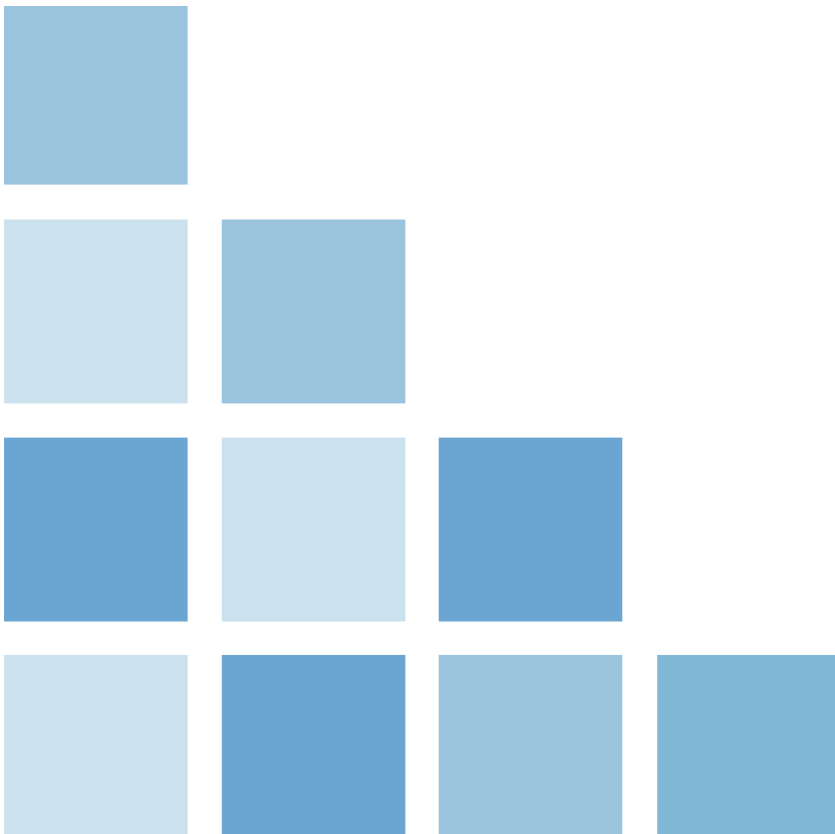


Realisation of the SDGs in Countries Affected by Conflict and Fragility: The Role of the New Deal

Conceptual Note



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Countries affected by conflict and fragility were among those left furthest behind by the Millennium Development Agenda. Through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world pledged to reach the furthest behind first. In April 2016, over forty countries and organisations signed the Stockholm Declaration on Addressing Fragility and Building Peace in a Changing World. By doing so, they recommitted to using principles of the New Deal to guide efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in countries affected by fragility and conflict. As the global community moves to implement the 2030 Agenda, the value of the New Deal as a key global framework for sustainable peace and development must be highlighted and brought to bear. The New Deal represents the efforts of some of those who are furthest behind to build a better future for themselves, with the support of the global community. At its core, the New Deal is a set of principles designed to tackle the root causes of conflict and fragility that undermine development. These principles, and their associated mechanisms, seek to forge trusted partnerships at national and global levels. They also seek collective commitment to key priorities that build resilience and promote inclusive development.

This note is intended for national actors and their international partners operating in countries affected by fragility and conflict. Its purpose is to support their efforts to realise the 2030 Agenda, including but not limited to SDG 16, using the principles of the New Deal. This can be achieved by: 1) Supporting country-owned transitions towards resilience through prioritisation and sequencing of the SDGs in ways that take account of conflict and fragility; 2) maximising the possibility for greater coherence and accountability between country-led planning, stakeholder consultation processes, and partner support; and 3) working to ensure results are sustainable.

1. The New Deal and the world's new development framework

On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda charts a course for eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development, while ensuring that no one is left behind by aiming to reach the furthest behind first.² It includes a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are universal in their application, and far broader in vision and intent than the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which preceded them. The 2030 Agenda recognises the indivisibility of peace and sustainable development by placing peace as one of five cross-cutting priorities. It also includes a dedicated goal (SDG16) focused on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and access to justice and accountable institutions. On 5 April 2016, over forty countries and organisations signed the Stockholm Declaration. Welcoming the 2030 Agenda and its focus on building sustainable peace, they affirmed the continued importance of the New Deal, and committed to using its principles to achieve the SDGs in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

¹ This draft note was prepared by the New Deal Ad hoc Working Group on Agenda 2030 and the New Deal.

² Agenda 2030 Declaration preamble, paragraph 4.

The New Deal and the specific challenges in countries affected by conflict and fragility

While the ambition set by the 2030 Agenda is to eradicate extreme poverty from the globe, empirical evidence suggests that, if current trends continue, extreme poverty will increasingly be concentrated in countries affected by fragility and conflict.³ These countries face context-specific challenges, including weak institutions and insufficient resources to tackle competing demands. The New Deal was crafted with these realities in mind, understanding the need for principle-driven partnership between states, their societies and international partners, working towards mutually agreed objectives.

The New Deal and a new mandate

The New Deal uses a set of basic principles to address the challenges posed by conflict and fragility. The first is an agreement to channel all efforts primarily towards Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs), whose content is defined by countries affected by fragility and conflict themselves to ensure their ownership and leadership. Through these goals and two additional sets of core principles – which can be summarised by the acronyms FOCUS and TRUST – the New Deal aims to foster inclusive political dialogue and build trust between all national and international actors operating in these settings, including the private sector and the humanitarian community.

The New Deal contains new norms, standards and practices designed to lead to greater collective ownership of development results. It can offer useful pathways towards the realisation of the SDGs in contexts affected by fragility and conflict. In doing so, it also supports the implementation of SDG 17, which focuses on global engagement and partnerships as a means of achieving the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda.

Meeting the SDGs in conflict-affected and fragile settings: The case of SDG 17

The 2030 Agenda highlights ‘partnerships’ as one of five cross-cutting priorities. It calls for “an intensive global engagement in support of the implementation of the Goals and targets, bringing together governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations System and other actors and mobilising all resources.” Specifically, Goal 17 has two targets which promote multi-stakeholder partnership to support the achievement of the SDGs: one on sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources; and a second on encouraging and promoting effective public-private and civil society partnerships, and resourcing these efforts.

The multi-stakeholder International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding represents exactly the kind of partnership envisioned in Goal 17. The International Dialogue advocates for the inclusive implementation of the New Deal principles, and support at global and country levels to implement the SDGs in countries affected by conflict and fragility. This partnership can be used and built upon to realise the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda.

2. Working towards the SDGs in countries affected by fragility and conflict

The 2030 Agenda does not prescribe how countries should work towards meeting the SDGs. Instead, it notes that work on implementing the SDGs must take into account different national realities, capacities, and levels of development, and that it must respect national policies and priorities. It also recognises that the goals and their targets are interlinked, and that they should not be tackled in silos. Every country will

³ OECD (2015) States of Fragility 2015: Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions Paris: OECD, p 9.

need to reflect on how to integrate the goals and targets into their national planning processes – a practice which has already begun.

Yet, countries affected by conflict and fragility often have the most limited capacities and resources, while facing the greatest political challenges. Processes that build upon existing awareness of context, build national ownership, foster transparency, secure support in the face of difficult choices and build consensus over trade-offs, are crucial. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges a central premise of the New Deal: the need to foster decision-making that not only addresses the technical, but also the political obstacles to development progress.

The PSGs and the FOCUS and TRUST principles lie at the heart of the New Deal and should guide work towards achieving the SDGs. These principles should not necessarily be viewed as a sequential list of steps that must be done, but rather as a set of interacting processes, instruments and commitments that can evolve and deepen over time. They are designed to overcome the specific challenges to development faced by countries affected by conflict and fragility. These principles are the product of negotiation and agreements between International Dialogue stakeholders and represent widely-recognised good development practice.

New Deal Principles

PSGs: The New Deal recognises five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals: Inclusive Politics; Security; Justice; Economic Foundations; and Revenues & Services. They are crucial for enabling progress towards any development framework – national and/or global – in fragile and conflict-affected situations.

FOCUS: These principles provide key instruments to facilitate inclusive, country-led and country-owned transitions out of fragility: Fragility Assessments; One vision – one plan; Compact; Use of the PSGs to frame monitoring; and Support for inclusive and participatory political dialogue and leadership.

TRUST: These five basic development-effectiveness principles aim to lead to the effective management of resources while building mutual trust and strong partnerships: Transparency; Risk sharing; Use and strengthen country systems; Strengthen capacities; and Timely and predictable aid.

The PSGs outline core issues to be addressed through the development strategies, policies, and practices of all stakeholders in countries affected by fragility and conflict. The g7+ countries have agreed that the New Deal's PSGs represent top development priorities which are the "necessary foundations for achieving development and resilience." The PSGs should also, therefore, be used to frame and facilitate the prioritisation of the SDGs and their targets, and their alignment with national planning processes.

How this is done will vary according to the particular needs and choices of a given country. Countries will differ in how they articulate priority goals and targets within their national development frameworks. The linkages between the SDGs may also differ. For example, in some countries problems related to climate change (SDG 13) may contribute to conflict (SDG 16), and will therefore be of more immediate concern. The bottom line, however, must be that the prioritisation of goals, targets, and indicators must be informed by New Deal principles and processes.

There is clear convergence between the PSGs and SDG 16, and the members of the International Dialogue, who support the New Deal, contributed to the development of SDG 16. The PSGs go beyond SDG 16, however, and they are also captured in a number of other Goals (as Annex B illustrates).

Meeting the SDGs in conflict-affected and fragile settings: The case of SDG 16

SDG 16 aims to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.” This is a vital goal in all settings – yet, working towards these universal ambitions will require taking different actions in different settings. In countries affected by fragility and conflict, pursuing the goal of creating more peaceful societies may mean ensuring that peace is sought through inclusive dialogue and reconciliation and/or disarmament initiatives. Providing access to justice, which is critical for maintaining peace, may require a focus on building formal justice systems, while also focusing on transitional and informal justice mechanisms. In addition, building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions is central to any statebuilding project whose goal is to anchor state legitimacy and build strong bridges between states and societies. In countries where it was piloted, New Deal processes fostered inclusive processes for bringing together governments, civil society, and development partners around shared plans to address these issues in context-relevant ways. These inclusive approaches can support the realisation of SDG 16 and other priority goals.

The FOCUS principles are powerful New Deal implementation instruments for fostering inclusive political and strategic decision-making around the selection and sequencing of context-relevant priorities. As such, they should be used to facilitate the effective realisation of the SDGs.

Fragility Assessments are unique when they are country-driven, developed, and owned, with strong societal participation and support by international partners. Such Fragility Assessments are a tool that can empower national stakeholders by: 1) enabling them to identify and diagnose the root causes and drivers of conflict and fragility; and 2) once identified, encouraging stakeholders to uphold their commitments to ensuring that development processes effectively address them.

The Compacts and the national development plans (One vision – one plan) should be interlinked and underpinned by Fragility Assessments. Country leadership, with inclusive engagement of civil society – including organised women and youth groups, the private sector, and individuals – should continue to shape the prioritisation, ownership and implementation of country priorities. All international actors should work with these priorities in order to support the country’s development. International Dialogue members and New Deal advocates have recently renewed their commitment to supporting these processes at different levels.

The TRUST principles are the foundations for effective development interventions and for long-term stability. They must be used to drive progress towards the SDGs and to cement the partnerships needed for this purpose. The lack of financial resources in countries affected by fragility and conflict is a fundamental challenge to the realisation of the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. Thus, it is equally important that resources are used effectively. The TRUST principles are designed to ensure that basic development effectiveness principles guide support and partnerships for SDG realisation in these contexts.

The need for transparent, timely, and predictable aid is at the heart of the TRUST principles. They also stress the need for development partners to be willing to share risk – especially by channelling and creating the conditions for delivering development assistance through national systems. The New Deal, as a whole, was recognised as a relevant means of implementing the SDG agenda in fragile and conflict-affected situations in the Addis Ababa Agenda for Action (AAAA). The TRUST principles should, therefore, continue to be used and strengthened by governments and their development partners to guide peacebuilding and development support in these countries.

3. Monitoring SDG progress

The monitoring requirements of the SDGs place a particular burden on countries affected by conflict and fragility, which have less capacity to monitor and report. Over the last five years, members of the International Dialogue have acquired substantial learning on the challenges and opportunities produced by using robust monitoring tools. Given the significant capacity challenges faced by most g7+ countries in institutionalising data collection, indicators have not been used consistently to track progress on New Deal implementation. This has limited its impact in improving the policies and practices of relevant stakeholders. The advent of the SDGs offers an opportunity to address these shortcomings. As noted in the Stockholm Declaration, building statistical capacity is an important area for action.

During the pilot phase of the New Deal (2011-2015), the g7+ developed a Menu of Indicators to measure progress against the PSGs.⁴ This was developed out of a rich, country-driven investigation that fed into an effort to develop *common* PSG indicators. These indicators, in turn, greatly informed the development of SDG targets and indicators.⁵

The process of selecting indicators to track SDG progress in countries affected by fragility and conflict brought the g7+ into global discussions on indicator priorities and on the institutional capacities required to monitor them. The g7+ countries have now agreed to mutually monitor and report progress on priority indicators across the SDGs.⁶ Progress on these indicators will be jointly reported through an online portal that will be hosted by the g7+ Secretariat. The guiding criteria for selection was broadly based on the New Deal and the set of indicators identified during Fragility Assessments conducted in g7+ countries. A periodic report will be produced, documenting trends across g7+ countries in terms of progress against the SDGs. The report will help the g7+ to advocate for support to address the common challenges faced by countries affected by fragility and conflict.

These priority indicators will complement wider processes of national monitoring which each g7+ country will need to undertake based on their selection of country-specific indicators. The Fragility Assessment exercises – which are part of the New Deal’s FOCUS instruments – generate indicators relating to the drivers of conflict and fragility. By guiding a country’s prioritisation of goals and targets, Fragility Assessments ensure that the implementation of the SDGs takes full account of country contexts and their potential drivers of conflict and fragility. The g7+ Menu of Indicators can equally support this process, providing a useful reference and resource for countries as they develop their country-specific set of indicators.

The current New Deal monitoring framework of the International Dialogue will also be redesigned to incorporate learning from past processes and experiences, and to reflect the new priorities outlined in the Stockholm Declaration. New Deal monitoring processes will be increasingly oriented towards integrating SDG considerations and building an evidence-base to mobilise further support for implementing the New Deal principles as a means of realising the SDGs.

4. Follow-up and review of SDG progress

The 2030 Agenda calls for national and global follow-up and review processes to “promote accountability to our citizens, support effective international co-operation in achieving this Agenda, and foster exchanges of best practices and mutual learning.” At national level, it calls for regular and inclusive reviews of

⁴ <http://www.g7plus.org/en/resources/fragility-spectrum-note>

⁵ Of the 34 PSG common indicators, 21 are already included in the global SDG indicator set.

⁶ The agreement, which currently exists at a technical level, is to mutually monitor and report progress on 19 indicators.

progress. Through the New Deal country teams or the PSG Working Groups, the New Deal has already created multi-stakeholder mechanisms that can be used for this purpose at a global and, in some countries, national level. Many of these mechanisms meet the criteria for inclusivity, giving civil society a seat at the table. They can be used, therefore, to support national SDG follow-up and review processes.

At the global level, the 2030 Agenda will include an annual follow-up and review process through the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), held by heads of state every four years. This offers an opportunity to showcase progress towards achieving the SDGs with the support of the New Deal. In July 2016, two g7+ countries (Sierra Leone and Togo) took part in the first HLPF follow-up and review process. Other g7+ countries will be able to take part in similar processes in the future. It has also been proposed that specific follow-up and review fora be set up for countries in special situations, which could include a forum for countries affected by fragility and conflict.

In the coming years, some g7+ members will undoubtedly make great progress towards achieving the SDGs. Key principles driving follow-up and review should include: 1) an appropriate level of effort on monitoring, given the efforts invested in implementation; 2) emphasis on context-appropriate indicators measured in-country and with local validation; and 3) a conflict-sensitive definition and measurement of indicators.

Through the 2030 Agenda, the world pledged to reach the furthest behind first. The New Deal represents the efforts of those who are furthest behind to build a better future for themselves, with the support of the global community. This crucial work should continue to drive the action of the global community, with greater awareness of the special situations and requirements of countries affected by fragility and conflict.

Annex A: UNDP SDG-Ready Project

The SDG-Ready project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is an attempt to put the New Deal into practice to support countries' own efforts to realise the SDGs. Its purpose is to provide resources for actions to support g7+ countries in realising SDGs, through the application of the New Deal principles. It also shows the desire of the International Dialogue, in line with SDG 17, to engage its constituencies to expand the partnership to support countries affected by fragility and conflict.

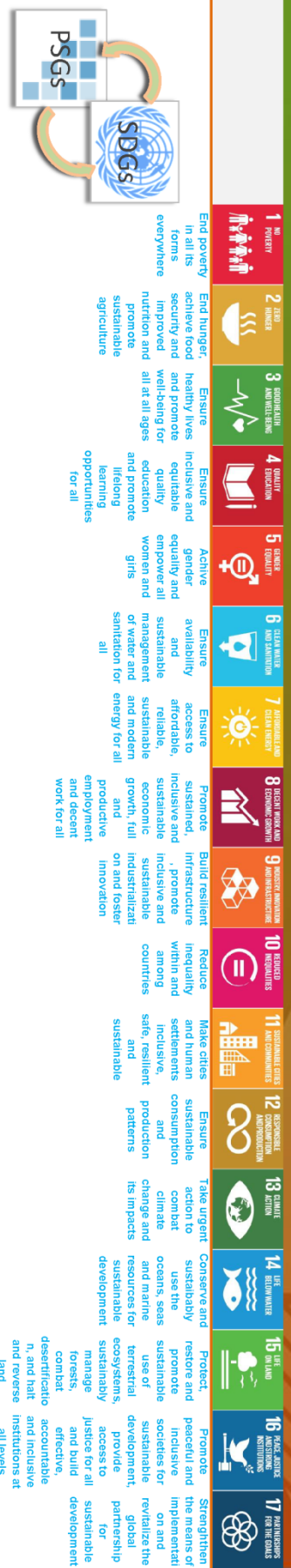
UNDP SDG – Ready Project

Tailoring support to SDG implementation in countries affected by conflict and fragility is critical. UNDP will support countries faced with fragile situations in their plans to implement and achieve sustainable outcomes under the 2030 Agenda by supporting the mainstreaming of the SDGs in development plans. This process will be informed by comprehensive assessments of the root causes of fragility and by the New Deal principles. This will also be done through UNDP investment in planning, aid coordination, and data management capacities. UNDP has developed a common approach across its cluster and practice areas, called SDG Ready. Its purpose is to tackle fragility and risk in programming around the 2030 Agenda. This customisable support will focus on systems development, institutional strengthening, and mainstreaming the SDGs within national development strategies and processes in line with New Deal principles. The programme seeks to identify the drivers and the root causes of fragility, and to develop strategic and sequenced approaches to overcoming bottlenecks and accelerating SDG implementation, while taking into account local dynamics and context, and fostering national ownership and capacity.

Annex B: Mapping of the PSGs and SDGs

PSG/SDG map:

The PSGs can be a useful lens for applying the SDGs to fragile contexts



PSG 1 Legitimate Politics	PSG 2 Security	PSG 3 Justice	PSG 4 Economic Foundations	PSG 5 Revenues & Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political settlement Political processes and institutions Societal relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security conditions Perception of security Capacity and accountability of the police and authorities Population's confidence in police and security forces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice conditions Capacity and accountability of justice institutions Performance and responsiveness of justice institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productive resources and prospects for growth Jobs, livelihoods and private sector development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenues Public administration Service delivery
5.5	5.2		1.4, 1.5, 1a 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2a, 2c 4.4 5.4, 5a 6.6 7.1, 7b 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8b 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, 10.6 11.1, 11.2, 11.6, 11.7 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12a, 12b 13b 14.1, 14.4, 14.5, 14.7, 14b 15c 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.10 16.6, 16.7, 16.8, 16.10, 16b 16a	3.7, 3.8, 3c, 3d 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4a 5.6 6.2, 6.3, 6b 12.7 15.7 16.4, 16.5, 16.6 17.1