However, there are still few examples of full and effective vertical integration across national, subnational and local levels for SDG implementation. The report shows that while national governments are recognizing the role of local governments, this does not necessarily lead to the creation of multi-level spaces for dialogue and joint action.

At the initial stage of the policy cycle, leadership for vertical integration has taken many forms, from recognition by the national government of the importance of local governments for SDG implementation and outreach campaigns intended for local governments, to actions by local governments to signal their commitment to the SDGs, to joint events and adoption of agreements across levels of governments for SDG implementation, as observed in Argentina. In some cases, national coordination mechanisms for SDGs have engaged local governments, but no general pattern has yet emerged regarding the nature of this engagement and its impact on SDG implementation.

Some countries have used legal and regulatory instruments to enshrine the SDGs in the environment of sub-national governments. In Indonesia, a Presidential regulation has been drafted, which ensures the role of provincial governments in leading the implementation of the SDGs at their level and in the districts under their supervision. In the United Kingdom, Wales has enacted an explicit legal link to the SDGs through its Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Vertical integration at the planning stage is also widespread. In many countries, sub-national governments have been aligning their strategies and plans to the SDGs, sometimes under a legal mandate. Some national governments have issued guidelines or templates to facilitate these efforts. In some countries, genuine multi-level structures or mechanisms for planning have been put in place, where local and national governments can collaborate. The so-called “SDG localization” effort has been wide-ranging and is supported by international organizations, including UN-Habitat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The Global Task Force of local and regional governments, and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

Vertical integration at the SDG implementation stage seems less frequent. However, some countries have made efforts to align national and local budgets for SDG implementation. The drive for alignment sometimes comes from the national level, sometimes from the sub-national level. Colombia is an extreme case of alignment, where multi-level processes enable allocation of budget resources across territories and establish common reporting formats.

Vertical integration at the level of monitoring, evaluation, follow-up and review is not common, but there are innovative examples from different regions. In some countries, the national level recognizes sub-national and local SDG indicators, or supports their development. Some countries also ensure that SDG implementation is monitored at the sub-national level, either through central government efforts, through the establishment of sub-national monitoring structures, or through joint, multi-level structures and mechanisms. Such joint mechanisms are observed in several European and Latin American countries, among others.

Government oversight and accountability mechanisms can also play a role in monitoring and evaluation of SDG implementation. In many countries, supreme audit institutions (SAIs) have undertaken to audit the readiness of governments to implement the SDGs. These efforts often try to assess whether mechanisms are in place to foster vertical integration, for example for sharing information across levels of governments. Pioneering work has been done by SAIs in Latin America to conduct coordinated audits across levels of governments as well as share and coordinate audit methodologies and tools.

Local governments are leading SDG innovation in many countries. Networks and associations of local governments are playing an important role in driving these efforts. However, these initiatives face the challenge of going beyond the local level and effectively connecting SDG action across levels of government. Enhanced collaboration with other stakeholders could help establish and sustain these linkages.

Innovative examples include those that rely on legal and regulatory instruments, those that establish structures for multi-level coordination and collaboration across levels of government, and those in which authorities at different levels of government work together to address commonly identified SDG implementation challenges. It remains to be seen, however, how these structures work and whether they are sustained in practice with appropriate resources, capacities and mandates. Further research is needed on the effectiveness of the different mechanisms to promote vertical integration and their impact on the achievement of the SDGs.

In many places, further collaboration between authorities at different levels and in specific sectors will be required, including the participation of multiple stakeholders, to create awareness, address barriers, strengthen institutional coordination mechanisms, and create capacity for strengthening integration. The active participation of other key stakeholders, such as Parliaments and Supreme Audit Institutions, can also contribute to fostering integration.

Engaging stakeholders for integrated implementation of the SDGs

The 2030 Agenda clearly recognizes that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires active action and involvement of all stakeholders. At the broadest level, “People” and “Partnership” are two of the “5 Ps” that introduce the Agenda and emphasize the dimensions of engagement and participation. These concepts are further fleshed out in the agenda itself as well as in the SDGs. Chapter 4 explores how the adoption of mechanisms for engagement of various actors, both at the systemic and at the sector level, can affect outcomes in terms of integration.

At the most basic level, awareness needs to be raised and ownership of the SDGs needs to be increased in the whole population if the Agenda is to succeed. Engagement is also key to building integrated visions and strategies for the future as a support to long-term transformation, and to achieving a shared understanding of complex problems and devising integrated solutions that benefit from broad societal consensus. Doing so requires the balancing of perspectives from different actors operating in different sectors, and this can only be done through engagement. Engagement is also a key tool and mechanism to encourage different stakeholders to act on common objectives along with governments. Also, adhering to the principle of “leaving no one behind” enshrined in the 2030 Agenda requires engagement with the full diversity of stakeholders, with focus on marginalized groups and individuals.

A wealth of experience has been accumulated regarding processes and mechanisms for engagement in different sectors, at different levels of decision-making, and with different constituencies involved. The chapter reviews some of these experiences.

Advancing policy integration requires changed procedures for increased interaction with non-state actors - either through formal mechanisms or informal contacts and relations. Mechanisms that allow participatory, multi-sectoral and multi-level problem solving are needed, which need to involve a wide range of stakeholders. Non-governmental actors are themselves key drivers of change. Civil society and non-governmental organizations are often at the forefront of initiatives to effect change and promote sustainable development, keeping the pressure on governments to act on the SDGs. They can contribute direct knowledge of how services and programs work for them in practice, and help governments identify policy solutions that are better tailored to particular contexts.

Different actors bring distinctive benefits and value in their interactions with governments in the process of implementing the SDGs. The report shows that the identification of interdependences among sustainable development goals and targets can be a first step in identifying the set of stakeholders that can support integrated policies in relation to specific issues. It also provides examples of guidelines for stakeholder selection in relation to various issue areas that address the dimension of integration.

At the systemic, whole-of-Agenda level, there is great institutional variation in terms of the engagement mechanisms being used. Institutional structures for engagement involve several types of stakeholders and

operate at various levels of government. While some of these structures are led by governments, others are led by non-state actors. Some institutions have decision-making powers while others are advisory bodies. Approaches build on the lessons learned during past decades, for example, from National Councils of Sustainable Development (NCSDs). In the SDG context, stakeholder engagement has taken place at different stages of policy-making, including: awareness raising on the 2030 Agenda; adaptation and prioritization of Goals to the national context; the development of national SDG implementation plans; SDG implementation; and monitoring and review.

Efforts to engage stakeholders in monitoring, review and reporting are limited but gaining increasing attention. Many Member States recognize the importance of engaging stakeholders in the process of preparation of voluntary national reviews (VNRs) at the UN high-level political forum on sustainable development. The extent of engagement and the methodology varies from country to country.

Institutional attempts at integration at the level of specific sectors or issues have been widespread. The level of stakeholder engagement as well as the structures and approaches to foster stakeholder engagement seem to vary across sectors and within the same sector from country to country. The types of stakeholders engaged also vary within and between sectors. Participatory approaches that foster a high level of stakeholder engagement in planning and decision-making processes have been highlighted for example in ocean and forest management.

UN Member States have placed high hopes on multi stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) for the realization of the 2030 Agenda. Several countries have put forward multi-stakeholder partnerships or created frameworks for those in relation with the SDGs. For example, the Netherlands has a broad coalition of over 75 different stakeholders referred to as the “Global Goals Charter NL”. Participants ranging from companies, to banks, to civil society organizations, have signed the charter and are contributing to the implementation of the SDGs. Finland’s whole-of-society approach to the achievement of the goals encourages stakeholders from all parts of society to make public commitments that contribute to the goals. At the sectoral level, MSPs have been increasingly prominent over past decades. Evidence in terms of how MSPs can contribute to policy integration is scarce, and the topic does not seem to have been systematically studied. Specific examples suggest that MSPs can be at odds with integration and coherence at the national level.

There is not yet much systematic evidence on the performance and effectiveness of engagement mechanisms - both informal and institutionalized - and how they may contribute to a more integrated implementation of the SDGs. Yet, typical challenges facing engagement and participation highlighted in the literature may also affect the impact of engagement mechanisms on integration. For example, differences in power, capacity and resources between the public, civil society, government institutions and the private sector can result in outcomes that heavily favor some stakeholders. Political factors play a key role in determining the way engagement mechanisms are designed and allowed to function, and their ultimate impacts on policy. Indeed, engagement is a strategic policy tool that governments may use to manipulate the outcomes of political processes. Regarding the SDGs, it will be important to ensure that engagement mechanisms are sustained over time and go beyond one-time, ad hoc consultation meetings as have been organized in countries since 2015. Established institutions such as parliaments, economic and social councils and national sustainable development councils provide spaces for engagement that can be used for the SDGs, according to each country’s context.

In spite of this scarcity of information, it seems clear that “more engagement” does not automatically result in more integration; for example, strengthened engagement in sectoral mechanisms can reinforce existing silos and entrench fragmentation. By the same token, to the extent that successful integration relies on balanced consideration of perspectives of multiple actors, engagement processes that fail to address power and resource imbalances among participants may actually lead to policies that give privilege to narrow interests, with negative impacts on politically weaker stakeholders or sectors, the precise outcome that integration efforts seek to avoid.

Some examples of stakeholder engagement show the potential of bottom-up participatory approaches that work across levels of decision making, involving soft forms of coordinated action to address specific development problems or seeking broad policy change. These exemplify the potential for engagement, horizontal integration and vertical integration to be mutually reinforcing.

Addressing the needs of international migrants and refugees: policy and institutional perspectives

Chapter 5 focuses on how national public institutions and administration have used integrated approaches to policy-making and public service delivery to respond to the needs of migrants and refugees. This topic has recently gained importance in international discussions, as witnessed by the ongoing discussions at the United Nations to elaborate a Global Compact on Migration.

Migration can be seen from a multiplicity of perspectives. The linkages between migration and sustainable development can be classified into six broad categories: security, human rights, sectoral and economic perspectives including employment, and environmental perspectives. Politics play an important role in the way competing claims and interests are adjudicated, and hence on what types of policies are developed to meet the needs of migrants.

Integration across sectors and across levels of governments is especially relevant to migration, given the fact that migration policies are formulated at the national level, whereas delivery of services to migrants happens for a large part at the local level. The fact that the legal status of migrants has a critical impact on their ability to generate livelihoods and access various services also warrants integrated approaches, including between policies in relation to entry of migrants, border control and other sectoral policies (e.g. in relation to employment).

For public institutions and public administration to adequately address these linkages, multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional approaches are required. Policy-makers and policy communities across the world are interested in learning about different options of institutional and public management modalities, legal policy frameworks and administrative measures to better link international migration with policies and services for sustainable development.

The report examines national institutions and policies on migration in a sample of 29 countries representing different regional, economic, social and political backgrounds, with emphasis on labour, education and health policies as they apply to migrants. Many countries include migration or asylum in their constitutions. A majority of the 29 countries mention migration or refugees in their national development plans or their sustainable development plans and strategies. Fourteen of the 17 countries of the sample which presented voluntary national reviews of progress on the SDGs at the UN high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2016 or 2017 made references to migration or refugees in their statements. These findings indicate the ubiquitous and increasing importance of migration and refugees in national policy agendas.

Analysis of national institutions dealing with migration issues shows a broad variety of institutional settings. A multi-agency approach was apparent in Brazil and the Philippines, and to a lesser extent in Italy and Mexico, with individual institutions in charge of migration accompanied by inter-ministerial advisory commissions. Australia, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Greece, Morocco and the United Kingdom have stand-alone ministries on migration. Other countries have separate units in charge of migration and refugees within the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Home or Civil Affairs, the Ministry of Public Security or the Ministry of Justice. Still in other countries, it was more difficult to identify leading institutions on migration and refugees. The involvement of Ministries or Departments of security and border management in migration policy-making was found to be important across the board.

Data is a key cross-cutting enabler of policy integration. Digitalization and processes for exchanging information among administrations is an area where potential for enhanced efficiency exists. However, a balance needs to be struck between enhanced administrative efficiency and safeguarding the rights of migrants. In this regard, the creation of appropriate “firewalls” between various parts of the administrative system and in terms of data exchanges is regarded as an important policy option by experts in the field.

Migrants’ and refugees’ access to employment is often precarious. The array of labour rights accorded by States to regular and irregular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers varies widely across countries. Many countries grant access to employment to refugees but not to asylum-seekers. In addition, the existence of a legal basis for providing access to employment is no guarantee for its actual implementation.

Migrants’ and refugees’ access to education is often limited. Out of the 29 countries examined in the report, only a handful provide education in local languages upon entry into the country. The dominant trend is one

where refugees have legal access to public education whereas asylum-seekers do not. Migrants in an irregular situation are often excluded from education unless they are minor.

In many countries, migrants' and refugees' access to healthcare is also limited. The main trend is to give access to emergency care for adults and children, while in certain countries children may also benefit from primary care. Thailand is an exception, as it provides comprehensive healthcare policies to all migrants, including those in an irregular situation, as well as refugees.

In many countries, the local level has been at the forefront of innovation in terms of addressing migrants' needs and creating an enabling environment that enhances the positive impacts of migration for both migrant and host communities. The report finds that local governments, particularly cities, have played an increasing role in linking migration issues, public services and sustainable development. At the same time, there is great variation in terms of how local governments within any given country are addressing migration. By fostering local innovation in terms of services provided to migrants, decentralization can potentially be an important enabling factor for bottom-up integration of migration and development.

In many countries, civil society plays an active role in national migration governance, albeit in diverse ways and capacities. Non-governmental actors are active in many areas relevant to migration and development, although their role could often benefit from further integration at the local level. At first glance, engagement of non-governmental actors seems to be stronger in open and transparent governance systems, particularly when coupled with effective decentralization and inclusive local governance. Local level engagement also tends to climb when national migration policies and institutions are either absent or inadequate. There seems to be a need for more systematic studies of lessons learned, challenges and triggers for success in terms of engagement modalities.

Migration and refugee issues are likely to remain high on policy-makers' agenda. Effective horizontal and vertical policy integration and engagement with non-governmental actors are all relevant to the efforts of public institutions and public administration to address them. In the end, countries' own circumstances and aspirations will determine how migration will be integrated with sustainable development.

Integrated approaches to health and well-being

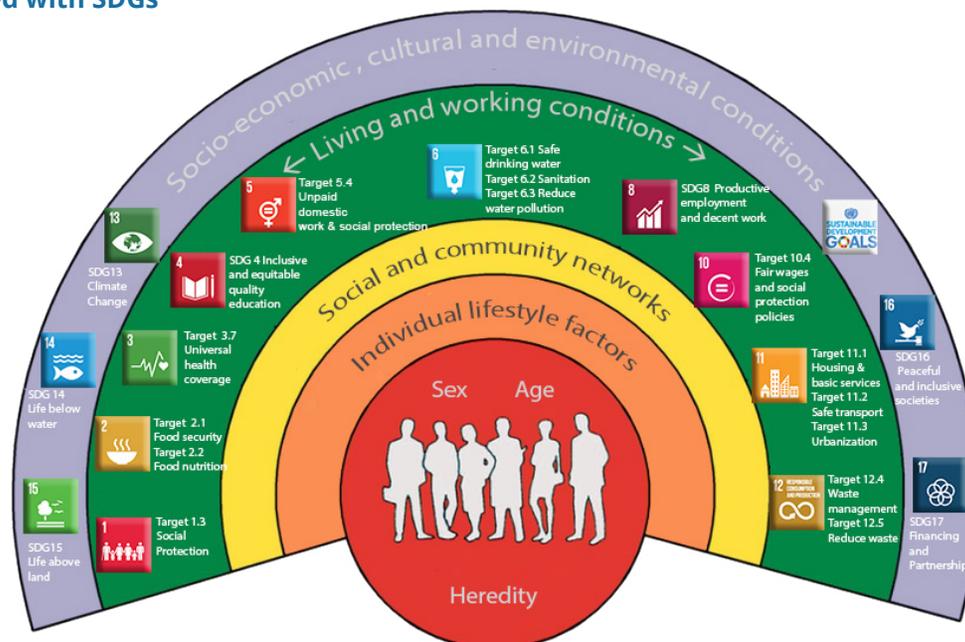
Chapter 6 examines integrated approaches to health through the SDG lens. It explores how strong linkages between health and other policy areas translate into integrated actions for improving health outcomes and achieving the SDGs. Not only is health itself a dedicated goal of the 2030 Agenda, it is also widely recognised as a prerequisite, contributor and indicator of progress for all other Goals. Conversely, health outcomes are influenced by a multitude of factors that correspond to policy areas outside the health sector. Although the SDGs adopt a broad notion of health and well-being and acknowledge today's burden of disease, the recognition of interlinkages and interdependence of health with other sectors and the call for integrated action are not new. Research reveals, however, that many attempts at policy integration in health have remained within the health care sector itself. Hence, the potential of integrated approaches to achieve synergies and minimize trade-offs may remain relatively untapped in many countries.

Health and health-related development outcomes are affected by a multiplicity of determinants. Evidence suggests that a large part of the gains achieved in health over the past two centuries owe more to changes in broad economic and social conditions than to medical advances. The social determinants of health illustrate how health conditions and diseases can be prevented, mitigated or precipitated by the conditions under which people are born, grow, learn, work, play, worship and age. Mapping the social determinants of health with the SDGs highlights how many different policy areas potentially impact health outcomes.

Health outcomes are also influenced by the strategies and approaches used by the private sector to promote products that influence public health outcomes - the so-called commercial determinants of health. This includes, for example, tobacco products and unhealthy commodities, but also industrial epidemics, profit-driven diseases, corporate practices harmful to health, and techniques to influence lifestyle choices such as marketing to children. A third dimension is the role of political economy and government policies in affecting health outcomes at both national and local levels.

Figure E.4.

Mapping of “Social determinants of health” as set out by Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991), superimposed with SDGs



Source: Author's adaptation from Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991.

The policy evidence base for the impact of multisectoral determinants of health has been strengthened considerably in past decades. Such determinants, separately or collectively, are increasingly seen as a rationale for integrated actions to achieve not just the health Goal but also other related SDG targets, for example, on education, employment, environment, security, transport, urban planning, youth and social protection policies.

Governments across the world have put in place institutional and administrative initiatives that address specific linkages between health and other SDGs. A snapshot of those is provided by initiatives submitted each year by Governments for the United Nations Public Service Awards. For the period 2003-2017, 57 of the winning cases were related to health. More than half (one-third) of the cases exhibited at least one linkage (two linkages) with other sectoral Goals. The initiatives featured frequent linkages with food and nutrition (SDG 2), inequality (SDG 10), education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5) and cities (SDG 11).

There exist many examples of practical approaches to policy integration for health. One of them is Health in All Policies, an approach adopted in both developed and developing countries, including Australia, Brazil, Cuba, Finland, Iran, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand and the United Kingdom. Such approaches systematically consider the health implications of policy decisions across sectors, seek synergies and aim to avoid harmful impacts in aiming to achieve common goals.

The implementation of integrated health policies needs to be supported by adequate institutional settings to establish rules of engagement and set the stage for ongoing interactions and strategy development across ministries and agencies. In practice, different forms of institutional arrangements are found to support intersectoral health approaches in public administration, ranging from informal to formal networks, from light-touch coordination mechanisms across sectors to collaborative problem-solving for deeply rooted social problems, and from high-level inter-ministerial bodies to parliamentary deliberation.

Because health service provision is inherently local, integration and coordination among actors operating at both national and local levels of governments is a critical element of successful integrated policies for health. Health inequalities in urban areas and slums are a continuing concern. The issue of inadequate health services for the urban poor is acute in many countries. The slum upgrading target under Goal 11 on sustainable human settlements (Target 11.1) will directly contribute to reducing health inequalities. More efforts are needed,

however, to integrate multi-sectoral determinants of health as criteria in the design and evaluation of slum upgrading projects.

Engaging people and communities in planning and implementing policies that are about their own health and well-being can lead to sustainable change and increased public trust. Local authorities and communities are known to have unique ground knowledge and opportunity to address the multi-sectoral determinants of health. Community participation in health will benefit if marginalised groups including women, youth and older people are included, as social exclusion is in itself a contributor to health inequalities. Genuine engagement is essential to ensure that policies are responsive to community needs, and can enhance public trust in government.

The chapter explores four enablers of integrated approaches to health: financing; capacity development; data, information systems and science-policy interface; and technology and innovation. Innovative financing initiatives such as establishing joint budgets from different public sources of financing and establishing joint accountability can facilitate effective implementation of health-related activities. Cross-sectoral financial allocation systems can help to promote the integration of policies, for example, in providing budget for research and policy activities, and in deploying public funds gained through taxes on alcohol and tobacco to promote universal health coverage programmes. Capacity building programmes are needed not just to develop skills in the health workforce, but also to foster a broader mind-set and enhanced knowledge of various SDG areas among health professionals, in order to support integrated, multi-sectoral approaches.

Effective multi-sectoral health information systems can support decision-making and monitoring, and collective actions by various stakeholders. They need to be supported by appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks. Various data and analytical tools can facilitate integration, such as health lens analysis, foresight mechanisms, health equity impact assessments, health technology assessments, health analytics and learning analytics, and health decision support systems.

Innovation and the use of information and communication technologies can help address challenges such as reconceptualising how universal health coverage can work in resource limited settings and exploring how to design cross-sectoral policies to tackle the causes of non-communicable diseases. One example is the “aging in place” initiative, which aims to move the point of care for older people from costly health facilities to the home and the community through digital health measures, integrating social and transport policies with the urban environment through sensors and technologies.

In comparison with other sectors, integrated approaches to health seem rather common and well developed. Lessons learned in terms of how various institutional and administrative approaches have worked could prove useful in other areas of the SDGs that also have strong connections with other SDGs. However, the path to integrated approaches to health, though compelling, is not easy. Adopting and implementing integrated approaches has proven difficult, partly because of the complexity and dynamics of the determinants of health and the involvement of multiple actors. Many questions remain regarding how best to kickstart integrated approaches, including: how to define priorities in specific national contexts in order to best address multisectoral issues; how to jar the inertia that surrounds health inequities; and how to sustainably promote whole-of-government efforts to tackle the root causes of ill health.

There is insufficient systematic evidence to reveal the most effective policy processes and institutional arrangements that allow for successful integrated approaches to SDG implementation, for example, in elaborating integrated policy for health and urbanization. Further work of combing the available evidence about policy experimentation and framing appropriate policy research is required. It will help to develop the necessary metrics and evidence base for integrated approaches to health problems.

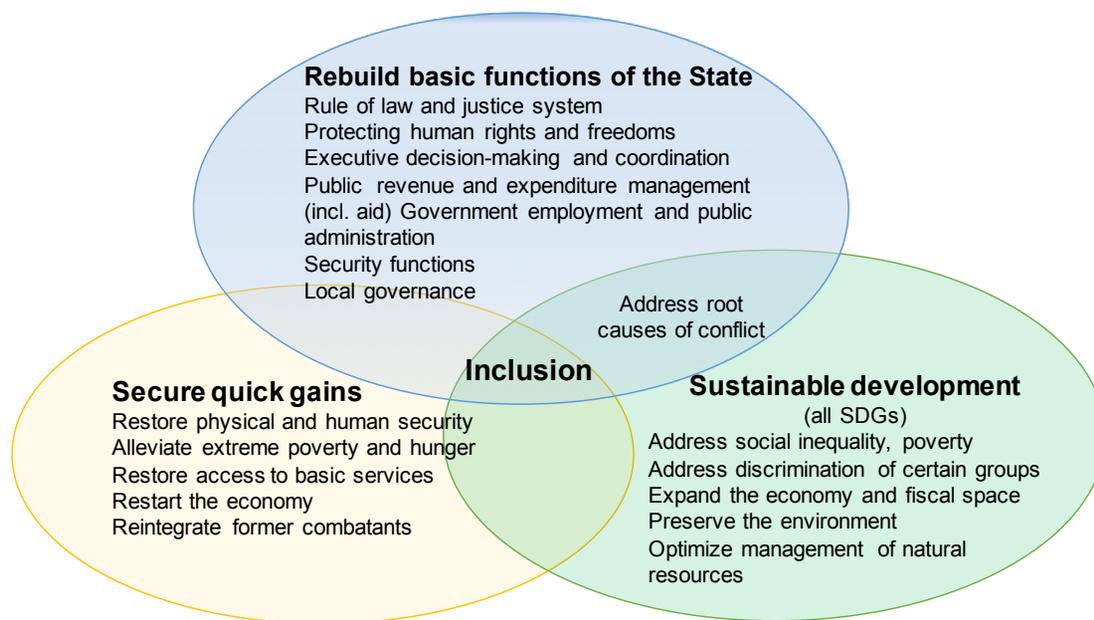
Realizing the SDGs in post-conflict situations: Challenges for the State

Chapter 7 explores the challenges to realizing the SDGs in post-conflict situations and their implications for integrated approaches that advance both sustainable development and peace.

Conflict and its aftermath make the realisation of all the SDGs more difficult than in countries not affected by conflict. In particular, each of the targets of SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies is made more difficult, because public institutions and public administration have usually suffered heavily from conflict.

Figure E.5.

Multiple governance challenges in post-conflict situations



Conflict can completely disintegrate institutions that are taken for granted in stable contexts (e.g. central bank, civil service, etc.). In some cases, the reach of the central government may not extend to the entire country. Even if institutions exist, their functioning is challenged by the destruction of human capacity and physical infrastructure. Importantly, the realisation of sectoral SDGs also needs to be approached differently in post-conflict countries. Sectors such as education, infrastructure, health, social protection, and basic services can be critical in contributing to addressing grievances from different groups and helping re-start economic and social development on a sustainable path.

In general, post-conflict countries have to deal simultaneously with three categories of issues: securing quick gains; restoring basic functions of the State; and progressing toward sustainable development. The three sets of priorities are interrelated, and have to be considered simultaneously. However, adopting integrated strategies and policies is more complicated than in other contexts. The task of prioritizing and allocating resources among SDG areas faces competition from the two other sets of priorities. This happens in contexts of low national budgets, linked with narrow fiscal space, lower fiscal base due to destroyed assets and low revenue mobilization capacity in public administration, often coupled with extensive debt, all of which limit the ability to address multiple priorities. Limited resources may be compounded by corruption and illicit financial and capital flows, which themselves may fuel further conflict.

Experts agreed that inclusion, in a political sense, is at the center of all efforts to build sustainable peace and development. If exclusion generated conflict in the first place, not addressing it is likely to lead to recurrence of conflict. Thus, inclusion stands out both as a goal and an outcome-driven “strategy” for achieving sustainable development and sustaining peace. National ownership of the post-conflict development path needs to be inclusive and involve a broad set of stakeholders to create a sense of belonging and inclusion, regardless of political differences. Moreover, promoting institutionalized capacities and collaboration to identify, and address grievance can help avoid relapse into conflict.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda may facilitate integrated approaches to post-conflict situations. This is because of the broad scope of the SDGs, which encompasses areas that are critical to all the components of post-conflict interventions, from humanitarian action to rebuilding of the basic capacity of the State to longer-term development. Yet, developing integrated policies that build on the synergies among the SDGs is daunting in post-conflict contexts. Several countries have used the SDGs as a framework to align their long-term development strategies and plans, as well as other instruments such as budget processes. Among

countries having suffered from conflict, Chad, Colombia, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands and Somalia have explicitly linked high-level objectives expressed in their national plans and strategies with the SDGs.

Capable, effective and inclusive institutions and public administration are instrumental to addressing both short-term and long-term development challenges. They help to shape an integrated national vision for sustainable development and peace, ensure responsive public service delivery and look beyond post-conflict peacebuilding. Building or reforming institutions can affect existing power structures, which makes it de facto a political process. Elites often have a vested interest in keeping economic and political power - this can be offset by building coalitions to get a critical mass of agents of change. Departing from past approaches that encouraged focusing efforts on institutional capacity before addressing other institutional challenges, countries in post-conflict settings have addressed effectiveness and accountability alongside other key recovery efforts, including anti-corruption efforts.

Even more than in countries not affected by conflict, public institutions and public administration in post-conflict countries must be committed to inclusion and to the imperative of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind. Public administration constitutes a key instrument and channel for inclusion. Public servants have to be open to the idea of working with civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders for public service delivery. They need to be aware of the challenges inherent to providing equal access to public services for the poor and most vulnerable and those facing discrimination.

Particularly in post conflict settings, effective management of the national budget is critical to ensure policy implementation, as well as for enhanced state legitimacy and accountability. External actors all have different agendas, which may not match the government's or other stakeholders' priorities. Because of their systemic importance in post-conflict settings, this often creates an additional challenge to integration. A coherent country vision, national sustainable development strategy and implementation plan can help align external intervention to country priorities.

Adopting horizontal integration strategies is critical in post-conflict contexts. Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Timor-Leste and Nepal, for example have promoted institutional coordination across sectors for implementing more integrated national sustainable development strategies. The Colombian Government has created a high-level inter-ministerial commission for developing the SDG implementation strategy and action plans at national and regional levels. In the Solomon Islands, the Ministry of National Unity Reconciliation and Peace was specifically created to emphasize the importance of peacebuilding for the country's social and economic development.

Overall, ensuring coherence and integration between national and sub-national levels of government is more challenging in post-conflict contexts, where local interests and powers may resist central authority. Building coalitions at the local level where the State works with community leaders may help prevent further violence. Devolving power to local governments - decentralization - is not always a solution to vertical integration, as supporting local governments at the expense of strengthening the central government may in the long run lead to negative outcomes. If decentralization is implemented, it should be well managed (impeding local elites capture among others) to support improved linkages between central and local authorities and cohesion. The integration of action at the national and sub-national levels may be enhanced through compacts or other accountability frameworks between the central government and local authorities.

Stakeholder engagement is a key factor in successful post-conflict governance. Engaging all social groups (including minority groups, women and youth) in this process allows shaping a common vision for a country's sustainable and peaceful development that reflects people aspirations and needs. Effective engagement strategies are important to ensure equality of rights and power relations and opportunities between men and women. Experience shows that in post conflict settings, youth can be engaged as champions for SDG implementation and as agents of change to proactively pursue sustainable peace. They also have a strong potential to build bridges between communities. Public administrations, at all levels, have a key role to play to establish institutional arrangements in this respect. The development of national SDG strategies and action plans provides an opportunity for engagement of non-State actors.