



CLASSIFYING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) TARGETS & INDICATORS

Mohsina Atiq

FEDERAL SDG SUPPORT UNIT (INHOUSE)



Classifying Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Targets and Indicators

The ambitious 2030 Agenda entails comprehensive and wide-ranging development cooperation across the public, private, and civil society sector. It is important to streamline the process of understanding the 17 Goals, 169 targets, and 244 indicators, which will in turn, assist in assigning responsibilities to relevant federal and provincial ministries and departments. This process of understanding the linkages among different SDG targets can also benefit private entities, think-tanks and other nonprofits that may be interested in working on one or more Goals. It is important for various reasons including: identifying common priorities and targets useful for joint results monitoring, pinpointing gaps in development efforts, and most importantly, designing national and sub-national results frameworks focusing on prioritized SDG targets and indicators.

The SDGs represent development results, but owing to their broad scope, their achievement must necessarily be measured by their targets. One of the objectives of this exercise to link the outcomes with MOIs and P&Is from financial allocations viewpoint. Hence, this activity aims to classify the targets and indicators to make it easier to design a results-based framework that supports by a reporting mechanism and prioritizing Goals and their respective targets. Particularly, this task seeks to classify targets into outcome, means of implementation, and process and institutions (Box-1) based on the 2017 OECD methodology¹.

Box-1

1. Outcome: Targets oriented to outcomes are useful for the portions of results frameworks that pertain to development results and development cooperation results
 2. Means of implementation (MOI): Targets that deal with portions of results frameworks that relate to the performance of development providers and their inputs.
 3. Processes and institutions (P&I): Targets that specify arrangements, legal frameworks and institutional change
-

This classification exercise has further expanded by using OECD definitions to classify the 244 indicators to support the targets. This can help in prioritizing the SDGs and gaining momentum on their progress in several ways:

1. Currently, an online portal or dashboard for SDGs for Pakistan is being designed. This portal would be publicly available and would provide a quantitative and visual representation of all the indicator level data available to help measure progress on the targets. It would also assist in monitoring and reporting, assessing interlinkages between targets and Goals. It may include an analysis module with simulation modelling. Classifying targets and indicators into outcomes, MOI, and processes and institutions

¹ Strengthening providers' results frameworks through targets & indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – The Development Assistance Committee September 2017

(P&I) would aid in designing this portal and presenting results to various stakeholders. Progress on achieving the outcomes can be expedited with this classification and focusing on the MOI and P&I indicators which will help achieve the outcome ones.

2. The classification would also help in completing the baseline exercise that involves setting national and sub-national baseline data for all indicators. Since Outcome indicators are impacted by MOIs and P&Is (input indicators), they can be clustered together to streamline this process. Data on input indicators can help guide setting baselines for the Outcome indicators and vice versa.
3. Another benefit of this exercise would be to the provinces who are in process of prioritizing the SDGs for their Provincial development plan. The results of this exercise will be useful for provinces for prioritizing targets and designing implementation plans for achieving these targets by stressing on the corresponding MOI and Processes and Institutions (P&I) indicators.
4. Overall, such classification allows development cooperation working across the country to strengthen their result framework and identify gaps in development efforts. In addition, this exercise enables them to focus on real change and impact, common Goals and targets between providers and partners, strengthening results-based management, and raising cost-effectiveness while collecting information (OECD, 2017). On a national level, country level a result framework can be established around the selected prioritized Goals and targets.

Key findings of the classification exercise

Classification of Targets

This classification entirely followed the methodology adopted by the Results Team of the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate, to strengthen results-based framework through incorporation of the SDG targets and indicators. The classification in this study separates SDG targets into Outcomes, Means of Implementation (MOIs), and Processes and Institutions (P&I), as defined in Box 1. The Table 1 below shows the key findings of this exercise on target level. Out of 169 targets, there are 88 outcomes, 62 Means of Implementation (MOIs), and 19 Processes and Institutions (P&I) targets.

The outcome targets mostly related to real development change for instance, target 1.1 which talks about eradicating poverty or target 10.3 which ensures equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome. This differs from MOI targets which relate to resource mobilization, implementation, development support and cooperation, and raising capacities. For example, target 2.a, which states increases investment in agriculture or target 7.a, which enhances cooperation on clean energy research and technology. Interestingly, all targets under Goal 17 of partnerships are classified as MOI targets. The third category includes P&I targets which speak of change on an institutional level, e.g., target 8.3 which promotes policies for productive activities and entrepreneurship or target 12.7 which promotes sustainable public procurement practices.

Goals	Targets			
	Outcome	MOI	Processes and institutions	Total
GOAL 1: No Poverty	5	2		7
GOAL 2: Zero Hunger	5	3		8
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being	9	4		13
GOAL 4: Quality Education	7	3		10
GOAL 5: Gender Equality	6	3		9
GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	5	2	1	8
GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	3	2		5
GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	7	2	3	12
GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	3	3	2	8
GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality	5	3	2	10
GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	5	3	2	10
GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	4	3	4	11
GOAL 13: Climate Action	2	2	1	5
GOAL 14: Life Below Water	6	3	1	10
GOAL 15: Life on Land	7	3	2	12
GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions	9	2	1	12
GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal		19		19
Total	88	62	19	169

Classification of Indicators

It was deemed important to classify the SDG indicators along the same lines as the targets since this can help gather relevant data on indicators, which helps in monitoring targets. The OECD methodology provided some guidance on extending this activity to indicators however, it was limited to listing the robust indicators that support the targets already classified. Here, the exercise, conducted through consultations, aims to classify indicators into outcomes, MOIs, and P&Is. Even though there may be some subjectivity in this exercise, it can be argued that this classification is flexible and can evolve after further consultations. Indicators were grouped into the same three categories as used for targets, but their definitions were tweaked to suit the nature of indicators:

1. Outcome: Indicators related to an outcome or a result (positive or negative developmental change)
2. Means of implementation (MOIs): Indicators related to means of implementation or referring to policies, partnerships and cooperation. These can also include financial resources allocated, providing access that leads to an outcome, arrangements for cooperation, progress towards compliance and implementation, and strategies and policies.
3. Processes and Institutions (P&I): Indicators related to processes and institutions including frameworks and legislation.

Table 2 depicts a summary of the results of classifying 244 indicators into 163 outcome indicators, 72 MOI indicators, and 7 P&I indicators. In addition, there are 2 indicators that are entirely irrelevant for Pakistan since they talk about least-developed countries and small island countries. Outcome indicators can monitor both positive and negative development change. For instance, indicator 2.1.1 which measures the prevalence of undernourishment; negative rate of change

implies positive development whereas, indicator 8.1.1 which measures annual growth rate of GDP per capita; positive growth implies positive development. In addition, the definition of MOIs category for indicators is far wider that includes indicators that pertain to resource mobilization, providing access, arrangements and strategies and policies. For example, indicator 1.a.1 talks about resources allocated for poverty reduction, indicator 2.c.1 that measures food price anomalies, indicator 6.5.2 which measures transboundary basin areas with water cooperation arrangements, and indicator 11.b.2 which measures number of countries with disaster risk reduction strategies.

Goals	Indicators				
	Outcome	MOI	Processes and institutions	Not Relevant for Pakistan	Total
GOAL 1: No Poverty	9	5			14
GOAL 2: Zero Hunger	9	4			13
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being	23	4			27
GOAL 4: Quality Education	7	4			11
GOAL 5: Gender Equality	10	1	3		14
GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	9	2			11
GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	4	2			6
GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	14	3			17
GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	10	2			12
GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality	6	5			11
GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	13	1		1	15
GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	6	6	1		13
GOAL 13: Climate Action	3	4		1	8
GOAL 14: Life Below Water	6	4			10
GOAL 15: Life on Land	9	4	1		14
GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions	20	2	1		23
GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal	5	19	1		25
Total	163	72	7	2	244

It is also interesting to note that every outcome target does not relate neatly with an outcome indicator, it can instead relate to MOI indicator, or vice versa as shown in Table 3. For example, indicator 3.a.1 measures prevalence of tobacco-use is an outcome indicator while its corresponding target 3.a talks about strengthening tobacco control that was classified as MOI target. On the other hand, indicator 4.7.1 is about mainstreaming sustainable development education that is MOI indicator while target 4.7 ensures the acquisition of sustainable knowledge which is classified as an outcome target. This phenomenon exists for P&I indicators and targets such as indicator 5.1.1 checks if gender equality legal frameworks exist is P&I indicator while target 5.1 aims to end discrimination against women and is an outcome target. Similarly, indicator 8.3.1 measures non-agricultural informal employment is an outcome indicator while target 8.3 promotes employment policies is a P&I target.

To build on this clustering activity, the data availability and requirements for each indicator were also spelled out. Firstly, it is important to specify whether the data for each indicator is relevant and available at the national, provincial, or district level, and so the regional disaggregation level for each indicator was specified. It was found that 230 indicators have data at the national level since indicators calculated at district or provincial level will also be consolidated at national level. Thus, 230 indicators will have national-level data which will be fed from both provincial and district sources, where they will also be reported at their respective levels. As a result, 161 indicators will be reported at the provincial level with data from district being consolidated at provincial level for several indicators, while 42 will be reported at the district level. 14 indicators are wholly global indicators for which regional disaggregation is not applicable. Secondly, it was also specified whether the indicator definition requires the data to be disaggregated based on gender and age. About 64 indicators require gender-based disaggregation while 54 indicators require age-based disaggregation. Furthermore, the available data for each indicator has also been mapped – baseline national-level data for 91 indicators and baseline provincial-level data for 31 indicators. This is useful to highlight the data and disaggregation level gaps which can be addressed to complete the baseline exercise for all indicators. Table 4 below highlights the summary of this activity for all Goals.

Table 3. Targets to Indicator Mapping Matrix

Targets	Indicators			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Means of Implementation</i>	<i>Processes & Institutions</i>	
Outcome (88)	129	12	3	144
MOI (62)	16	56	3	75
P&Is (19)	17	8	-	25
Total	162	76	6	244

Note: The matrix lists down the number of indicators classified at Outcomes, Means of Implementation, and Processes & Institutions corresponding to respective targets. For example, 88 Outcome targets have a total of 144 indicators out of which 129 are classified as outcomes, 12 as MOIs and 3 as P&Is to reflect the fact that outcome targets do not break-down into outcome indicators only as explained above.

Table 4. Snapshot of SDG Indicator Disaggregation and Data Availability

Goals	Indicators						
	Disaggregation level - National	Disaggregation level - Provincial	Disaggregation level - District	Disaggregation level - Gender	Disaggregation level - Age	Baseline national data available	Baseline provincial data available
GOAL 1: No Poverty	14	11	4	4	3	7	3
GOAL 2: Zero Hunger	13	10	3	3	2	4	3
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being	27	27	0	14	15	11	8
GOAL 4: Quality Education	11	11	7	7	6	4	4
GOAL 5: Gender Equality	14	14	7	5	7	2	2
GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	11	8	8	3	0	3	1
GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	6	3	2	1	0	3	2
GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	17	8	0	8	4	10	2
GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	12	8	2	2	1	7	1
GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality	10	4	0	0	0	3	0
GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	14	13	2	3	3	4	0
GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	12	9	0	0	0	7	0
GOAL 13: Climate Action	7	1	0	1	1	3	0
GOAL 14: Life Below Water	10	2	0	0	0	3	1
GOAL 15: Life on Land	14	8	0	0	0	9	4
GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions	22	21	7	11	10	4	0
GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal	16	3	0	2	2	7	0
Total	230	161	42	64	54	91	31

Note: Indicators calculated at district or provincial level will also be consolidated at national level. Thus, 230 indicators will have national-level data which will be fed from both provincial and district sources, where it will also be reported at their respective levels.

How MOIs and Processes and Institutions Lead to Outcomes

One feature of the SDGs is the interlinkages of the goals, targets, and indicators. To streamline the process of designing development plans around SDG targets, it is important to understand some of these interlinkages. Particularly, it is useful to draw links between outcome, MOI, and P&I targets to pinpoint efficient ways to achieve outcome targets. A natural question arising from this exercise, using the OECD's methodology, is which of the MOI and P&I targets, jointly called input targets hereafter, contribute to and are linked to which specific outcome targets. This can be helpful in prioritizing the input targets to achieve the outcome targets considered to be most relevant for our development priorities. While the OECD study does not provide guidance on this type of interlinkages, this mapping was done using meta data and intuitively by linking input targets (MOI and P&I) with related outcome targets since these can help achieve development outcomes and enhance their progress.

The process of doing this exercise was as follows:

- a) Firstly, the entire list of input (MOI and P&I) targets was methodically analyzed and compared alongside the entire list of outcome targets.
- b) Secondly, input targets within the same Goal that were deemed to be linked or contribute directly to a specific outcome target, were then identified.
- c) Thirdly, input targets from other Goals were also analyzed and those contributing directly to the specific outcome target were identified. For example, while input target 1.a (resource mobilization) and target 1.b (policy frameworks) intuitively contribute to outcome target 1.1 (eradicating extreme poverty), input targets from other Goals contribute too. These include target 5.a, target 5.b, and target 5.c (women empowerment), and target 8.3, target 8.10 (capacity), target 8.5 (youth employment), and target 10.c (remittance costs). Other outcome targets, on the other hand, do not require several input targets, for example, target 16.10 (access to information and freedom) only requires two input targets i.e. 16.a (strengthen institutions) and 16.b (laws and policies), while target 12.4 (environmentally sound chemicals and waste management) require only a single input i.e. 6.a (international cooperation and support).

There are a few limitations to this kind of activity which are important to highlight. First, the scope of this activity is quite broad but here, it was narrowed down to specifically linking input targets to outcome rather than linking all targets with each other. Second, the linkages were attempted to be strictly restricted to direct link. For example, outcome target 1.1 relates to eradicating extreme poverty and it is conceivable to link it with several input targets that can indirectly help in achieving this target. It could include target 2.a. which increase investment in agriculture or target 3.b. which supports the development of vaccines. However, the focus of exercise was to identify the targets that would contribute directly to extreme poverty alleviation and hence, have considered targets 1.a, 1.b, 5.a, 5.c, 8.3, 8.10, 8.b, and 10.c.

Overall, the outcome target with the largest number of linkages is target 8.1 which is to sustain per capita economic growth with 25 input targets directly contribute to achieve this target knowing its broaden nature. On the other hand, there are four outcome targets that have only one input targets

directly linked to it. This includes target 10.7 on responsibly migration and mobility of people, target 12.4 (environmentally sound chemicals and waste management), and target 12.5 (reduce waste generation), and target 16.9 (legal identity).

The third limitation is the extent of subjectivity that is inherent in this type of exercise since it depends on theoretical knowledge, national or international research publications, logical reasoning and development context rather than quantitative evidence. Though the meta data has also used for reference. In the absence of workable input-output matrix for SDGS framework, the key findings can be useful for policy analysis because it provides information on the relevant areas or input targets. Addressing these input targets can inadvertently help achieve progress on the outcome targets of the SDGs. Therefore, it is important to view the results from a holistic perspective rather than a microscopic detailing with the view to informing development strategies.

Exercise conducted in this study depends on logical reasoning (based on literature review) and intuition rather than quantitative evidence, although we have used meta data for reference. Nevertheless, the results are useful for policy analysis because it provides information on the relevant areas or input targets. Addressing these input targets can inadvertently help achieve progress on the outcome targets of the SDGs.

