

A new National Action Plan applies the Policy for Global Development (PGD) as a key tool to mobilise coherent whole-of-government action. The PDG provided all ministries with the mandate for the first time to develop internal action plans with concrete goals and clear responsibilities for the work of the PGD linked to the 2030 Agenda (2017^[1]). This process provided an opportunity to anticipate and manage potential conflicts of interest between sectors and between domestic and international priorities in 2014–2016. The most recent Government communication, Sweden’s policy for global development in the implementation of Agenda 2030, sets out the government’s work for 2016–2017 covering and reporting on all SDGs. The government reports examples of its work with the PGU under the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals. One section of this communication is a more in-depth report of five areas where the Government has expressed a particular ambition during the period: feminist foreign policy; sustainable business; sustainable consumption and production; climate and sea; and capital flight and tax evasion, identifying areas where conflicting objectives within and across government might limit opportunities to achieve equitable and sustainable global development as well as where alignment and synergies are present. The communication further outlines the responsible ministries for each PGD area under the respective global goals. Policy coherence is thereby considered as the backbone of PGD (2018^[2]).

Reporting requirements to parliament every second year can enhance transparency in the handling of conflicts of interests and strengthen coordination for policy coherence.

The Minister for Public Administration at the Ministry of Finance is responsible for coordinating national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. All ministries at the level of policy officers/analysts participate in an inter-ministerial working group meeting once a month. In addition, a consultation group for the 2030 Agenda meets three to four times a year with participation of State Secretaries from the Ministry of Finance, the MFA, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation. The Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate at the MFA is responsible for Sweden’s contribution to international SDG implementation. A PCSD coordination team at the MFA guides the ministries by checking documents and decisions for the degree of mainstreaming and PCSD in the 2030 Agenda. Each ministry, however, retains responsibility within its respective policy domain to adopt policies and raise potential conflicts to a political level.

Box 1. Promoting Sustainable Business Models

The Government expects Swedish companies to use international sustainable business guidelines as a basis for their work, in Sweden and in other markets. In December 2015 it submitted a Communication to the Parliament on its policy for sustainable business (Communication 2015/16:69). The communication sets out the Government’s expectations of companies’ work on sustainability and practical recommendations on how to achieve them. The international guidelines incorporate primarily the OECD’s Guidelines for Multinational Companies, the UN Global Compact, the UN’s Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the fundamental conventions of the ILO and tripartite declarations as well as the 2030 Agenda. On the basis of this Communication, the Government created a platform in 2016 to provide guidance for sustainable business geared towards Swedish companies.

The Government has additionally drawn up a national Action Plan for business and human rights that contains about fifty measures to put the UN’s Guiding Principles in this area into practice. The Action Plan urges Swedish companies, and others, in line with the UN’s Guiding Principles, to adopt company policies that take into account respect for human rights in their operations, put in place an internal process to survey and control risks in the value chain with regard to human rights infringements (due diligence) and, ensure transparency by reporting on risks.

Source: OECD (2017^[3]).

Table 1. Institutional Mechanisms for PCSD in Sweden

PCSD Building Blocks

Political commitment	The Policy for Global Development (PGD), relaunched in 2014, underlines the centrality of policy coherence to promote sustainable development. It means raising ambitions and involves a knowledge boost within the Government Offices of Sweden and its agencies.
Policy integration	All ministries have developed internal action plans for working on global development policy – and PCSD - to support decision processes linked to the SDGs.
Intergenerational timeframe	The PGD is well anchored across all parties. The Government needs to report to Parliament every two years, ensuring long-term support.
Policy effects	The task to identify potential transboundary and intergenerational effects in policies is a part of the action plans that all ministries have drawn up.
Coordination	The Minister for Public Administration at the Ministry of Finance is responsible for national SDG coordination and implementation. The government has set up an interdepartmental consultation group for the 2030 Agenda consisting of those responsible for global development policy at Head of Department level from all relevant ministries under the leadership of the MFA's Director-General for international development cooperation. The MFA is responsible for international SDG implementation. The PCSD coordination team at the MFA provides competence development and methodological support to the ministries for international implementation. When requested, it checks documents and decisions for mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda, and sometimes PCSD, and can thus contribute to communications and action plans. However, each ministry retains responsibility to adopt policies within its domain and raise potential conflicts to a political level.
Local involvement	The government appointed a Multi-stakeholder National Committee to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda throughout Swedish society. The Committee has put forward several reports, including a proposal for a comprehensive action plan. A survey of 206 municipalities and 19 county councils found that about half of respondents use the 2030 Agenda as a tool in their sustainable development work.
Stakeholder participation	Civil society organisations are invited to open hearings by the Multi-stakeholder National Committee, including also municipalities, academia, private sector and trade unions. The Scientific Council for Sustainable Development, established 2015, includes a panel of prominent researchers and provides a forum for dialogue between the government and the scientific community. Sweden held ambitious stakeholder consultation processes leading up to and following the 2017 HLPF. These consultations are also a part of the process to prepare a National Action Plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, using PGD as a tool.
Monitoring and reporting	A new reporting model that links PGD to the SDGs will provide a more in depth account of these areas. Every second year, the PCSD team at the MFA produces a report to Parliament, which includes actions and results of the period 2016-2017, as well as a forward looking section. PGD is seen as a tool in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and an interdepartmental consultation group is being formed.

Source: Government Offices of Sweden (2018^[2]) and OECD (2017^[3]).

References

- Government of Sweden (2017), "Sweden and the 2030 Agenda - Report to the UN High Level Political Forum 2017 on Sustainable Development", [1]
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16033Sweden.pdf> (accessed on 21 December 2017).
- Government Offices of Sweden (2018), *Government Communication 2017/18:146: Politiken för global utveckling i genomförandet av Agenda 2030*, [2]
<http://www.regeringen.se/4952fb/contentassets/7af580b7bee2454eb8ae3fd572525654/politiken-for-global-utveckling-i-genomforandet-av-agenda-2030-skr-2017-18.146.pdf> (accessed on 26 March 2018).
- OECD (2017), *2017 Survey on applying the eight building blocks of PCSD in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: Sweden*, OECD, Paris, unpublished. [3]