

**RESULTS MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

**An SDG-based results framework for development co-operation**

**Draft Note by the Results Team of the Development Co-operation Directorate**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The 2030 Agenda and development results**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the politically agreed framework for international co-operation. It is praised for its universalism, its focus on eradicating extreme poverty and its coverage of all dimensions of sustainability, including environmental, equity and governance issues. Scepticism about the Agenda also focuses on its wide scope and coverage, with 17 goals, 169 targets and 200+ indicators, many of which will be hard to quantify and monitor.

This paper examines whether and how the 2030 Agenda can work as a common *results framework* for development co-operation. Providers and partner countries each have their own objectives and results frameworks. The benefits to be gained from a common results framework are economic, political and strategic. While the results framework would be operational and practical, it also expresses the commitment to partnerships and mutual accountability that is inherent in the common 2030 Agenda. This paper addresses three questions:

1. *Does the 2030 Agenda deal with results, i.e. with real change in people’s lives and other benefits?* Of the 169 *targets* of the 2030 Agenda, approximately half (88) deal with *outcomes*, i.e. with real change in people’s lives, in the structure and functioning of society and in the health of the planet; of these, 28 are *people-centred*, 38 are *society-wide*, and 22 are *environment-focused*. The answer to this question is therefore: Yes, the 2030 Agenda deals with *results* through its outcome targets.
2. *Can these changes, at least partly, be considered results of ODA-based development co-operation?* As goals, the SDGs fit well with the ODA objectives of economic development and welfare. So indeed, the results can at least partly be linked to development co-operation. Nevertheless, some dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, such as peace, are not impacted significantly by ODA, but by different public international efforts, some of which may be captured under the broader concept of Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD).
3. *Will monitoring of the 2030 Agenda yield the results information needed by aid providers?*

The challenges here include the *slow progress of change* at the level of outcomes and the need to focus on the *contribution* of development co-operation to the progress of partner countries (recognising that *attribution* is feasible only at the level of individual interventions). However, this study finds that monitoring of SDG outcome targets will provide relevant, decision-oriented results information at the goal and outcome level, while individual DAC members and other providers may need additional results information for learning and quality assurance.

**Which SDG targets are most relevant for assessing the results of development co-operation?**

Given the generally positive answers to the initial questions, it seems worthwhile to pursue the idea of an SDG-based results framework for development co-operation. However, it would clearly be unworkable to apply all the 17 goals and 169 targets as an assessment grid. A much simpler structure is needed to provide intelligible and comparable information – recognising that this will only cover a small part of aid providers’ and partners’ obligations towards achieving the Agenda.

To arrive at an initial draft of an SDG-based results framework for development co-operation, a *filter* approach is used, with five steps that successively identify:

1. All *outcome* targets, (88 of the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda).
2. The outcome targets that are easiest to *quantify* andmeasure (16, with 26 partly quantifiable).
3. Key *overlaps and synergies* between the Agenda and development co-operation objectives (20).

These 20 targets are then examined from two perspectives:

1. The *developing country situations*, where ODA-based development co-operation plays the largest role, i.e. notably in the least developed countries and fragile situations
2. The targets where change happens relatively *quickly*, i.e. with some rolling progress reported over a 1-3 years period.

Applying the five filters, the paper identifies nine SDG outcome targets that may serve as building blocks for a common results framework for development co-operation:

* *People-centred outcome targets*:
  + # 3.2. End preventable deaths of new-borns and children under 5
  + # 6.1. Achieve access to safe and affordable drinking water
  + # 8.6. Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
* *Society-wide outcome targets*:
  + # 3.8. Achieve universal health coverage
  + # 4.5. Eliminate gender disparities in education
  + # 16.9. Provide legal identity for all
* *Environment-related outcome targets*:
  + # 12.3. Halve per capita global food waste
  + # 14.5. Conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas
  + # 15.2. Promote forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests

These nine SDG outcome targets represent a continuation of the focus on health, education and water under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000-2015, yet also support the increasing attention to youth unemployment, inequality, global and environmental challenges. They are drawn directly from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, expressing the agreed political will of the world community and are therefore directly useful for co-operation and dialogues on accountability. And they have potential for quantification, for results contributed by development co-operation, and for the documentation of real change within a medium-term perspective.

The nine SDG outcome targets can constitute a *core* of a common, SDG-based results framework, while individual development co-operation providers and developing country partners need additional results monitoring to reflect and capture their individual development priorities within the 2030 Agenda with its SDGs and approximately 88 outcome targets.

**Possible next steps**

This paper is only a first step. DAC, other providers and partners may agree that other SDG outcome targets are equally or more important, while still keeping the number to an operational level. As noted, individual providers and partners will have development priorities that go beyond these nine outcome targets. The strength of the proposed approach is that it suggests a wide results framework (88 SDG outcome targets) with the scope for a common, operational core of approximately nine. Common data could be provided on progress on the selected SDG outcome targets, focusing on developing countries where ODA-based development co-operation in financial terms contributes significantly to development.

Development co-operation providers and partners are invited to consider this proposal at the workshop **Results in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: How can we use the SDGs as a common results framework?** (Paris, 3-4 February 2016). Subsequent actions could include:

* Providers consider how their *current goals and results frameworks* align with the *SDG outcome targets*, and which of the projected 200+ *global indicators* they will use for national monitoring.
* Partners advise if and how they use SDG outcome targets as *country results frameworks*.
* The DAC DCD results team compiles an overview of the match between a) SDG outcome targets; b) provider and partner priorities; and c) the global indicators used.
* The DAC could then consider a common results framework and its links to SDG monitoring.

Development co-operation providers and partners see development effectiveness as a first step towards sustainable development. Agreeing to a common results agenda for development co-operation, based on the SDG outcome targets, is cost-effective, enhances partnership through joint ownership, and builds for a future, where international development co-operation addresses all dimensions and levels of sustainable development, including shared global challenges.

# INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has the potential to transform development. Its universal nature requires global response and responsibility. Its multi-dimensional character urges coherence and the breaking down of silos. Its results focus drives the possibility of real change for people and planet.This is not business as usual for development co-operation. DAC members and other providers will need to expand their engagement with a broader set of partners, and use results and evidence to frame their decisions and improve their performance.

The ‘’results agenda’’ itself may need to be revitalised. Management for Development Results (MfDR)[[1]](#footnote-1) is part of the business model of most DAC members and observers, but results information is often *used* too little (by development co-operation providers and partners). MfDR risks becoming too *selective*, if it serves primarily domestic communication purposes; and too *routine*, if it compiles results information with little follow-up. The development community needs a common framework, which is attractive to constituencies, and which can be used for decision making by all parties. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a strong opportunity to achieve this ambition.

The paper applies a *filter approach*, with five steps to get from the wide scope of the 2030 Agenda to a common results framework for international development co-operation, cf. Figure 1.

The paper is part of the *DAC Programme of Work on Development Results 2015-2016*. [[2]](#footnote-2) It is published at the launch of the OECD DAC DCD online community on *Results for the future*, feeding into the workshop on *Results in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: How can we use the SDGs as a common results framework?* (OECD Headquarters, Paris, 3-4 February 2016). Based on discussions online and at the workshop, the paper will be updated, possibly in the form of an action plan to operationalise a common results framework for development co-operation, based on SDG outcome targets.

With a section on each, the paper examines three main questions, and concludes with suggestions on the next steps.

* Does the 2030 Agenda deal with *results*, i.e. with real change in people’s lives and other benefits?
* Can these changes, at least partly, be considered results of *ODA-based development co-operation*?
* Will monitoring of the 2030 Agenda yield the *results information* needed by aid providers?

**Figure 1: A filter approach to a results framework built around selected SDG outcome targets**

A common framework to monitor results of development co-operation

Subsequent papers and workshops in the *DAC Programme of Work on Development Results 2015-2016* will address the following themes:

* *Corporate results reporting:* Enhancing the practical use of results information for its different purposes by DAC members, observers and partners.
* *Mutual accountability through results:* Ensuring that development co-operation outcomes feed into institutions and processes of mutual accountability, aimed at behavioural change.
* *Results fit for the future:* Developing a political narrative beyond ODA and practical methodologies for results-based decision making across government departments and levels of governance.

# 2) RESULTS IN THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* presents itself as ‘’a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity’’. It emphasises further ‘Ps’ in the call for peace, poverty eradication and partnerships. Its 17 *goals* and 169 *targets* with universal coverage are very ambitious. The term *targets* implies a future state of affairs achieved through sustainable development efforts, so all 169 targets should in principle be *development results*. This is, however, not the case, as indicated in Figure 2.

The 169 targets also include *means of implementation* targets to facilitate outcomes. SDG #17, which covers global partnership, comprises 19 such targets, and there is a total of 43 more under SDGs 1-16 (where they are separately identified using small letters after the Goal number, e.g. 16.a). To these 62 means of implementation targets must be added 19 other targets that relate to policy measures or other “process” actions. This means that, overall, the 169 targets comprise approximately:

* 88 outcome targets
* 81 process targets

**Figure 2: From 169 SDG targets to 88 outcome targets for sustainable development**

**88 outcome targets: desirable change between outputs and impact**

107 other targets

Total Number of Targets in the 2030 Agenda: 169

81 process targets: means of implementation, policy measures, etc.

62 "means of implementation” other targets

The first step in the filter approach is therefore to move from the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs to approximately *88 outcome targets*. The attached excel file (see Annex I) lists all SDGs and targets as well as the assessments made for this study of whether the individual targets are outcome or process targets; whether the outcome targets relate to people, society or environment; and whether the outcome targets can be quantified.

The second filter concerns *quantification*. Outcome targets and development results are not necessarily quantifiable. Qualitative change in people’s lives, societies’ structures and the health of the planet may be just as important, but for a *common* results framework a significant degree of quantification is desirable. An assessment shows that of the 88 outcome targets only:

* *16 are quantifiable*
* *26 are partly quantifiable*

The 88 outcome targets may also be classified by target area:

* *28 are people-centred, i.e. aimed at direct improvements in people’s lives*
* *38 are society-wide, i.e. aimed at political, economic or social structures*
* *22 are environment-focused.*

Table 1 summarises these assessments for each of the 17 SDGs, showing that:

* *People-centred* outcome targets relate primarily to finishing the business of the Millennium Development Goals in *health and education*.
* The 2030 Agenda includes new outcome targets related to *equality, inclusion, justice and peace*, which mostly aim at *society-wide* changes.
* The formulations of SDG #9 and its targets on *infrastructure, industrialisation and innovation* are more *process*-oriented than goal and outcome-focused.
* The people-centred poverty reduction and health SDGs are the easiest to quantify, whereas most of the society-wide and environment-focused SDGs have non-quantifiable outcome targets.

**Table 1: Summary assessment of the SDGs and their outcome targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The Sustainable Development Goals | THE 88 OUTCOME TARGETS OF THE SDGs | | | Quantification:  Full / Partly |
| **People-centred** | **Society-wide** | **Environmental** |
| 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2 / 0 |
| 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 / 2 |
| 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages | 8 | 1 | 0 | 5 / 3 |
| 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 / 3 |
| 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 / 1 |
| 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all | 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 / 2 |
| 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 / 2 |
| 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, decent work for all | 2 | 5 | 0 | 1 / 2 |
| 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 / 2 |
| 10 Reduce inequality within and between countries | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 / 0 |
| 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 / 4 |
| 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 / 0 |
| 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 / 0 |
| 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 / 3 |
| 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 / 1 |
| 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels | 2 | 8 | 0 | 1 / 1 |
| 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 / 0 |
| All 17 Sustainable Development Goals | **28** | **38** | **22** | **16 / 26** |

***Note: Assessments made for this paper***

The 88 outcome targets are mixed with respect to their direct usefulness as *results* pursued through development co-operation. The second step in the filter approach is therefore to look for a smaller set of quantifiable outcome targets that are well distributed across people-centred, society-wide and environmental outcome targets. Table 2 presents the 16 quantifiable outcome targets and their coverage of people-centred, society-wide and environmental issues, respectively.

**Table 2: The 16 quantifiable outcome targets out of the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Target # | 16 quantifiable outcome targets out of 169 targets | Change for |
| 1.1 | By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day | People |
| 1.2 | By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions | People |
| 2.2 | By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons | People |
| 3.1 | By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births | People |
| 3.2 | By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births | People |
| 3.3 | By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases | People |
| 3.4 | By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being | People |
| 3.6 | By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents | People |
| 4.1 | By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes | People |
| 6.1 | By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all | People |
| 7.3 | By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency | Society |
| 8.1 | Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries | Society |
| 10.1 | By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average | Society |
| 12.3 | By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses | Environment |
| 14.5 | By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information | Environment |
| 16.9 | By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration | Society |

***Note: Assessments of quantification potential made for this paper***

# 3) LINKING ODA-BASED DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION TO SDG OUTCOMES

The third step in constructing an SDG-based results framework for development co-operation is to compare goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda with the aims and coverage of ODA and other financial flows for development. The official definition of ODA focuses on *economic development and welfare*of developing countries[[3]](#footnote-3), which is well aligned with the SDGs. The “Creditor Reporting System purpose codes” (CRS) provide a sectoral and functional breakdown of international co-operation, intended to cover both ODA and the range of flows to be included under the emerging category of Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD). For this study, an assessment was made of the correspondence between the SDGs and their targets on the one hand, and the CRS functional classification of resource flows for development on the other. This is summarised at broad aggregate level in Table 3. The detailed examination it represents has identified a total of 20 quantifiable or partly quantifiable targets that correspond to officially supported development activities as follows:

*Quantifiable targets*

* People-centred outcome targets:
  + 1.1 Eradicate extreme poverty
  + 3.2 End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5
  + 4.1 Complete primary and secondary education
  + 6.1 Achieve access to safe and affordable drinking water
* Society-wide outcome targets:
  + 7.3 Double improvement in energy efficiency
  + 10.1 Achieve income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population
  + 16.9 Provide legal identity for all
* Environment-related outcome targets:
  + 12.3 Halve per capita global food waste
  + 14.5 Conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas

*Partly quantifiable* *targets*

* People-centred outcome targets:
  + 2.1 End hunger and ensure access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food
  + 8.6 Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
* Society-wide outcome targets:
  + 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage
  + 4.5 Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to education
  + 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
  + 11.1 Ensure access for all to housing and basic services and upgrade slums
  + 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
* Environment-related outcome targets:
  + 6.4 Substantially increase water use efficiency across all sectors
  + 11.6 Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities
  + 14.1 Prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds
  + 15.2 Promote all types of forests, halt deforestation, and restore degraded forests

These 20 outcome targets cover 14 of the 17 SDGs. For various reasons, the targets under SDG#9 (infrastructure and industrialisation), SDG#13 (climate change), and SDG#17 (means of implementation and global partnership) do not qualify under this filter approach towards a common, *outcome* focused results framework.

**Table 3: Links between the SDGs and the ODA purpose codes at the main categories level**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS |  | ODA PURPOSE CODES: MAIN CATEGORIES | |
| 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere |  |  | **300 - PRODUCTION SECTORS** (This main heading groups contributions to all directly productive sectors.) Agriculture; forestry; fishing; industry; mineral resources and mining; construction; trade policy and regulations and trade-related adjustment; tourism |
| 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture |  |  |
| 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages |  | **100 – SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES** (This main category relates essentially to efforts to develop the human resource potential of developing countries.). Education, health; population and reproductive health; water and sanitation; government and civil society; other social infrastructure and services |
| 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all |  |
| 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls |  |
| 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all |  |
| 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all |  | **200 - ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES** (This major heading groups assistance for networks, utilities and services that facilitate economic activity.) Transport and storage; communications; energy generation; distribution and efficiency; banking and financial services; business and other services |
| 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, decent work for all |  |
| 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation |  |
| 10 Reduce inequality within and between countries |  |  |
| 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable |  |  |
| 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns |  |  |
| 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts |  |  |  |
| 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development |  |  |  |
| 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss |  |  |  |
| 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels |  | **From 100 – SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**. … government and civil society; other social infrastructure and services |  |
| 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development |  |  |  |
|  |  | **500 – COMMODITY AID AND GENERAL PROGRAMME ASSISTANCE** | **400 – MULTISECTOR / CROSS-CUTTING** |
|  |  | **600 – ACTION RELATING TO DEBT** | **700 – HUMANIT-ARIAN AID** |
|  |  | **910 –ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF DONORS**  **930 – REFUGEES IN DONOR COUNTRIES**  **998 – UNALLOCATED/ UNSPECIFIED** | |

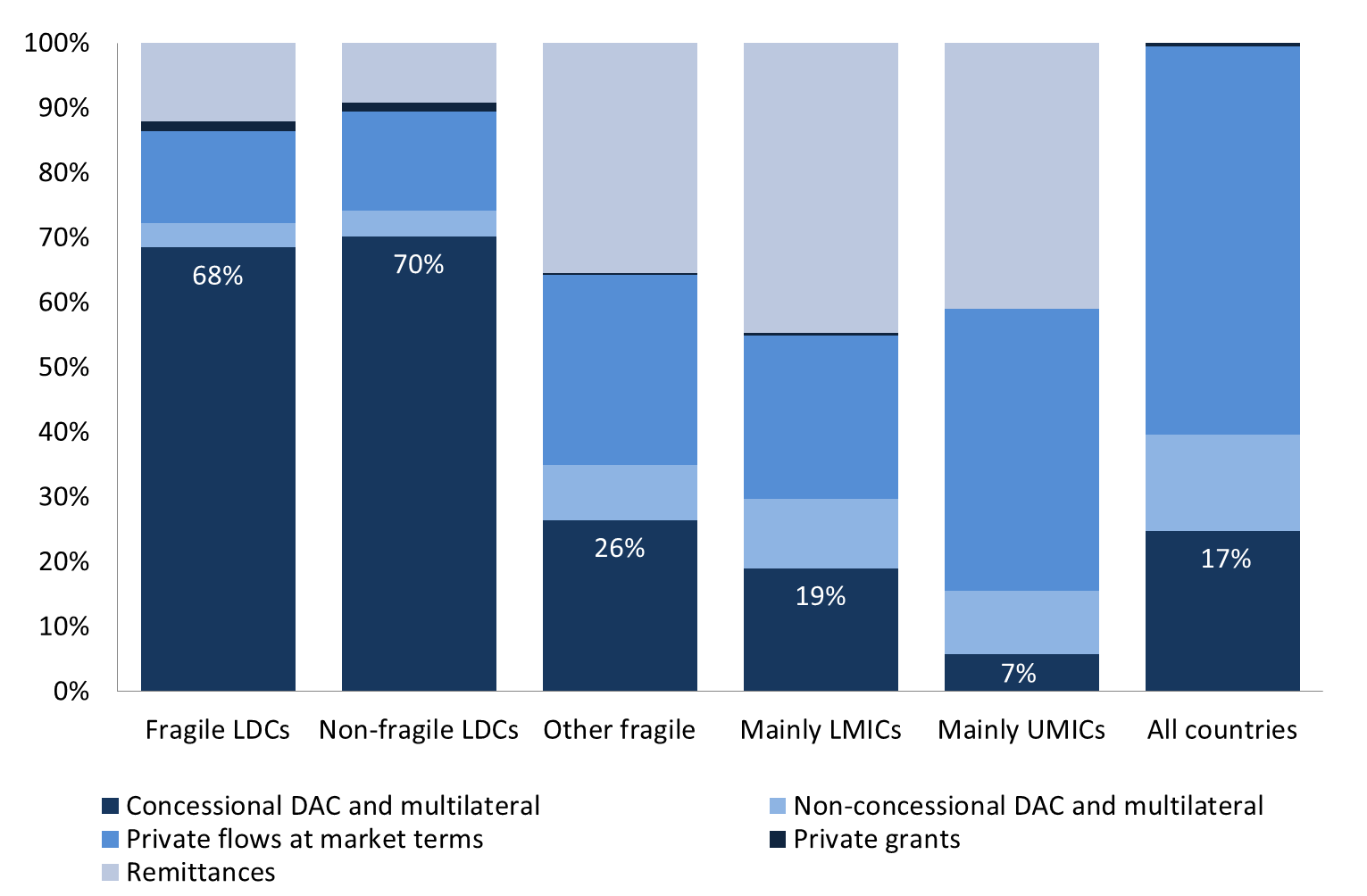
# 4) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION IN ACHIEVING SDG OUTCOME TARGETS

The fourth filter towards using SDG outcome targets as the basis of a results framework is to ensure that providers’ development co-operation contributes *significantly* to the change recorded by developing countries on the various SDG outcome targets. It is possible only to illustrate the *financial* significance of ODA to different categories of developing countries.

OECD’s Development Co-operation Directorate monitors the targeting of ODA to five groups of developing countries: fragile LDCs (725 million inhabitants); non-fragile LDCs (178 million); other fragile countries (625 million); lower middle income countries (LMICs, 1,463 million), and upper middle income countries (UMICs, 2,831 million inhabitants). Figure 3[[4]](#footnote-4) shows the role of ODA relative to other sources of external finance to developing countries in different situations. Only in the least developed countries (with more than 900 million inhabitants) does ODA constitute more than two thirds (69%) of external resources flowing to developing countries. The data shows:

* In 2014, ODA made up 68% of total external finance in fragile LDCs and 70% in non-fragile LDCs. ODA represented only 6.7% of total external finance among mainly upper middle-income developing countries (i.e. all countries that are not LDCs, fragile or IDA eligible).
* In 2013, ODA as % of GDP was 7% in fragile LDCs; 9% in non-fragile LDCs, and less than 1% in middle income countries.
* In 2013, ODA represented the equivalent of 77% of tax revenue in fragile LDCs and 55% in non-fragile LDCs. It represented the equivalent of 0.7% of tax revenue among mainly UMICs.

**Figure 3: The composition of external resources to developing countries, preliminary data 2014**



In the LDCs, ODA has potentially large impact on the achievement of all SDG outcome targets, whereas in other developing countries the impact is likely to be marginal or to depend on highly targeted allocations towards a few outcomes. This assessment is based on financial significance only. An outcome-focused results framework cannot capture all those situations where development co-operation involves limited ODA and consists primarily of political dialogue and technical collaboration. Individual providers of development co-operation would have to use other means to monitor the results of such partnerships with middle income developing countries.

# 5) IMPACTING AND DOCUMENTING REAL CHANGE FOR PEOPLE, SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

The fifth and final step in the filter approach is to focus on SDG outcome targets, where *real change* (impacted by development co-operation) is likely to be achieved and monitored within a short to medium-term perspective, e.g. over a 1-3 years period. Such a relatively short time frame is needed, because providers and partners of development co-operation need regular, rolling information on progress towards the outcome targets, if this is to be used for results-based decision making and communication. This does not mean that results are achieved and completed within this short time frame, only that real change can be recorded.

Section 3 above suggested a set of 20 fully or partly quantifiable SDG outcome targets that are results in sustainable development. Section 4 added the criterion that the prioritised SDG outcome targets should be impacted by development co-operation. Combining these criteria, or filters, Table 4 assesses the degree to which these 20 SDG outcome targets are potentially impacted by development co-operation and adds the further test of whether they are likely to show real change in a short to medium-term perspective.

**Table 4: The likelihood of documentable, real change in selected SDG outcome targets, as potentially impacted by development co-operation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Selected, SDG outcome targets (quantifiable and partly quantifiable) in three areas: People, society, environment | Impact of dev co-op | Some change in 1-3 years |
| *People-centred outcome targets:*  1.1 Eradicate extreme poverty  2.1 End hunger and ensure access to food  3.2 End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5  4.1 Complete primary and secondary education  6.1 Achieve access to safe and affordable drinking water  8.6 Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, training, etc. | Medium  Medium  High  Medium  High  Medium | Medium  High  High  Medium  High  High |
| *Society-wide outcome targets:*  3.8 Achieve universal health coverage  4.5 Eliminate gender disparities in education  5.6 Ensure access to sexual & reproductive health, reproductive rights  7.3 Double improvement in energy efficiency  10.1 Achieve income growth of the bottom 40 % of the population  11.1 Ensure access for all to housing and basic services  16.1 Reduce all forms of violence and related death rates  16.9 Provide legal identity for all | Medium  Medium  Medium  Medium  Medium  Medium  Low  Medium | High  High  Medium  Medium  Low  Medium  High  High |
| *Environment-related outcome targets:*  6.4 Substantially increase water use efficiency across all sectors  11.6 Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities  12.3 Halve per capita global food waste  14.1 Prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds  14.5 Conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas  15.2 Promote forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests | Low  Medium  High  Low  High  High | Medium  Low  Medium  Low  Medium  High |

***Note: Assessments made for this paper***

The assessments in Table 4 would differ from country to country and would depend on the *indicators* available for each target. Still, the table offers the following findings:

* On *people-centred outcomes*, three targets offer good potential:
  + End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5
  + Achieve access to safe and affordable drinking water
  + Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
* On *society-wide outcomes*, three targets offer good potential:
  + Achieve universal health coverage
  + Eliminate gender disparities in education
  + Provide legal identity for all
* On *environment-related outcomes*, three targets offer good potential:
  + Halve per capita global food waste
  + Conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas
  + Promote forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests

These nine SDG outcome targets represent a continuation of the focus on health, education and water under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000-2015, yet also support the increasing attention to youth unemployment, inequality, global and environmental challenges. They are drawn directly from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, expressing the agreed political will of the world community and are therefore directly useful for co-operation and dialogues on accountability. And they have potential for quantification, for results contributed by development co-operation, and for the documentation of real change within a medium-term perspective.

At the same time, these nine SDG outcome targets represent practical examples of the elements of a common results framework based on SDG outcome targets. DAC, other providers and partners may agree that other SDG outcome targets are equally or more important, while still keeping the number to an operational level. And individual providers and partners will have development priorities that go beyond these nine outcome targets; these additional priorities will have to be built into the results frameworks of individual providers and partners.

The strength of the proposed approach is that it suggests a wide results framework (88 SDG outcome targets) with the scope for a common, operational core of approximately nine. A possible argument for an increase in the number of core outcome targets to be monitored through the common results framework is that the nine outcome targets proposed above cover only half of SDGs #1-16. The nine outcome targets represent SDGs 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 15 and 16. In the process of developing a common results framework, it may be useful to add outcome targets and/or indicators that cover also the remaining SDGs. Ideally, the selection of additional outcome targets or indicators should follow the filter approach outlined in this paper. This is partly a technical question of focusing on SDG outcome targets that can deliver useful information on the results of development co-operation. Equally, it represents a political decision by providers and partners to focus their development co-operation on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

# 6) THE SDG OUTCOME TARGETS AS A GUIDE TO DECISION MAKING IN DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION

The use of the SDGs as a results framework for development co-operation requires that the outcome targets provide an *effective guide to development co-operation*, including *information needed by co-operating partners*. Will such a results framework be *useful* for providers and partners of development co-operation? The fifth step in the filter approach is to focus on the SDG outcome targets that are most important to individual providers and partners – allowing selectivity within a common framework.

Development agencies use the results chain, from inputs to impact, to guide their political narratives, priority-setting, operations management, monitoring, evaluation, communication and learning, in short their management for development results. As discussed in an upcoming paper from the DCD results team[[5]](#footnote-5), a common challenge to many development co-operation providers is that results information is used too little or too selectively for decision making on development co-operation. The usefulness to providers and partners of *progress information on relevant SDG outcome targets* is:

* *For policy making, planning and resource allocation:* The SDG outcome targets present a menu of operational goals for development agencies to address, and from where to set priorities. This is both the strength of the wide 2030 Agenda and the challenge for the results framework. Several DAC members have built their corporate results reporting around a set of priority goals and themes. The results framework based on SDG outcome targets can assist in country-level coordination of providers and partners: Do the portfolios of providers and the country results frameworks of partners work to achieve the same SDG outcome targets? The main challenge for this framework would be the degree to which DAC members and other providers pursue goals *outside* of the 2030 Agenda, for example geo-political strategic or commercial interests. From the point of view of development co-operation *effectiveness*, the results framework based on SDG outcome targets should make clear when goals outside the 2030 Agenda are pursued by either party.
* *For accountability and communication:* The strength of SDG outcome targets is that they enable concrete, political dialogue between providers and partners on *common targets* and on *progress achieved* (or lack of progress). The dialogue can be *substantive* because the outcome targets deal with real life challenges of poverty, hunger, health, equality, equity, inclusiveness, sustainability, etc. Providers and partners are held to account for substantive issues of poverty and sustainability. Using the SDG outcome targets as a results framework has two weaknesses, however: First, there are too many SDG outcome indicators, so stakeholders may be able to get away with ‘’selective story-telling’’, which may be good for communication but not for accountability. Hence, the paper suggested in Section 5 a focus on a select number of SDG outcome indicators, to avoid undue selectivity in results frameworks. Second, change related to individual outcome targets may be too slow to allow for regular accountability and communication. A review of the 88 outcome targets suggests, however, that information on progress can be made available regularly with a medium-term perspective on change. The selection above of quantifiable and partly quantifiable outcome targets was made with an effort to identify those targets where change does happen within a relatively short time frame of one-three years.
* *For learning and quality assurance:* The strength of relying on the SDG outcome targets as the results framework is that learning and quality assurance will be related to the achievement of real change for people, planet and society. This will lift the efforts of everyone involved in learning and quality assurance to address lessons and risks related to the real challenges of today, thus minimising any risk of ‘’results reporting for the sake of reporting’’. A challenge is that learning and quality assurance will be limited to the provider’s *contribution* to development results. In most cases, *attribution* of SDG progress to the efforts of individual providers is not feasible, because the achievement of SDG outcome targets depends on so many forces within developing countries and on other external forces than development co-operation. Even if the common results framework builds on outcome targets and data that are particularly relevant to countries where ODA matters the most, i.e. notably to least developed countries and countries in fragile situations (cf. Section 4), ODA-based development co-operation will still play a contributory role only. If one recognises that attributing development results to the particular efforts of individual providers is feasible mainly at the level of individual projects, programmes and interventions, this will overall make more realistic the results frameworks of development co-operation.

A results framework based on SDG outcome targets can therefore be an effective guide for decision making in development co-operation if it:

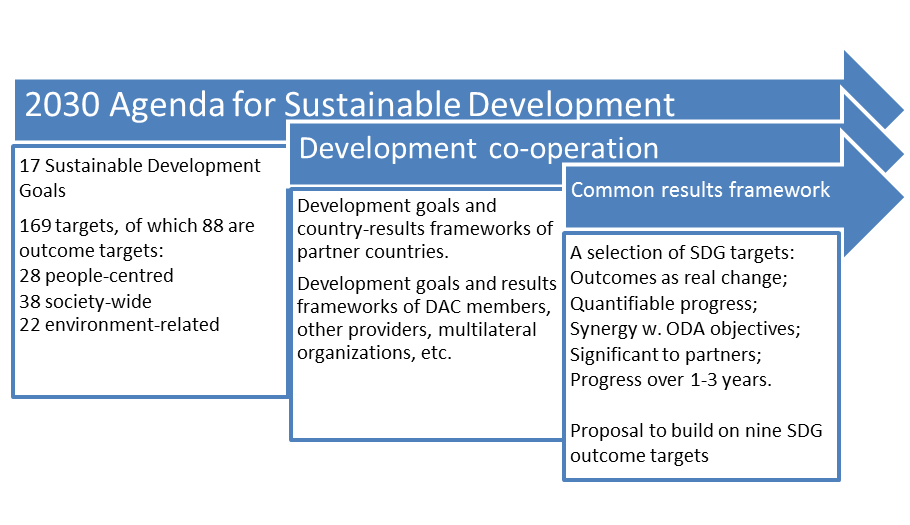
* Is built around those people-centred, society-wide and environmental outcome targets, for which *change* can be *measured* in the short to medium term (e.g. one to three years).
* Reflects a synergy of *priorities* that are common to providers and partners within the larger menu of SDG outcome targets.
* Acknowledges that learning and quality assurance should aim at development effectiveness with a *contribution* from everyone.
* Produces the results information that providers and their partners need for accountability, communication, policy making, planning, resource allocation, learning and quality assurance.

# 7) TOWARDS AN SDG-BASED DEVELOPMENT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

DAC members are relating their development co-operation objectives and narratives to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs. The vision explored in this paper is that:

* Development co-operation providers and partners agree to adopt the 2030 Agenda and the SDG outcome targets as the goals for and intended results of their development co-operation
* Development co-operation providers update their results frameworks and corporate results reporting, so that they fit with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, yet still reflect the particular priorities of the individual provider; this will require some selectivity among the approximately 88 SDG outcome targets *within* the 2030 Agenda
* Developing countries set national priorities under the 2030 Agenda and adopt SDG outcome targets as the core of their *country results frameworks* for development co-operation
* Provider and partner countries and multilateral agencies share the SDG outcome targets as a common results framework, to which they can all contribute – within their priorities.

**Figure 4: The 2030 Agenda as the context for a common results framework**

 Figure 4 summarises the main elements of a common development results framework based on SDG outcome targets. The next steps in the testing and possible agreement, within DAC and with partners and other providers of development co-operation, could be:

* Providers consider how their *goals and results frameworks* align with the *SDG outcome targets*, and which of the projected 200+ *global indicators* they will use for monitoring.
* Partners advise if and how they use SDG outcome targets as *country results frameworks*.
* The DAC DCD results team compiles an overview of the match between a) SDG outcome targets; b) provider and partner priorities; and c) the global indicators used.
* The DAC could then consider a common results framework and its links to SDG monitoring.

# ANNEX I: LIST AND ASSESSMENT OF SDG TARGETS



1. *Measuring and managing results in development co-operation. A review of challenges and practices among DAC members and observers*, OECD, November 2014, Paris. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ‘’DAC Programme of Work to Strengthen Development Results’’, [www. oecd.org/dac/peer/-reviews/dac-pwb-development-resullts.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/DAC-PWB-Development-Results.pdf)  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. DAC’s definition of ODA covers “(T)hose flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral institutions which are: i. ***provided by official agencies***, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and ii. each transaction of which: a) is administered with the promotion of the ***economic development and welfare of developing countries*** as its main objective; and b) is ***concessional in character.”*** [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Upcoming data from <http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/countries-most-in-needs.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. "Corporate results reporting on development co-operation: Making good use of results information" [↑](#footnote-ref-5)