UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Guidance Note – The SDGs, Human Rights, Gender, and Sustainable Development in the 2030 Agenda[1]

The following note provides guidance on key aspects related to the interlinked nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to how we can fulfil the UN's commitment to human rights and gender in UNODC's programmatic work.

The interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda and its SDGs are a strategic framework that demands that Member States and its partners address the indivisible nature of the agenda– a highly interconnected web – and to the fact that progress on one Goal or Target should ideally reinforce another. We cannot focus on single Goals or a select set of Goals without considering how these interact with the SDGs overall. Transitioning towards more sustainable and resilient societies requires a cohesive approach that recognizes that these challenges, and their solutions, are interrelated.

Understanding how the SDGs are interlinked should make for better policies and more effective action to attain sustainable development targets. Consider the following:

- Achieving one target can be dependent on another – ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making at all levels (16.7) **is dependent on** ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (5.5), and vice versa;
- One target imposes conditions on another – take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products (15.7) **conditions** the […] combat[ting] [of] all forms of organized crime (16.4);
- Progress on one target reinforces progress on another – ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for […] promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence […] (4.7) **facilitates** the promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels […] (16.3).

What do these linkages mean for strategic planning and project design?

- The need for seeing the big picture up front - the interrelationships that matter; we need to ensure that every new project we develop at least consider the linkages it can make with other ongoing projects in a particular office/region as also with global programmes.
- The need to work with like-minded partners from within the UN family, public or private sector, civil society, as this will foster an inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach,

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[1] A/res/70/1 that adopted the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development explicitly includes the following language: "The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which we are announcing today demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what they did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental."

highlighting interlinkages and interconnections that cannot be tackled by one entity in isolation.

- The need to examine goals from multiple perspectives, including, critically, from the perspective of rights holders; and
- The need for broad ownership of the whole agenda and understanding the interdependencies between targets.

Human rights and gender as core components of our work

The integration of equality, human rights, gender, and social determinants into UNODC policies, programmes, and institutional mechanisms will be vital in upholding the ideals at the heart of the SDGs, that seek to empower women and men, reduce inequalities between and among populations and promote human rights. The SDGs reaffirm the indivisible nature of economic, social, and cultural rights, on the one hand, and civil and political rights, on the other, and the mutually reinforcing nature of these rights on sustainable development and peace. When drafting concept notes and project documents, be mindful of adhering to UNODC human rights and gender guidelines and policies.[2]

Human Rights

Human rights are at the core of all the work of the UN system and – together with peace and security, and development – represent one of the three interlinked and mutually reinforcing pillars of the United Nations enshrined in the Charter. UNODC is in the unique position of working across all three pillars, and it is crucial that we apply a holistic approach to our programmatic work in the areas of human rights, security, and development.

A key element of mainstreaming the promotion of human rights in the work of UNODC is the incorporation of a human rights-based approach to development cooperation and technical assistance programming. A human rights-based approach implies a conscious and systematic integration of human rights and human rights principles in all aspects of programming work. In particular, when applied to programming, a human rights-based approach should include a focus on the promotion of equality and non-discrimination, ensuring the participation and inclusion of disadvantaged groups, and strengthening state accountability concerning its human rights obligations. Where relevant, it must also be ensured that project managers consider the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN support to non-UN security forces (HRDDP). The HRDDP sets out measures that all United Nations entities must take in order to ensure that any support that they may provide to non-United Nations forces is consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. These measures include conducting risk assessments to decide whether to provide support to non-UN security forces, monitoring the human rights situation, applying mitigation measures and, in extreme cases, withdrawing support. At all stages of the programme cycle and for all programmes, the overall aim is to enhance service delivery by UNODC through the strengthening of state capacity to respect, protect, and promote human rights, particularly in the areas of justice, security, and health. In practice, this means considering all programming actions not only from the perspective of the immediate project or programme goals but also from the perspective of

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[2] Refer to the list of reference documents at the end of this document.

whether actions improve state capacity, observance, and fulfillment of human rights, in line with the 2030 Agenda and universally recognized human rights conventions.[3]

Questions to keep in mind when formulating concept notes and project documents:

- What are the main aspects of the human rights situation in the country/region you are covering?
- Are there any risks that we need to be aware of when designing our projects and programmes?
- What safeguards or monitoring will be in place to ensure that work under the project does not inadvertently feed into human rights violations, particularly where non-UN security forces are involved (for the latter, see the UN's Human Rights Due Diligence Policy)?
- How will you ensure the integration of human rights and human rights principles in all aspects of your project/programme (adhering to a human-rights-based approach)?

Gender

UNODC has also committed to systematically and effectively mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in our programmatic activities and organizational policies and practices. Understanding the relationship between mandate areas and gender is vital to the overall effectiveness of any response.[4] The UNODC strategic framework commits staff to mainstream gender concerns into the three pillars of the work programme of UNODC (normative work, research and analytical work, and field-based technical assistance work).[5] Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for making women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women, men, boys and girls benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.[6] In order to achieve this, UNODC has committed to the following:

- Defining and supporting gender-related SDG results in strategic planning;
- Reporting on gender-related results;
- Delivering programmatic results on gender equality and the empowerment of women; and
- Evaluating performance in a gender-responsive manner and evaluate gender equality-targeted performance in particular.

Questions to keep in mind when formulating concept notes and project documents:

- Is the project based on data and evidence gathered in a gender-sensitive manner?

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[3] For more information, please refer to UNODC's position paper on human rights:
https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC_Human_rights_position_paper_2012.pdf
[4] Refer to the Guidance Note for UNODC Staff on "Gender Mainstreaming in the work of UNODC"
[5] For more information, please refer to UNODC's Strategy for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women:
https://www.unodc.org/documents/Gender/UNOV-UNODC_Strategy_for_Gender_Equality_and_the_Empowerment_of_Women_2018-2021_FINAL.pdf
[6] In accordance with Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2

- What are the implications of the project for women and men[7] and how do they differ?
- What do gender-based power structures in the country/region you are covering look like, i.e. access to resources, services and rights by women and men?
- What are the key issues related to the empowerment of women and gender equality that are being addressed by your project/programme?
- How will the project bring about improvements for women as well as men?

UNODC and sustainable development

Peace, justice, respect for the rule of law, and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions are at the core of sustainable development. Going forward, there is a need to link up UNODC's programmatic work with development initiatives and the work of the UN Sustainable Development Group (successor to the UNDG and headed now by empowered RCs who report directly to the Deputy Secretary -General), and to make it clear to Member States that UNODC does not only work in the area of security, supply reduction, and law enforcement without considering other parts of the complex equations that go in to finding sustainable development solutions.

Sound, evidence-based, and whole-of-society interventions that seek to promote healthy, safe, inclusive and resilient communities are, therefore, critical to helping Member States promote societies that are well equipped to achieve sustainable development. It is essential that you incorporate the broader use of development language in concept notes and project documents. At the same time, you will need to assess your project's/programme's contribution to the national development goals of the country/ies you are working in, to determine how you can support their national SDG targets. Further, your project/programme should address needs identified in the UNDAF or similar document in your country and be included herein. This will be vital in light of the Development System reform agenda, and coordination with RC and UN Country Team (CT) efforts will be of great importance.

Questions to keep in mind:

- How does your project/programme support Member States to achieve their development goals?
- How does your project/programme relate to the UNDAF's of the countries you are covering, and what linkages can be made to the UNSDG, in particular to the CTs and the RCs?
- Can your proposed interventions be used to define Joint Programmes with other UN entities, to be submitted to the RC for funding through the Joint SDG Fund or other pooled funding mechanisms?
- How does your project/programme contribute to attaining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development, notably, does it include elements of data collection, analysis and reporting against national and global level SDG indicators?

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[7] For purposes of this Guidance Note, the terms "women" and "men" will be used but will implicitly refer to males and females of various ages.

Reference Documents:

UN Docs:

- Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1): http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf
- Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/ECOSOCAC1997.2.PDF
- Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN support to non-UN security forces (HRDDP)

UNODC Docs:

- UNODC and the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Position Paper: https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC_Human_rights_position_paper_2012.pdf
- Drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice - A Human Rights perspective: https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_19/E-CN15-2010-CRP1_E-CN7-2010-CRP6/E-CN15-2010-CRP1_E-CN7-2010-CRP6.pdf
- Mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender Equality – Evaluation and Planning: http://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/IEUwebsite/HumanRights_Gender/Mainstreaming_Human_Rights_and_Gender_Equality.pdfUNODC Guidance Note on
- Gender mainstreaming in the work of UNODC: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/directory/docs/UNODC-GuidanceNote-GenderMainstreaming.pdf
- UNODC's Strategy for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women https://www.unodc.org/documents/Gender/UNOV-UNODC_Strategy_for_Gender_Equality_and_the_Empowerment_of_Women_2018-2021_FINAL.pdf
- SDG materials on the UNODC website: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/about-unodc/sustainable-development-goals/sdgs-index.html
- SDG tools and publications on the SPIA intranet page: https://www.unodc.org/intranet_pa/en/SPIA_temp/sustainable-development-goals.html

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