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The Voice of the IsDB Community of Practice (CoP) on SDGs

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NAVIGATING THE POLYCRISIS ON THE ROAD TO THE 2030 AGENDA



Contributing to the SDGs in a Fragile Context

Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Transformation of Agrarian Economies in Rural Afghanistan (SITARA)

Convergence of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and National Security Agendas

From Accountability and Learning to evidence-based evaluation: a roadmap to SDGs for Developing Countries

Aligning Sustainable Development Goals in Maldives Member Country Partnership Strategy 2022-2025

Enhancing Use of Evidence Accelerates Progress on SDGs

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Note: The SDGs COP core team is composed of:

- Amir Hamza Syed (leader) • Hamdi • Khalid Ahmed • Sharjeel Ahmad • Dr. Ima Arit Kashim • Md Golam Mortaza • Raian Farooq • Bassem Haikal • Syed Muhammad Abdullah.

The core team will rotate in writing the editorial for each issue.

Views expressed by the contributors do not necessarily represent IsDB view or policies. The views should be attributed to the author(s) and not to the IsDB, its Management or its Board of Executive Directors.

Editorial: Ahmed Faruk Diken



Dear Esteemed Colleagues,
Warm greetings from the SDGs Community of Practice as we embark on the 18th edition of the SDGs Digest!

While we had hoped to usher in 2024 with a renewed sense of optimism for sustainable development across our Member Countries, the challenges of 2023 have been profound.

The year ended amidst a series of daunting obstacles, particularly the prolonged crises witnessed globally. Most notably, the recent conflict in Palestine continues to inflict unspeakable devastation upon a populace already burdened by decades of injustice, further compounded by catastrophic earthquakes in Morocco, Turkey, and other Member Countries, resulting in widespread destruction of lives and infrastructure.

In an era marked by unprecedented global interconnectedness, we find ourselves confronting a tapestry of intertwined crises, collectively referred to by experts as "polycrises." At the core of this intricate web of challenges lies the enduring specter of conflict and fragility, casting a long shadow over the regions we serve, including the Middle East, Africa, and beyond. Protracted conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Palestine exact a heavy toll on civilian populations, fueling humanitarian crises of unprecedented magnitude. Refugee and displacement crisis of unparalleled scale is one of the immediate repercussions, which has further exacerbated the existing challenges such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. These conflicts, with their multifaceted nature, defy simple solutions and perpetuate cycles of instability, fragility, and exacerbate the already proliferating humanitarian crises. Consequently, coordinated, and collaborative actions on both national and international levels become increasingly urgent and imperative.

In this edition of the Digest, our dedicated team has curated insightful articles and opinion pieces that showcase the commendable work being done across the IsDB Group to respond to these challenges through emergency response and resilience-building activities. It's heartening to realize that despite the adversities, the Bank not only met but surpassed its financing objectives, reaching a record US\$ 4.2 billion in approvals across key sectors. In addition, the Bank's active participation in COP28 underscored its commitment to addressing pressing global issues while leading initiatives and programs crucial for sustainable development. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all authors for their invaluable contributions.

I would like to take a moment to inform you of some changes in the SDGs COP that have begun to take effect in October 2023. I am pleased to announce that the SDGs COP, which started under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Rami Ahmad in 2017, is now transitioning into its 3rd generation of the Core Team. I am honored to pass the baton to my colleague Amir Hamza Syed from Partnership, Global Advocacy and Resource Mobilization Department (PGARM) to lead the 3rd Core Team with members including Dr. Bassem Haikal, Dr. Ima Arit Kashim, Sharjeel Ahmad, Mohammed Golam Mortaza, Raian Farooq and Mona Munshi. Brs. Hamdi Ahmedou (ITFC) and Khalid Ahmed (ISFD) are continuing with the Core Team in this 3rd generation. We would like to express our eternal gratitude to outgoing members including Sr. Munira Abdelwahid, Sharia Walker, and Yehia Amin for their invaluable support and hard work.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all contributors of the COP who have taken the time to contribute to the Digests as well as the Open Dialogues over the years. As the team transitions under new leadership and new members, we ask for your continued engagement with the COP to keep the sustainable development agenda alive in the Bank.

Thank you and May Allah Bless!

SDGs Digest is a Newsletter published by the SDGs Community of Practice (CoP) in IsDB Group. You can submit your articles, feedback, book reviews, reports and other topics related to the SDGs via SDGsCoP@isdb.org

Rising to the Challenge: The IsDB's Key Role in Addressing Triple Shocks of Fragility, Conflict, and Natural Disasters



Abdimajid Abdullahi
IsDB

In an increasingly interconnected world, the challenges posed by fragility, conflict, and natural disasters have been intensified, demanding urgent attention. These multifaceted issues have profound implications for both the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group and its member countries (MCs). This article seeks to delve into the intricate nature of these challenges, underscored by specific examples from MCs, scrutinizes the existing approaches and policies in place to address them, identifies prevailing gaps and their implications, and proposes forward-looking suggestions and conclusions.

As per the IsDB fragility and resilience policy, fragility is defined “as the combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacity of the state, system, and/ or communities to manage, absorb, or mitigate those risks”. For instance, the number of fragile and conflict-affected member countries escalated from 28 to 31 as reported by the OECD’s State of Fragility Report in 2022 and the IsDB Resilience Index in 2023. This increase can be attributed to heightened macroeconomic vulnerability, challenges in debt sustainability, extreme poverty, and sudden shifts in institutional and governance structures. These MCs grapple with persistent fragility, enduring decades of protracted crises, inadequate institutional capacity, and fragile economies. This state of fragility often perpetuates a vicious cycle, rendering transition, recovery, and development exceedingly arduous. According to the IsDB resilience report in 2022, it is highly improbable that these countries will be able to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Violent conflict remains a devastating and enduring pressing issue, leaving lasting impacts on affected countries and their populations. The protracted civil wars in Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, Yemen, and enduring occupation of Israel on Palestine serve as stark examples, leading to mass displacements, devastation, and the disruption of countless lives. These conflicts not only result in significant humanitarian crises but also destabilize entire regions. Violent conflict, coupled with compounded crises, has profoundly affected MCs in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, where conflicts and climatic shocks are pushing populations deeper into the fragility trap.

Natural disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods, can strike suddenly and have catastrophic consequences. Turkey, Syria in 2022, Morocco, and Libya in 2023 serve as poignant cases, as they have experienced multiple natural disasters, such as devastating earthquakes, storms, and floods. These calamities have led to a substantial loss of life, extensive damage to infrastructure, and significant setbacks to economic and social development.

The interconnected challenges of fragility, conflict, and natural disasters demand a comprehensive and nuanced approach. MCs grappling with fragility must address the root causes, fortify governance

structures, and promote social cohesion to break the cycle of instability. The international community must redouble its efforts to prevent and mitigate violent conflicts, as their consequences resonate far beyond borders. Additionally, nations should enhance early warning systems, disaster preparedness and response mechanisms to minimize the devastating impacts of natural disasters. By confronting these challenges proactively, MCs can foster resilience, stability, peace, and ultimately achieve sustainable development.

Effectively addressing fragility, conflict, and natural disasters demands a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach that encompasses humanitarian-development, the cultivation of resilience, and the implementation of sustainable development strategies. In this endeavor, the IsDB needs to play a central role, providing essential support to MCs in tackling the multifaceted challenges posed by fragility, conflict, and protracted crises.

The IsDB recognizes the vital importance of proactively investing in prevention to help MCs address the root causes of fragility and conflict. The Bank’s approach is characterized by a shift from providing immediate relief to fostering long-term development, thereby enabling countries to not only recover but also build resilience to future shocks.



In addition to addressing the complexities of conflict and fragility, the IsDB places significant emphasis on managing the risks associated with natural disasters. To this end, the Bank adopts a proactive approach by assisting MCs in managing risks, incorporating disaster risk management into its country engagements and operational strategies, and making investments in disaster risk financing. This multifaceted approach enables the Bank to proactively address and reduce the destructive impact of natural disasters, while also aiding in a more resilient recovery and reconstruction process, guided by the "building back better" principle.

The IsDB has recently introduced a range of policies, strategies, operational frameworks, tools, and action plans to further bolster the resilience of its member countries. Notably, the introduction of Crisis Management Response Guidelines and a contingency emergency response component within development projects stand as a significant step forward in mitigating the risks posed by natural disasters. Nevertheless, a critical challenge remains—the availability of limited grants and concessional resources to enable



timely and adequate support for MCs to address these crises.

The IsDB's commitment to addressing fragility, conflict, and natural disasters is evident in its holistic approach, which combines prevention, development, recovery, and resilience-building strategies. While the bank has made substantial progress in its endeavors, the need for increased resources to effectively respond to these challenges remains a pressing concern. By bolstering its support mechanisms, the IsDB can further reinforce the resilience and stability of its member countries, ensuring a brighter and more secure future for all.

In summary, the challenges posed by fragility, conflict, and natural disasters in an increasingly interconnected world demand immediate concerted attention. The IsDB and its MCs face profound implications that require comprehensive strategies for resolution. To enable the Bank to support MCs to navigate these unprecedented challenges effectively, it is necessary to consider the following recommendations:

Holistic Approach to Fragility, Conflict, and Natural Disasters: The IsDB should adopt a holistic approach that addresses the intricate nature of these challenges. This involves supporting member countries in addressing the root causes of fragility, strengthening governance structures, and fostering social cohesion to break the cycle of instability. The IsDB can work with member countries to develop comprehensive strategies that encompass humanitarian development peace nexus, resilience building, and sustainable development, tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each country.

Preventive and Resilience-Building Initiatives: The Bank needs to proactively invest in prevention and resilience-building efforts. This approach involves shifting

from providing immediate relief to fostering long-term development. By enabling member countries to not only recover from crises but also build resilience against future shocks, the IsDB can play a central role in mitigating the long-term impacts of fragility, conflict, and natural disasters.

Disaster Risk Management and Financing:

Natural disasters are unpredictable and have devastating consequences. The IsDB should place significant emphasis on managing the risks associated with natural disasters. This includes assisting member countries in disaster risk management, effectively incorporating disaster risk management into its country engagements and operational strategies and making investments in disaster risk financing. By doing so, the IsDB can anticipate and mitigate the potentially devastating consequences of natural disasters effectively.

Strengthened Resource Mobilization:

While the IsDB has taken significant steps to address these challenges, one critical concern remains the availability of sufficient grants and concessional resources to enable timely and adequate support for member countries in their responses to crises. To further reinforce resilience and stability, it is important to work towards securing increased resources to effectively respond to these challenges.

As an institution with the largest number of fragile and conflict affected MCs, the Bank's leadership role is crucial in supporting its MCs in overcoming the complex challenges of fragility, conflict, and natural disasters. By adopting a comprehensive approach, investing in prevention and resilience-building, and prioritizing disaster risk management, the IsDB can make a significant impact in promoting stability, peace, and sustainable development within its MCs.



The IsDB has recently introduced a range of policies, strategies, operational frameworks, tools, and action plans to further bolster the resilience of its member countries. Notably, the introduction of Crisis Management Response Guidelines and a contingency emergency response component within development projects stands as a significant step forward in mitigating the risks posed by natural disasters.

IsDB Group Participation and Key Outcomes of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) in Dubai under the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) Presidency



Olatunji Yusuf,
IsDB

The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) hosted the world in Dubai for the 28th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) from 30 November – 12 December 2023, as a crucial opportunity for global collective action on climate change. COP28 aimed to be open, fair, practical, and effective. COP28 Presidency areas of focus were: Adaptation and Fragility, Finance, Loss and Damage, Mitigation, Food Systems, and Nature and Biodiversity and driven by the main theme of (i) accelerating the energy transition and cutting emissions before 2030, (ii) transforming climate finance, by fulfilling old commitments and setting the basis for a new finance agreement, (iii) putting nature, people, lives, and livelihoods at the centre of climate action, and (iv) mobilizing for the most inclusive COP ever.

More than 100,000 participants from over 200 countries took part in the blue zone

of COP28, including 156 Heads of State and Government, 22 leaders of international organizations, over 780 ministers, 500 mayors, over 50,000 students and thousands of other key actors from international organizations, civil society, private sector.

The IsDB Group member countries were very active in the Blue Zone, with events in their pavilions. The President led the IsDB Group delegation, which also included the VP of finance, CEOs, DG GP, Senior Advisor and Bank staff who coordinated IsDB Group activities and MDBs initiatives.

The Parties at COP28 agreed on the main outcomes in the “UAE Consensus”, a long and comprehensive technical and political decision that has the first Global Stocktake (GST) as its core, showing the ambitious actions required to keep 1.5°C within reach. The UAE Consensus – based on the science; urges Parties to increase “ambitious, economy-wide emission reduction targets” in their next nationally determined contributions; proposes a new, specific target of tripling renewables and doubling energy efficiency by 2030; acknowledges the need to significantly scale adaptation finance beyond doubling, to address urgent and changing needs; a groundbreaking reference to transitioning away from all fossil fuels in energy



systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner in this critical decade to enable the world to reach net zero emissions by 2050, creates momentum towards reform of the global financial architecture, recognizing the role of credit rating agencies for the first time, and calling for the scaling up of concessional and grant finance.

At COP28, transforming climate finance was a major theme. US\$85 billion was raised in total. Some of the big achievements of COP28 are the Activation of the Loss & Damage Fund by countries, with a large promise of \$792 million, and the World Bank was chosen as the temporary trustee for 4 years. The UAE's announcement of Alterra, which is set to be the biggest climate investment fund in the world, worth \$30 billion expects to attract another \$250B of climate investments by 2030. A shared goal to increase renewable energy capacity threefold in this decade. A stronger focus on addressing the challenges in





IsDB collaborated with all MDBs to develop the Joint MDB Climate and Development statement as part of its coordinating role.

Fragile states by raising the proportion of climate finance in fragile and conflict-affected states. A first-ever COP-Health Ministerial event with the commitment of \$777 million by parties to fight tropical diseases. Second replenishment of the Green Climate Fund with a record pledging level of US\$ 12.8 billion over the next four years. Adoption of the framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation, following the two-year Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme. COP28 put a stronger emphasis on just transition. Promises toward adaptation from developed parties totaled ~\$330M across the Adaptation Fund, Least Developed Countries Fund, and Special Climate Change Fund.

The IsDB Group had a dedicated Pavilion and held high-quality COP28 side events. The side event program was designed in accordance with the overall IsDB Group COP28 theme, Develop Green, Include All. 17 side events took place across the IsDB Group Pavilion (12 side events) and the MDB Joint Pavilion (5 side events).

The IsDB took over as the chair of the MDB Climate Group in June 2023 and assumed the coordination role. The IsDB collaborated with all MDBs to develop the Joint MDB Climate and Development statement as part of its coordinating role. For events, the IsDB organized 13 Joint

MDB side events at COP28. At COP28, under IsDB's tenure, the Bank led the MDB Long-term Strategies Program, Support for Country-led Platforms, Development of Climate Outcome Metrics, and the Joint work of MDBs on Paris Alignment. The Bank also facilitated stakeholder engagement with CSOs and MDBs to discuss the work of MDBs and identify more areas of collaboration.

At COP28, MDB Heads met for the first time since COP21 and delivered a united message on the climate crisis. Their Joint Statement highlighted the importance of linking climate action with water, health, gender, and nature, and focused on outcomes, country-led platforms, long-term strategies (LTS), and supporting just transition. Several joint MDB sessions, coordination with UAE and country dialogues took place under the overall leadership and guidance of IsDB. The IsDB endorsed several statements led by the U.A.E Government, such as the COP28 U.A.E Presidency Climate and Health Declaration and COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace. These statements are in line with the Bank's strategic mandate and assistance to its member countries.

The IsDB, together with the Arab Coordination Group (ACG), a strategic alliance of regional and international development institutions, announced at

COP28 a commitment of US\$10 billion until 2030. This funding aims to support a comprehensive and affordable transition to renewable energy in developing countries. IsDB committed a landmark pledge of US\$ 1 billion to climate adaptation in fragile countries in the next three years, launched its Just Transition Framework, represented all MDB Heads to deliver a statement on climate action and the water sector, organized a high-level panel of MDB Heads as well as other substantial commitments from IsDB Group entities.

COP28 ushers in a new avenue of increased support for member countries

COP28 brings a new phase of environmental and economic policy for the 57 IsDB Member Countries. The global pledges made by various countries, development partners and stakeholders have important consequences for increasing climate efforts and further supporting countries, including the possibilities for financing loss and damage, enhancing support for climate-fragility nexus, country-led platforms by MDBs, access to the Alterra climate investment fund launched by the UAE Presidency, renewable energy transition support, just transition support, and food security and agriculture. Moreover, these pledges have a key role in transforming MDBs by changing the climate finance architecture and thus contributing to climate action and sustainable development. The consequences of these pledges include a strategic emphasis on capacity building for staff, improved project design and implementation, promotion of cross-sectoral, cross-thematic collaboration, advancement of innovation and knowledge sharing, and focus on results through improved monitoring and evaluation (M&E), further increased resource mobilization through sufficient capacity, resources and tools to mobilize, blend and leverage additional resources from climate funds, bilateral and multilateral funds, philanthropy and private sector for member countries.



SIMPLE: Six Strategies to Spur the Interest of Local Communities on Climate Change in Developing Countries



Muhammad Jameel Yusha'u
IsDB

"Simplicity is the ultimate Sophistication," according to the Italian philosopher Leonardo Da Vinci.

Climate change and extreme weather have been identified among the five most likely global risks in the World Economic Forum's global risks report 2020¹. Climate change is one of the most serious economic and development challenges of our generation. The Global Climate Change Report states that every single month of the year 2021 was warmer than average. Every year, major conferences are organized to discuss and create awareness about climate change, and pledges of billions of USD to support developing countries to fight the impact of climate change are made, but we are yet to see the flow of funds from these pledges to support developing countries to fight the impact of the changing climate. Whether it is the Conference of Parties, the UN General Assembly, or the regular meetings of multilateral institutions, it is clear, that these mega-events are about the elites talking to each other. But how do we make the language of climate change simple, and understandable in a way that connects with people?

The recent wave of populism across countries by right-wing politicians has taught us a major lesson. You can have the wrong message, but if you communicate the message in a language that can connect with people, you might be an inch away from capturing a major public office.

To make the campaign about climate change successful, stakeholders must speak in a language that connects with people in a way that they can understand. That is why I would like to propose a framework that can help climate champions to review and approach their engagement processes with the public differently,

especially in developing countries. The six-way framework is called SIMPLE.

S-speak in everyday language

To make the campaign about climate change successful, we must speak in a language that is accessible to people. Global warming, carbon emission, rise in temperature, climate adaptation and mitigation sound nice, but not everyone is a university graduate or receive enough training to understand these technical terms, especially if they have to be translated from one language to another. According to a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation (OECD), the total number of graduates globally will reach 300 million by 2030. As such, majority of the global population do not possess higher education qualification. Of course you do not need a degree to understand everything about climate change, but the easier the language, the better the message is understood by local communities.

I-invoke history and memories of the past

There is every likelihood that your grandmother has told you about a devastating flood during her childhood, or famine that cost lives due to hunger and food scarcity. That might sound more interesting in explaining the drastic changes in weather conditions, hurricanes or famines in different parts of the globe. It is easier than explaining 'a degree Celsius.' Information about climate change is not the exclusive right of few educated people. It must be made accessible to ordinary people. There are enough historical and anecdotal facts to help explain why climate change is a serious matter.

M-maximize the power of storytelling.

This strategy is a continuation of the previous one. The power of storytelling, especially on children cannot be overemphasized. A 2018 study in the Fukushima Journal of Medicine suggest that story telling in children activates part of the brain in children. The effect of that according to the journal highlights the importance of storytelling over reading in children.

P-publish educational materials in native languages

Publishing educational materials in different disciplines would go a long way

in simplifying and creating awareness about climate change. These publications should be done in every discipline and produced in local languages. A major difficulty in accessing information for local communities is reading materials in foreign languages. It is important to educate the public about climate change as almost 40% of adults globally are ignorant of climate change.

L-leverage civil society organizations

Civil society organizations and NGOs have a rooted understanding of local communities. They should serve as a vehicle in communicating with local communities and help them to understand all the nuances about climate change. The educational materials produced for public education are important assets that NGOs and civil society organizations can utilize for public sensitization campaigns. They could help in building the capacity of journalists on climate change issues. This is key especially in rural areas where radio remains an important instrument in creating public awareness.

E-entertainment through local channels

A local comedian engaging local communities could attract more interest in explaining global warming using humor than a professor of environment displaying chunk of data on PowerPoint. Think of it this way. Who will the local community understand better between a Trevor Noah equivalent in their vicinity dressed in local attire, and a PhD holder on climate change that appears too serious, too elitist and too urban for a truck driver or wood seller?

To spur in the interest of local communities on climate change, we must communicate to their conscience in a language they can understand. There is still a chance to make a difference.



1. WEF, 2020, The Global Risks Report 2020, World Economic Forum, Cologny/Geneva.

Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Transformation of Agrarian Economies in Rural Afghanistan (SITARA)



Farid Khan
IsDB

At the 17th Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers held on December 19, 2021, in Islamabad, Pakistan, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) mandated IsDB to develop and manage the Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund (AHTF). On March 22, 2022, IsDB and OIC signed the Fund's Charter, with the aim of mobilizing grant contributions from donors to provide funding for humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan through a pooled fund.

To respond to the continued challenges of poverty, uneven development, and marginalization of the poorest of the poor who live in some of the most isolated, hard-to-reach geographies of northern Afghanistan, AHTF has partnered with Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) to

promote **Sustainable and Inclusive Transformation of Agrarian Economies in Rural Afghanistan (SITARA)**.

The project will be implemented in Takhar and Kunduz provinces, assisting over 1000 households, or almost 100,000 people. It will complement the wider endeavors of the Aga Khan Development Network in north-eastern and northern Afghanistan provinces, supported by other partners such as the Aga Khan Foundation, the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE), the European Commission, Swiss Development Cooperation, and the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), among others.

SITARA builds on AKF's flagship integrated development approach. The key elements of this approach focus on the interlinked problems of food insecurity, spatial marginality, lack of access to financial resources, and the overall lack of opportunity to break through the poverty trap. The AKF's innovative approach puts the household at the center of the program intervention as opposed to customary approach of focusing on individuals.

Recognizing the household as the key unit in a community that has its unique challenges, opportunities, resources, and skills to negotiate with the wider social

and economic challenges in their own ways, AKF will facilitate entrepreneurial and catalytic transformational activities to promote rural development. Through the proposed project, AKF aims to engage pre-identified households and devise appropriate customized solutions to specifically address their individual situation and challenges.

Based on a needs assessment, Participatory Poverty Analysis (PPA) and Progress out of Poverty Index (PPI), customized Livelihoods Investment Plans (LIPs) have been designed for about 5,000 households. These LIPs provide a range of services. The LIPs aim to:

- i. Improve agricultural production,
- ii. Create income generation opportunities,
- iii. Build capacity of rural households to resolve their problems collectively, and
- iv. Offer financial products to accelerate the self-development of Rural Households in a sustainable fashion.

SITARA is being funded by the AHTF through a most generous contribution by King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief). SITARA will directly support households utilizing the platform established by the ongoing Food Security and Agriculture sustainability for Livelihoods (FASL) project, being funded by Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC).

SITARA's overall aim is to ensure that households graduate out of poverty by optimally utilizing tailored and targeted technical and financial support. The resultant improved household incomes, enhanced assets, and skills will create a snow-balling effect to enable households to not fall back to vicious cycles of poverty. SITARA supports multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including SDG-1 (No Poverty), SDG2 (No Hunger), SDG3 (Good Health and Well Being), SDG5 (Gender Equality), SDG8 (Decent Work), SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG17 (Partnerships).



The Middle East Green Initiative (MGI): From Ambition to Action



Ahmed Saleh Hariri

Advisor MGI, Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

The Middle East Green Initiative (MGI) was announced by HRH Prince Mohamed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Crown Prince and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Saudi Arabia in the first MGI Summit held in Riyadh in October 2021. The initiative aims to **facilitate collaboration and offer support** to regional member countries in the MGI geographic scope to tackle **land degradation, promote land restoration and vegetation cover, conservation of forests, rangelands, croplands** and other vegetation cover areas through utilizing nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches. The geographic scope of MGI includes countries in Central Asia, West Asia, South Asia, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The key target is to plant 50 billion trees in the member countries joining the initiative equivalent to restoring 200 million hectares of land. MGI aims to promote effective regional participation, attract international support, and facilitate effective implementation. Activities will include, but not limited to the following:

- **Knowledge-sharing** through workshops & publications,
- **Capacity building** of national and/or sub-national entities,
- **Supporting monitoring and evaluation** of national activities,
- **Facilitating coordination** of national initiatives,
- **Recommendations for regulatory reforms**

To finance the projects in the member countries, a dedicated fund is being established through which grants will be given to targeted countries along with opportunities for additional co finance from regional/international multilateral development banks, private sector companies, and philanthropists. **MGI provides an attractive value proposition and strong support network for regional members through:**

- **Regional alliance to achieve environmental goals & commitments;** it provides member countries with regional support to jointly achieve national & regional targets through carbon positive environmental projects,

- **Access to significant funding & technical resources;** it provides members with access to significant centralized funding volumes and efficient provision of technical support, capacity building and knowledge sharing at scale,
- **Close involvement of national private sector;** MGI enables members to boost their domestic economy by involving key national private sector in MGI project implementation & facilitating global partnerships,
- **Global visibility & credibility;** it offers a high visibility & high credibility forum with global recognition as the most extensive land restoration and afforestation program of its kind,
- **Transparent & rigorous mechanisms;** MGI's specific and measurable targets and rigorous screening and monitoring mechanisms ensure clear direction for implementation accountability and transparency.

The Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was entrusted to take the necessary action to implement the environmental track of the initiative. To start with, the Ministry prepared a communication plan and list of potential countries to be invited, which was approved by the concerned local authorities. This was followed by wide range consultations/workshops with relevant U.N. Agencies and Multilateral Development banks including UNEP, UNDP, FAO, UNCCD, World Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank in order to benchmark the initiative with best practices and develop transparent regional governance. Furthermore, bilateral meetings were held with a number of regional countries from Asia and Africa in order to get their concurrence and support to the proposed governance model, scope and benefits/opportunities they will receive from the initiative. The MGI Charter was prepared and discussed in an International Multilateral Workshop in September 2022 attended by 19 regional countries and 5 International Organizations including the Islamic Development Bank. After the workshop, the Charter reviewed by Deputy

Ministers of the regional countries on 17 October 2022. Finally, the MGI Governance and Charter were approved in a Ministerial Meeting held in Riyadh on 26 October 2022 attended by 20 founding countries.

The second edition of the MGI Summit was held in November 2022 on the sidelines of COP 27 in Sharm El Shiekh during which leaders expressed their appreciation to the efforts made by Saudi Arabia in the implementation of the initiative and endorsed the governance model. HRH Prince Mohamed Bin Salman announced during the Summit the pledge of US\$ 2.5 billion for the initiative and to support its secretariat in Riyadh.

After the summit, the founding countries were requested to start the ratification process of the Charter and designate their representatives in the MGI's Ministerial Council, Executive Committee, and the Ad hoc Technical Task Force entrusted with the actual implementation and setting up the secretariat for the initiative. So far, seventeen countries have designated their representatives in the Ministerial Council and the Executive Committee, while 13 countries are participating in the Task Force.

Furthermore, efforts are undertaken to invite additional regional and non-regional countries to consider joining the MGI, while there are a number of countries that have expressed their interest to support and join the initiative.

As far as the SDGs are concerned, the MGI is expected to contribute to the realization of SDGs 3, 13, 15, and 17. In SDG 3 relating to good health and wellbeing, the planting of trees in cities and suburbs will lead to better health. As for SDG 13 relating to climate action, the target number of trees to be planted throughout the region will lead climate change mitigation. As far as SDG 15 relating to life on land the MGI will help restore around 200 million hectares of land, and finally SDG 17 relating to partnerships for the goals, the MGI will foster a platform for partnerships between countries of the region, collaboration with U.N. agencies, and support from MDBs, the private sector and philanthropists.



Country leaders that have attended the second summit in November 2022



Group photo of the founding countries and organizations that have attended the Ministerial Meeting held on 26th October, 2022

Electric Vehicles - A Solution to Decarbonize Transport Sector



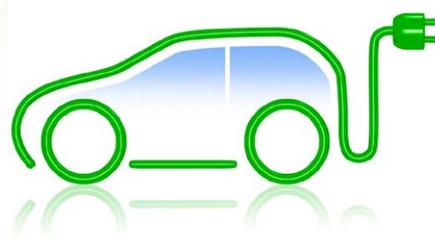
Atiq Ahmad
IsDB

Sustainable transport—with its objectives of universal access, abridged environmental and climate impact, enhanced resilience, and greater safety and efficiency—is cardinal to the sustainable socioeconomic development as it helps in enhancing productivity, competitiveness, growth, employment and promotes social inclusion and prosperity. Sustainable transport runs on clean and



efficient fuels and may include electric power, biofuels, hydrogen, natural gas, and synthetic fuels.

Globally, the transportation sector generates about 28% greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which is the largest share in the total GHG emissions. It is nearly one-quarter (25%) of global energy-related GHG emissions, in 2019. Most of the transport sector emissions, almost 97%, come from direct burning of fossil fuels. Only about 1% of total energy supplied by electrical sources is used in transport sector. The share of electricity in final energy consumption of transport sector is estimated to rise to 49% by 2050 and Electric vehicles (EVs) would account for more than 80% of all road transportation activities. However, the transport sector is still far from being on track to meet global



climate targets for 2030 and 2050.

During last decade, the Electric mobility (e-mobility) solutions, including EVs adoption, have gained significant attention and have generated substantial momentum around the world. Many countries are also focusing to its decarbonization potential, as being “Green Transport”, it safeguards local environment, improves air quality, and contributes towards overall global decarbonization process. About 90% of the world’s EV fleet is being used in Europe, China, and the United States.

Recently, many of the low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) have started opting e-mobility solutions for passenger transportation. Brazil, India, and Indonesia are leading the electrification of bus fleets in their largest cities. Particularly, in LMICs case the e-mobility solutions are more attractive for bikes, two/three wheelers, buses, and highly used light weight four-wheel fleets such as taxis and paratransit. Battery swap arrangements are now being successfully introduced in Asian and East African countries to lower the high up-front electrification cost of two- and three-wheelers.



Asia has emerged as the largest e-bike market, selling tens of millions of e-bikes annually. Currently, the China’s e-bike market is valued at USD 16.04 billion and expected to reach USD 31.3 billion in the next five years. The ‘Precedence Research’ reported that the expected total sales of e-bike in 2023 may reach to 40 million units and by 2023 it will be around 300 million units. Middle East & African regions are expected to experience the strongest growth of 15.40% during 2022-2030.

E-mobility in large urban areas not only results in significant decarbonization but also helps in achieving the inclusive mobility targets, improving local air quality, ensuring energy security, and promoting



harmonized industrial growth. Although the technology improvements, more efficient batteries, and mass EVs’ production have made considerable positive impacts; however, EVs are still 50-60% more expensive in manufacturing costs, which is considered as one of the key barriers to EV adoption. The increase in the EVs’ share in the transport fleets offers several advantages, including

- o significant reduction of CO2 emissions
- o substantial reduction of fleet’s operating costs
- o notable reduction of maintenance related to engines and oil
- o considerable improvement in local air quality, particularly in urban areas
- o reduction in noise and vibrations levels, while on board
- o on a global scale, incredible energy optimization capabilities through charging vehicles when the energy demand is low, or when electricity is

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



- o being derived from sustainable sources (like solar power, hydropower, or wind power etc.)
- o potential to promote production of renewable electricity reducing energy dependency
- o new opportunities for local production and assembly of adapted vehicles and technology
- o great potential to decrease energy waste and help balance energy demand through additional power storage and add energy back into the grid using Vehicle-To-Grid (V2G) technology.

The EVs have significant relationship and direct impacts to several United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Particularly, they contribute to SDG 3 (good healthy and well-being for all) by reducing the number of deaths and/ or illnesses from hazardous chemicals, air pollution and contamination, SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) by contributing to global resource efficiency, affordability, and utilization of clean energy consumption, SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic growth) by promoting sustained, inclusive & sustainable economic growth, improved and productive employment and decent workplaces. Additionally, EVs also supports SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) through development of efficient systems, scientific innovation, EV charging stations and modernization of industries and infrastructure.

Moreover, EVs also contribute to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) as they result in significant improvement in urban air quality, health, and wellbeing of inhabitants. The EVs by fostering more sustainable consumption of energy and transportation services also contributions to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and most notability contributes

to SDG 13 (Climate Action) since the EVs use clean energy sources and help in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Finally, EVs also support SDG-17 (Partnerships) by nurturing effective partnership between countries, public sector, private sector, industries and financial institutions.

The formulation and delivering of a successful sustainable low carbon transportation solution encompasses adoption of prudent policies, comprehensive planning, resource efficiency, vigilant regulation, transparent governance, affordable finance, and robust markets. The key factors in the formulation and mainstreaming of EV solutions may include:

1. Prioritization of the country's key motivational aspects and integrating these into country's national development strategy, transport policy and sustainable development agenda.
2. Development of a thorough and well worked out development and investment program by identifying the roadmap, timebound actions and resourcing plan for
 - a. essential infrastructure and it's effective integration into transport and energy systems,
 - b. integrated institutional



arrangements (specially in transport, energy, and environment sectors) to effectively manage demand and supply and related regulatory frameworks.

- c. carefully finalizing the choice of technology and detailed induction plans for various transport vehicles and modes,
- d. earmarking adequate public funds for subsidizing charging infrastructure and monetary incentives,
- e. devising detailed financing mechanisms to spread the capital costs, public investment mechanism, favorable energy tariffs and vehicle ownership facilitation
- f. Considering the eligible carbon finance supports to offset the public investment needs and technology upgrades etc.
- g. Promoting local manufacturing and industries, knowledge sharing and technology transfers and developing local research and innovation facilitations

The move to EVs may be ambitious but is necessary for decarbonizing the transport sector. The countries need to be ready of a rapid transformation, swift renovation, and modernization of associated infrastructure and industries. To achieve the global emission targets, collective initiatives in developing the (i) prudent financing mechanisms, (ii) strengthening of domestic and regional manufacturing capabilities, (iii) EV and battery supply chain sustainability, (iv) rapid capacity development, knowledge sharing and transfer of technology; (v) scaled up plans for electrification and green resources; and (vi) building partnerships and strengthening cooperation to foster South-South, North-South and South-North collaboration. Global implementation of EV solutions may result in a reduction of approximately 43% of CO2 emission, 37% decrease in oil demand and substantive progress towards net zero emissions. Therefore, the increase in the use of EVs is critical to advancing to sustainable development goals globally.



Convergence of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and National Security Agendas



Sohail Malik
CRCC

Earth Summit of 1992 at Rio de Janeiro is considered as a significant milestone in the evolution of global development agenda. It set the aim to achieve global sustainable development by the start of new millennium, therefore it was named Agenda 21. Ten years later at the Earth Summit of 2002 the (Millennium Development Goals) MDGs were agreed. The narrow set of 8 MDGs were later superseded by an expansive set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have 169 targets.

In the development context, year 2015 was quite significant. In 2015, at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed, also known as Agenda 2030. The landmark Paris Agreement on Climate Change was also adopted in 2015 at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) on 12 December 2015 to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and pursue efforts "to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction was also adopted in 2015 for reducing the frequency and impact of disasters resulting from natural phenomenon.

The development landscape has also evolved rapidly since beginning of the millennium. Emerging donors such as China and the Gulf States have become major actors in development finance, which could potentially have a dramatic effect on development cooperation. South-South financing of development is occurring more frequently. Several middle-income countries are expected to transition out of eligibility for donor financing.

Both sustainable development agenda and climate change imperatives that were independently evolving in 90s also started to converge as climate hazards such as extreme weather, high temperatures, droughts, floods, wildfires, storms, sea-level rise, soil degradation, and acidifying oceans became frequent and intense, threatening infrastructure, health, and water and food security. Climate-induced events can reduce adaptive capacity of individuals, communities, and regions by damaging key infrastructure and economic development.

The literature on interrelationship between climate change and sustainable development is limited, not well defined and fragmented. In reality, developing countries consider climate change a development issue. Any successful solution to the climate problem will

have to come from within the development process, it will need to begin, rather than end, with developing countries, and be based on a deep understanding of how development occurs. So far, the focus initially has been on addressing sustainable development from a climate lens. From a climate perspective, such development pathways need to be followed that not only will make economic growth emit less GHG emissions, but also reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts and sustain the growth momentum. Also, address climate from a sustainable development lens. In addition, "linkage of climate change to development policies will make development more sustainable". (ref Tariq Banuri and Hans Opscoor 2007, Climate Change and Sustainable Development, DESA Working Paper No.56)

Much before the convergence of sustainable development and climate change agendas, the US Naval War College had been studying climate change and national security interrelationships since 1980s. The US Defense Department followed and has undertaken steady stream of analysis over the past 3 decades. Global security agencies such as Pentagon, CIA, MI-6 and various European agencies are not only developing strategies to safeguard national sovereignty and protect people but also have begun to redirect resources to address climate change threats timely and effectively. Climate change is not a direct cause of instability and conflict, more seen as a "threat multiplier" that will aggravate stressors such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions -conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence.

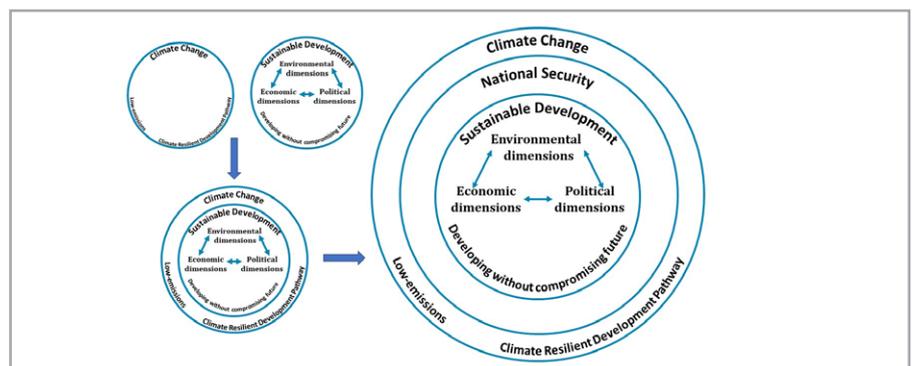
Recent actions and statements of Military experts and politicians worldwide have drawn attention to the consequences of climate change, including the destabilizing effects of storms, droughts, and floods. The fallout from global warming – massive migrations, increased border tensions, and greater demands for rescue and evacuation efforts - could increase the need for more military involvement. For these reasons, climate change is increasingly recognized as having national security implications, which has spurred dialogue between climate change and national security communities. However, military and security agencies are focusing on their own needs, such as military infrastructure, preparedness, and operations, with little or no attention to human and development side of security.

There is enough evidence about interrelationship between climate change, security, and conflicts. In Syria, the prolonged drought that preceded the uprising, drove farmers and herders from their fields and their pastures towards urban areas, which crowded these areas causing civil unrest. This escalated to the long and bloody civil war (ref Wilson Center).

According to an earlier annual report of the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community, water and food insecurity made worse by heat waves, droughts and floods are increasing the risk of conflict in Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, and Jordan. IPCC is predicting heat waves, heavier rain events, higher sea levels and severe damage to agriculture, all this represents a security risk for the entire world, however, their consequences are felt most strongly in Asian countries that are already vulnerable, where climate change and extreme weather compound their existing crisis and threats.

For Africa's Sahel region, tensions between herders and farmers were fueled by climate change and competition for land, forage, and water. For Maldives, there is no bigger threat than climate change as it is threatening the nation's very existence. In many Small Island Developing States (SIDS), lakes are drying up, depriving fresh water to tens of millions of people, unseasonal droughts are leaving millions of people homeless. Hunger and displacement are leading to conflicts, and entire nations are sinking under water, what is a bigger security threat to them than this?

In the wake of several South countries confronting polycrisis of a nature, magnitude, and complexity they have never experienced before, coupled with the extreme donor fatigue due to Ukraine war, global inflation, extreme weather etc., as well the interlinkage of climate change with sustainable development and national security, the time has come to converge the three interrelated agendas for maximizing effectiveness and efficiency, and most importantly the development impact. As depicted in the diagram below, the evolution and finally the convergence of the 3 agendas into one global sustainable development-climate change-national security agenda could help South – South countries meet their SDGs, fulfill their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and address their national security issues and challenges.



Contributing to the SDGs in a Fragile Context



Ahsanul Kibria
CRCC



Tenzin Rangdol
UNDP Cameroon



The North-West (NW) and South-West (SW) regions of Cameroon, the country's Anglophone regions, have been in a political crisis since 2016. The insecurity and violence resulting from the crisis exacerbated humanitarian needs, turned back development gains, and severely compromised the once-promising economy of the regions. In response to the crisis, the Government initiated a series of interventions, including the formulation of the Presidential Plan for Reconstruction and Development (PPRD) in the NW and SW, for which the UNDP was selected as the implementing partner under the ISDB financed components.

Within the framework of the PPRD, the ISDB Support to the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development (ISPPRD) for the North-West and South-West Regions of Cameroon amounting to Euro 32.25 million aims to support the acceleration of recovery and creation of an enabling environment for economic growth, development, and social cohesion. Particularly, the ISPPRD is anchored on three key components (i) reconstruction of infrastructure to improve access to basic

services; (ii) economic revitalization to boost production and create income-generating opportunities; and (iii) strengthening social cohesion to restore a sense of national belonging and rebuild the social fabric across all sectors. Activities within the ISPPRD are based on a thorough understanding of the local context and respond to the needs of affected populations through a gender-informed and conflict-sensitive approach.

All three components of the ISPPRD are mutually reinforcing and integrated to ensure maximum efficiency and impact, to ultimately address the root causes of fragility, reduce needs, and build resilience in the NW and SW regions. The ISPPRD is in line with the principle to "Leave No One Behind" and contributes to the Government of Cameroon's efforts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The overarching SDGs under the project include SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere; SDG 5: Gender Equality, and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. Furthermore, various activities of the project have been mapped to other SDGs as shown below to demonstrate the contribution of ISPPRD on the SDGs.

SDG	Project Activities
<p>SDG 2: Zero Hunger End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase agricultural production through the rehabilitation of farms and the erection of greenhouses • Strengthen agro-pastoral collectives and support agro-pastoral activities • Provision of farming equipment and tools to improve production methods
<p>SDG 3: Good Health and Well Being Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction and equipping of 33 health centers to improve access to medical treatment as well as preventative health care, contributing to overall health and well-being
<p>SDG 4: Quality Education Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction and equipping of 95 schools, from the nursery level to the college level, to address the needs of diverse age groups
<p>SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction of 32 solar-powered water points to increase access to clean drinking water and establishment of management committees for sustainability
<p>SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, productive employment, and decent work for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction of markets and small businesses affected by the crisis • Construction of solar-powered ovens for cocoa and coffee will be constructed to enable the production and eventually the sale of high-value crops
<p>SDG 16: Peace Justice and Strong Institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction of community-based multifunctional centers • Provision of training to enhance the capacity of women and youth in peacebuilding • Organization of dialogue platforms to encourage peaceful resolution of conflict • Provision of lost/destroyed documents such as birth certificates and ID cards to improve access to legal rights and mobility

Targeting SDG 11.5 Through Disaster Response Financing



Yigit Iscioglu

IsDB



Dr. Ishtiaq Akbar

IsDB



Moustapha Diallo

IsDB

On February 6th and 20th of February 2023, three major earthquakes hit Türkiye. The first two occurred on 6th February with the epicenters in the Pazarcık (Mw 7.7; focal depth: 8.6 km) and Elbistan (Mw 7.6; focal depth: 7 km) districts of Kahramanmaraş, at 04:17 and 13:24 local time, respectively. On 20th February 2023, another earthquake with a magnitude of Mw 6.4 occurred, with the epicenter of Yayladağı, Hatay, at 20:04 local time. These earthquakes, all of which are unprecedented in recent history in terms of magnitude and coverage, caused significant devastation in a total of 11 provinces of Türkiye.

The disasters have caused immense damage and suffering, as evidenced by official records. The earthquake has resulted in a staggering loss of life, with 50,783 deaths and 115,353 injuries officially reported. The destruction of 37,984 structures is truly unprecedented and surpasses the losses suffered during the 1939 Erzincan Earthquake (Mw: 7.9) and the 1999 Kocaeli Earthquake (Mw: 7.6), which were previously considered the most significant earthquakes in Turkey in the current century. The disaster has impacted over 13 million people across multiple provinces and cities. The Türkiye Earthquakes Recovery and Reconstruction Assessment (TERRA) concluded that earthquakes impact amounts to 103.6 billion USD, or equivalent to 9 percent of Türkiye's forecast GDP for 2023. The most prominent component of the burden imposed by the earthquake on the Turkish economy is the damage in housing units by 54.9% (56.9 billion USD). The second largest damage is the destruction of public infrastructure and damage to public service buildings (12.9 billion USD). The damage incurred by the private sector except housing is estimated at 11.8 billion USD. This

category includes manufacturing industry, energy, communications, tourism, healthcare, education sectors and damage to small tradespersons and houses of worship.

The destruction has left tens of thousands of buildings in ruins, leaving residents exposed and in dire need of immediate assistance. The continuous provision of critical, basic necessities such as food, non-food essentials, shelter, and healthcare still remain a major priority.

From this standpoint of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the aim is to ensure that cities are placing the safety and well-being of their communities as their top priority. SDG Target 11.5 (Reduce the Adverse Effects of Natural Disasters) captures this priority, with an unwavering emphasis on safeguarding the poor and vulnerable individuals. The ultimate objective is to significantly minimize the number of fatalities and individuals affected by disasters while simultaneously reducing economic losses resulting from such incidents concerning the global gross domestic product. IsDB's emergency response and relief projects are aligned to support SDG 11.5 with comprehensive human capital development, encompassing nutrition, food security, and social protection. Also, the Bank is applying the "leave no one behind" principle of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for its emergency relief to ensure that groups with specific needs receive sufficient assistance and enjoy equitable opportunities. This is in-line with Pillar 2 of the Bank's Strategic Realignment (2023-2025) and Pillar 1 of the Bank Disaster Risk Management and Resilience Policy, related to managing disaster risks and response.

In this context, the IsDB approved grant financing to provide emergency support to the areas affected by the recent earthquakes in South-East Türkiye. The interventions under this grant are supporting the ongoing relief basic and needs of the people in six of the most affected provinces, particularly in terms of access to clean water, food, and personal hygiene items. Critical items such as food packs and hygiene kits have been financed through the IsDB grant. The Relief program is being provided through the social markets of the Turkish Red Crescent (Turk Kizilay), located in 12 different locations of the six provinces (Adiyaman, Malatya, Hatay, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, and Kahramanmaraş). Social Markets offer a wide range of goods, from food to clothing, hygiene to cleaning products through a system and structure similar to a supermarket.

The IsDB's financial support amount to US\$ 1.5 million, to cover the procurement and distribution of 28,250 food packs and 8,125 family hygiene kits. These items have been designed to address the needs of the people affected by the earthquakes and will be sufficient to keep a family healthy for one month. By the end of July 2023, the Turkish Red Crescent effectively disseminated over 34,000 packs of food and 8,225 hygiene kits, providing life-saving relief and aid to 170,000 earthquake-affected people. Thanks to careful planning and precise execution, the project exceeded its initial beneficiary goal by 20% and was completed one month earlier than anticipated without exceeding the budget.

When emergencies strike, the first and most crucial step is providing life-saving aid and relief to affected areas. There is usually a strong solidarity and support provided by donors and partners in these initial periods. However, in addition to the immediate relief, delivering emergency food and hygiene products throughout the crisis can be challenging, as it necessary to maintain the health and well-being of those affected, not just in the first few days, but continuously for months. IsDB's grant operation has significantly and positively impacted the lives of many individuals, contributing to progress toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal Target 11.5 by 2030. We take pride in our role in assisting Türkiye's response and relief efforts in coping with this major national disaster. The IsDB Group is also working expeditiously to support the country in its recovery and reconstruction efforts on the physical and economic fronts.



Communication for Development Sets the Tone for Promising Sustainable Development

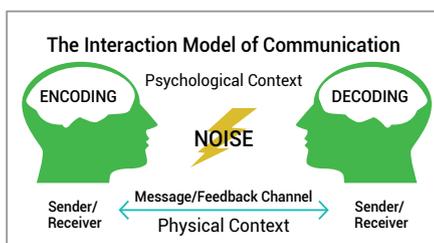


Dr. Musa Elkheir
IsDB

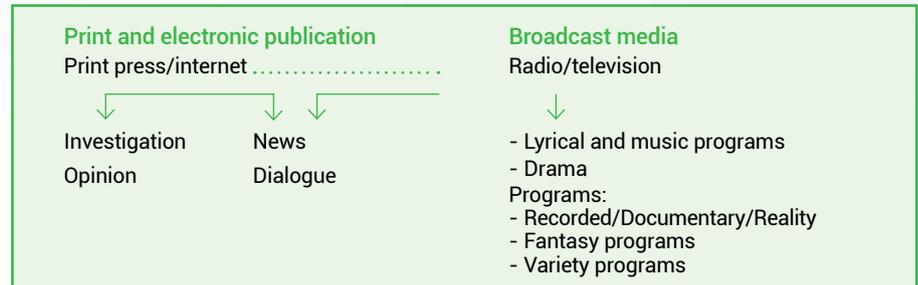
Sustainable development means: “development that meets and fulfills the needs of the present without risking and compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” Therefore, development indicates that a developing society has the tools and competencies necessary to harness all modern achievements and higher values: social, moral, and collective. This is in order to achieve the highest rates of production, prosperity and sustainability that ensure a dignified and safe human life for all segments of society. This major strategic process with its myriad inputs and outputs needs society to get informed, educated through communication process under the umbrella of development.

“Communication for Development” Communication is a two-way process where messages mutually flow from both sender (encoder) to receiver(decoder): D1. Communication also refers to as the use of different forms of media, such as print, broadcast (radio, television) and new media as well as the frequent contact between people. These media are used as an empowerment tool to facilitate and encourage the participation of people in developmental activities. Different media outlets are used to effectively communicate knowledge and information to people for developmental purpose.

This diagram (D1) shows Communication process between the sender and receiver,



This diagram (D1) shows Communication process between the sender and receiver, where sender encodes the messages and sends it through a channel “medium” to the receiver who decodes it and responds back through the same channel



This diagram (D2) shows how comprehensive media message is composed and delivered to the target audience during communication for development in the process of sustainable development

where sender encodes the messages and sends it through a channel “medium” to the receiver who decodes it and responds back through the same channel

The term “Communication for Development” can be divided into two terms, Communication and Development. Here communication refers to the use of different types of media outlets in the context of development. This means sharing of information and experience to accelerate development, whereas development refers to the change of society for better at social and economic levels.

Communication for Development is of paramount importance to the development process, as it contributes to disseminating concepts, educating, and guiding the community as well as involving and supporting the community to understand future needs and challenges that SDG may face.

Communication for Development also helps to present, circulate development concepts and activities, interact with the public and private sectors as well as the community itself, paving the way for building human capacities and encouraging agencies and institutions to best adopt development practices.

The Role of Communication for Development in the sustainable development process:

The responsibility of the Communication for Development towards the process of sustainable development is to provide society with considerable facts, accurate information and knowledge that concern with development, which is called “Mass Media social engineering”, and focuses on how to direct the public to serve human prosperity. The role of “Mass Media social engineering”, becomes clear as long as the objective of developing society depends entirely on informing, educating, raising

awareness of society members in order to lead smooth sustainable development process.

How to make Communication for Development work for sustainable development:

The real objective of sustainable development programs in developing societies is to bring about a change in people’s attitudes and how communication and new relationships between society members can be shaped accordingly in terms of values, behavior, and concepts. So, here comes the role and responsibility of Communication for Development to craft media messages (print, electronic and broadcast): D2, which work for onboarding and engaging society members in embracing and translating the concept of sustainable development into actions that upgrade the society in all walks of life.

Interactive Communication for Development can take development practices further in order to contribute to achieving sustainable and comprehensive development. This can be attained once technicality and expertise are made available and easy to be delivered by the two ends of the communication process: the society” and communication for development deliverables, a matter, which results, in the end, in maintaining comprehensive sustainable development output.

All in all, Communication for Development is the corner stone of the development process and its backbone for sustainability, as long as it persistently aims at enhancing community engagement in all aspects of the development process and transforming society into being supportive of the goals of sustainable development, as well as making people advocate for preserving the resources of their planet and embrace constructive change which channels into embracing concept and rationale to ensure promising sustainable development for whoever on earth.

Achieving SDGs with Employment Intensive Investments in Inclusive Infrastructure



Bashar Elsamarneh
ILO



Chris Donnges
ILO



Maha Kattaa
ILO

Developing countries are facing a huge backlog in the development of economic, social and environmental infrastructure. Existing infrastructure often deteriorates due to a lack of investment in maintenance. Consequently, many people, particularly in rural areas, live without safe water and sanitation, and have poor access to transport and markets while the infrastructure components to support health services and education often need improvements. Despite the fact that investments have been increasing, the development of infrastructure needs to be accelerated and better directed towards the poor and vulnerable if the world wants to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Infrastructure that is sustainable contributes to most of the SDG targets. But it is the principle of leaving no one behind that would require an infrastructure development that is also inclusive and allows for participation of the poor and vulnerable in the whole process of planning, design and implementation. Particularly in fragile context, the lack of sustainable infrastructure reinforces cycles of poverty and inequality.

Ending poverty and reducing vulnerabilities must equally go hand in hand with strategies that create jobs and generate income. Infrastructure investments create jobs and generate income during construction, rehabilitation and maintenance. They could provide opportunities for unskilled workers, within the informal economy, to participate in creating and maintaining the economic, social and environmental assets that will improve their living conditions and livelihoods. Many of the poor and vulnerable families, particularly in fragile countries, lack the employment and income earning opportunities that investments in infrastructure could create. Such opportunities could contribute to

skills and enterprise development which will have longer term benefits for the under and unemployed and introduce mostly informal workers and excluded segments of the population to good work practices and decent work conditions.

The ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) links infrastructure development with job creation and promotes inclusive approaches to create more and better jobs through infrastructure investments. It supports countries in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes aiming to address unemployment and underemployment through public investment, typically in infrastructure development. EIIP reinforces and builds national institutional and operational capacity to provide productive and decent work in relevant sectors that has an economic, environmental and social impact.

While maintaining cost competitiveness and engineering quality standards, jobs are created through local resource-based approaches that combine the use of local inputs including unskilled and skilled labour, local materials and technologies. This process of infrastructure development optimizes the involvement and participation of local contractors, local government and communities, including the most vulnerable groups in crisis affected areas. The approaches are most relevant for the creation and maintenance of rural infrastructure or infrastructure in informal settlements including roads and drainage, WASH, irrigation, low-cost buildings, markets and environmental infrastructure such as for flood protection, land and soil improvements and nature-based solutions.

To build national and local capacity for implementing the approaches, there are different entry points such as small contractor or community contractor development to establish capacity in the private sector, the development of nationally funded public employment programmes, the introduction of green works to support adaptation to climate change and rehabilitation of the environment and emergency programmes in response to natural disasters and conflict¹. Cross-cutting in all this, are the social safeguards that the ILO as an organization promotes globally.

The Employment Intensive Investment Programme also enhances gender equality, the inclusion of persons with disability and forcibly displaced people access to livelihoods and employment opportunities. It contributes to Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus and building social cohesion among communities in crisis and post crisis context².

The impact of all this includes the additional and better jobs created during construction and maintenance, the income generated in poor and vulnerable communities, the benefits of being employed, even for a shorter time, in a sense of being introduced to the formal and decent employment in the formal labour market, social protection, teamwork and having opportunities to learn and practice and improve skills and work experience. Finally, there are the longer-term impacts of the assets created and services improved: the roads, the WASH facilities, the irrigation canals, the schools, health centers, markets and an improved natural environment.

For more information see: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/employment-intensive-investment/lang--en/index.htm>



1. EIIP contributes towards sustainability by aligning its actions with almost all SDGs and mainly: SDG 8, Decent work and Economic growth, SDG 9 : industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG 11: sustainable cities and communities, SDG 13: climate action
2. ILO Arab States' Strategic Engagement in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Challenges and Opportunities, Geneva: International Labour Office, 2023 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_888462.pdf

Revitalizing Therapeutic Goods Health Markets for Regional Cooperation and Trade



Nazar Mohamed Eltahir Diab
IsDB



Ima Kashim
IsDB



Therapeutic Goods Health Markets (TGHM) and attaining the SDG 3 targets



Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3), is focused on “Good Health and Well-being”, and is established by the United Nations to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages. Targets for SDG

3 include the progressive provision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), research and development, trade, intellectual property rights, health financing of Therapeutic Goods (TG)¹ and services, and capacity strengthening for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

Therapeutic Goods Health Markets (TGHM) encompass direct inputs that provision the healthcare system – such as intangible assets in knowledge, know-how and intellectual property for the supply, production, distribution and delivery of physical

products and services, and intermediate or indirect inputs that include legislative, policy, regulatory, legal and commercial issues around pricing, antitrust, intellectual property rights, reporting and compliance, taxation and market.

Revitalizing Therapeutic Goods Health Markets for Regional Cooperation and Trade

To harness the momentum from global engagement opportunities and advance the achievement of SDG goals for MCs, IsDB CCD Department and Developing 8 Organization for Economic

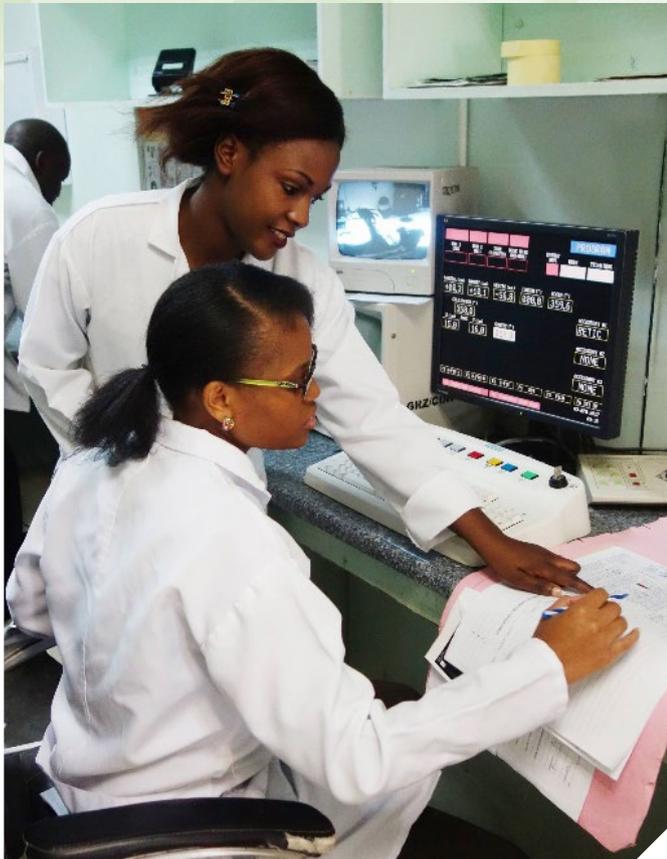
Highlights of the TGHM in MCs

- Levels and trends in domestic and external health financing in low- and middle-income countries already fell short of the SDG spending target and needs prior to the COVID-19 crisis.
- During the Covid-19 crises, evidence abound that health financing for supply chains was critical to attaining sustainable social and industrial development outcomes in these countries.
- Even high-income countries lacked core human and institutional resources and capacity for efficient and resilient production, equitable access and economic distribution of essential medicines, vaccines, and critical inputs to meet their own needs for TG – let alone for export and trade to developing countries.

Figure 1 below shows the analytic framework of the study

FOCUS AREAS	ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK	SDG INDICATORS	ANALYSIS
1 UHC and PHC system	PHC/Health System Building Blocks leadership/governance, healthcare financing, medical products/technologies (access to essential medicines) and epidemic preparedness and response (health security)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of pocket expenditure as % of Total Health Expenditure • Average availability of basket of essential medicines in public and private health facilities 	Capacity Gap Analysis
2 Therapeutic goods health markets	Therapeutic Goods Market landscape analysis Market structure, market conduct, market performance Market strengths, failures, opportunities and threats. Market competitiveness, capabilities, regulatory (framework conditions) and financing (access to finance) environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House hold expenditure on pharm. as a % of total house hold exp. for health • Therapeutic Goods market share and contribution to GDP 	
3 Trade and regional cooperation	Trade and market access analysis Includes indicators on trade balance, export performance, international demand, alternative markets, and competitive markets as well as firm level importing and exporting companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therapeutic Goods share of intra trade volume (D8/IOC) • Trade balance deficit, ie net import/export of Therapeutic Goods 	Composite Index and Priority Setting

1. Therapeutic Goods are broadly defined as products for use in humans in connection with preventing, diagnosing, curing or alleviating a disease, ailment, defect or injury, influencing inhibiting or modifying a physiological process.



NIGERIA has over three billion metric tons of kaolin estimated to be deposited in various parts of the country as documented by the country's leading parastatal overseeing raw materials the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC).

The composite Index:

In synthesizing emerging desk review findings, a composite index that aggregates and benchmarks UHC, PHC health systems, TGHM and trade indicators or measures was developed. Figure 2 below shows the indicators utilized to measure each country's performance in the TGHMs. The summary indicators proposed are easy to collect, standardize, score and replicate across additional ISDB member countries as required.

Opportunities for our MCs

Each of the three pilot countries have substantial potential to leverage existing capacity to leapfrog into advanced medical and therapeutic goods production, and intellectual property rights commercialization for product and economic complexity.

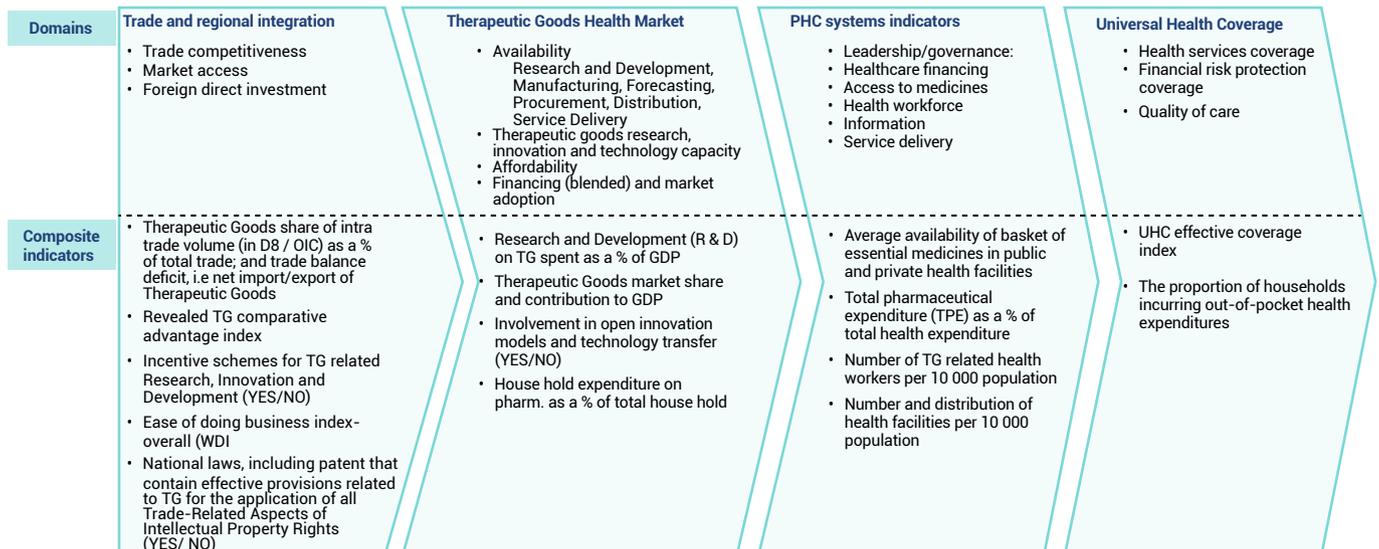
For example, 'low-hanging fruit' opportunities exist in integrating national and regional capacity and gaps in strategic value chain and manufacturing assets derived from each country's endowment of human and natural resources and institutional capacity, for extraction and value-add processing of Nigeria's health-grade colloidal kaolin assets (available in significant quantities) to provide regional supply and impact the health market in the subregion.

In addition, the establishment of a domestic integrated supply chain in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) precursors and other critical input supplies for West Africa such as excipients, drug delivery and other medical bioproducts derived from mineral resources can lead to regional growth along the coast enabling market access and services delivery for more than 700 million people. Across both Nigeria and Indonesia, the need to upscale strategic capacity in critical input supplies, infrastructure for bio pharmaceuticals and API production can be led by Turkey.

It is worth mentioning here that the Executive Governor of Bauchi State, visited ISDB to solicit support to finance Health Markets industrialization as one of the States' priorities as the Federal Government of Nigeria recently cited a Kaolin production facility for the country in Bauchi State.

Development (D8) conducted a pilot study in 3 MCs - Turkey, Indonesia and Nigeria - to study market drivers for TGs in order to revitalize and shape their respective therapeutic goods health markets and build more sustainable and integrated health systems that are accessible, equitable and affordable to populations. All the 3 vCs selected have the potential to establish resilient and effective health markets through strategic regional and global engagement in critical health input supplies for TGs in partnership with their South-South and High-Income Country partners.

The study utilized a 3-part analytical framework to develop a TG market capacity gap assessment and a TG composite index.



ICD's Path to the 2030 SDGs



Dr. Mohammed Alyami
ICD



Talal Karim Alobayd
ICD



Ismael Barry
ICD

The support of the private sector has been the primary focus of the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD) since its inception in November 1999. ICD's mission is to complement the role played by the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) through the development and promotion of the private sector as a vehicle for boosting economic growth and prosperity, with a vision to become a premier Islamic multilateral financial institution for this very purpose.

As the private sector arm of the IsDB Group and operating in 55 Member Countries (MCs), ICD plays an increasingly important role in building the enabling environment of the private sector. The ICD emphasizes inclusive growth that leads to an expansion of opportunities that are accompanied by measures to ensure that the poor and disadvantaged are able to access these opportunities and are not left behind.

Meanwhile, the 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for People, Planet, and Prosperity. It provides, along with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a guideline to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all of mankind. The ICD management recognizes the importance of the 2030 Agenda and has ensured that ICD operations and interventions are purposeful and help contribute to the SDGs, thereby securing a better future for the societies of its MCs. That was insured by incorporating the relevant SDGs within ICD's strategic objectives and mandates. ICD advocates the use of sustainable development in providing for the needs of today at the same time as ensuring tomorrow's generational needs are protected.

ICD's role within IsDBG is to connect the investment community with the SDGs using the Private Sector as a vehicle for economic growth and shared prosperity in its MCs. The main objectives of ICD are to (i) create investment opportunities, (ii)

provide a wide range of financial products compatible with Islamic Ethics and (iii) expand access to Islamic capital markets by private companies.

ICD's major premise is that the development of the Private Sector will be fundamental to the achievement of its strategy as well as the SDGs, in terms of access to finance, access to business infrastructure and job creation.

ICD is a unique DFI, as it offers exclusively Shariah-compatible financing for private sector in its MCs. Moreover, the promotion of Islamic finance and the deepening of Islamic financial intermediation objectives add to ICD's uniqueness. In doing so, ICD focuses on a broad definition of development effectiveness. It takes into special account the SDGs. ICD applies a holistic approach in the sense that it tries to capture all impacted SDGs; directly & indirectly and intended & unintended.

On an operational level, ICD will continue to define targets, measure contributions to the SDGs in focus and steer investment decisions based on development effectiveness considerations. ICD does this by continuous application of dedicated development effectiveness assessment process implemented in its investment decision analysis applying a holistic view on an investment's (i) strategic alignment to ICD's mandate, (ii) contribution to SDGs as well as (iii) ICD's additionality. Furthermore, ICD will continue its efforts in measurement of development impact across existing activities via structured data collection to derive insights for further enhancement and guidance for its business operations.

Energy Infrastructure

According to the World Bank research, energy infrastructure may contribute to economic growth and development in several ways. First, electricity serves as a key factor of production for firms which, as research shows, has low substitutability

with other factors of production and thus may constrain output when unavailable. Second, the state uses energy to deliver key public services, including health and education. Third, consuming electricity may directly improve household wellbeing as well as create efficiency gains, such as in time savings, communication, and educational investments.

Wind Power

Wind is used to produce electricity by converting the kinetic energy of air in motion into electricity. In modern wind turbines, wind rotates the rotor blades, which convert kinetic energy into rotational energy. This rotational energy is transferred by a shaft which to the generator, thereby producing electrical energy. Wind energy is a fast-growing and promising renewable energy source. The investment costs of wind turbines have decreased over the years, making wind energy economically competitive to conventionally produced electricity.

Market deployment policies, combined with reduced costs and improved technology, are driving unprecedented growth in wind power. Wind power is increasingly being viewed as a mainstream electricity supply technology. Its attractiveness as an electricity supply source has fostered ambitious targets for wind power in many countries around the world. Its benefits include: <https://www.irena.org/Energy-Transition/Technology/Wind-energy>

- Very low lifetime emissions of harmful gasses, particularly CO₂;
- Significant economically exploitable resource potential;
- No cost uncertainties from fuel supply price fluctuations;





- Increased diversity and security of supply;
- Modular and rapid installation;
- Opportunities for industrial, economic, and rural development.

Pakistan Power

Per the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) data, Pakistan’s per capita annual electricity consumption of 649kWh, is among the lowest in the world, which is only 18% of the world average, 7% of the developed countries’ average, and 11% of that of China. Per capita electricity consumption is considered as one of the key parameters, reflecting the living standards of the people in a country. This indicates that there is a lot of room for improving the living standards of the people and running the wheel of the economy to ensure sustainable growth.

Concrete examples of sustainable Islamic financing that helped contribute to the SDGs that were implemented by ICD include investing in sustainable infrastructure such as wind energy projects in Pakistan. For example, ICD invested in, Master Green Energy Limited (MGEL) which is a special purpose company based in Pakistan with the sole objective of developing, financing, building and operating a 50-megawatt wind power

Indicator	Result
Jobs	14
Amount of Local Purchases	\$1.1 million
Kilo Watt Energy Produced 2022	119,031,060
Total Power Capacity	50 MW
SDGs	

Indicator	Result
Jobs	19
Amount of Local Purchases	million \$1.3
Kilo Watt Energy Produced 2022	149,988,520
Total Power Capacity	MW 50
SDGs	

project near the district of Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan. The project was developed on a Build-Own-Operate (BOO) basis and will sell its entire energy output to the Central Power Purchasing Agency under a 25-year Energy Purchase Agreement. Of the facility amount of USD 52.7 million, ICD’s financing totaled to USD 25.0 million using Istisna’a Ijara.

Client Box 1 – Master Green Energy Limited (MGEL) - Pakistan

MGEL, a special purpose company incorporated in Pakistan with the sole objective of developing, building, and operating 50 MW wind power project. ICD provided a term finance facility of USD 25.0 million to MGEL. The company has contributed to 19 direct jobs and over USD 1.3 million in domestic purchases from local suppliers. The project will add roughly 132,500 megawatt-hours of clean energy per year.

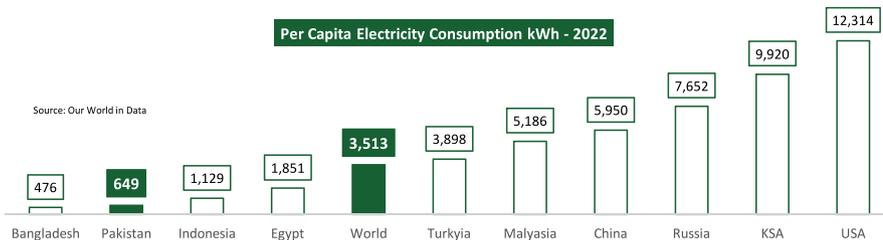
Furthermore, NASDA Green Energy (Pvt.) Limited (NGEPL) which was also founded in Pakistan with the aim to develop, finance, build and operate a 50-megawatt wind power project in Jhimpir, Pakistan. The NASDA Project was developed on a BOO basis and will sell its energy output to the Central Power Purchasing Agency Guarantee Limited under a 25-year

Energy Purchase Agreement. Of the facility amount of USD 51.0 million, ICD’s financing totaled to USD 25.0 million using Istisna’a Ijara.

Client Box 2 – Nasda Green Energy Limited (NGEL), Pakistan

NGEL is a Special Purpose Company (SPC) with the sole objective of developing, financing, constructing, and operating 50 MW wind power project in Pakistan. This innovative, high technology project will create an enabling environment for wind power development using international financing facilities which will help attract the private sector in future wind power generation projects. The wind power project utilizes the latest technology financed with a USD 25.0 million debt facility from the ICD, allowing NGEL to generate roughly 132,500 megawatt-hours of clean energy per year. NGEL has created 14 direct and stable employment opportunities with spillover development impact on the local area.

The successful development of these projects helped alleviate Pakistan’s power shortage, which cramps the country’s economic growth and efforts to reduce poverty. It also helped foster confidence among potential investors and lenders, promoting further private sector investment in renewable energy and power in Pakistan.



Revitalizing Urban SDGs – an Urgent Call for Actions



M Ashekur Rahman
IsDB

Urbanization is a defining feature of the 21st century's human progress and development, placing cities at the centerpiece of our global society. Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11) is a critical linchpin in achieving a future of environmentally sustainable, economically prosperous, socially equitable cities and human settlements. As we approach the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, it is evident that renewed action is urgently required to accelerate the implementation of SDG 11 to reverse the growing urban divide.

Rapid urbanization poses daunting challenges, including slum growth, insufficient waste handling, and climate imbalances, demanding innovative, collaborative governance solutions. Failing SDG 11 affects cities and resonates worldwide, stressing the collective responsibility involved. This article highlights the imperative to bridge ongoing disparities, acknowledge progress, and drive transformative change. The goal is to forge a brighter urban future where cities serve as sustainable development hubs, enhancing the well-being of all residents.

The latest assessment of SDG 11 progress, marking the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, presents a complex, predominantly grim outlook. The real risk of failing to attain SDG 11, which aspires to create inclusive, secure, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements, looms large. Achieving it within the next seven years hinges on immediate and substantial action from Member States and the global community. Encouragingly, some headway has been made in areas like transportation and national urban policies. Yet, yawning chasms persist in slum proliferation, insufficient public spaces, and inadequate waste management. Notably, regional disparities are stark, with Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia trailing on most fronts. A comprehensive, concerted effort is imperative to reverse this trajectory.

Assessing progress toward individual targets and indicators within SDG 11 exposes significant shortfalls. Notably, global efforts have faltered in reducing the proportion and count of slum residents, with many regions falling behind in combating slums and informal settlements. This issue is particularly pronounced in African and Asian regions. Alarming, the creation of new slums is outpacing efforts to address existing ones, presenting a concerning trend. Countries emerging from conflict situations encounter

unique hurdles in ameliorating slum conditions.

Global public transport access is problematic, with a significant North-South disparity, impeding equitable convenience for all.

Civil society's involvement in decision-making and development confronts threats in various regions, hindering inclusive urban development. Culture's role in urban economies is vital, yet local cultural assets may be overlooked due to centralized spending on heritage preservation.

Disaster risks persist, but more nations adopt risk reduction strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic underlines the need for urban preparedness in uncertain times. Urban areas battle rising waste generation, mismanagement, and severe air pollution, impacting both health and the environment.

Achieving universal access to safe, inclusive public and green spaces by 2030 remains elusive. Though more countries adopt urban policies, cities, with their high population density and climate-vulnerable infrastructure, still play a substantial role in climate change.

Although data and monitoring have improved, the general evaluation of SDG 11 progress underscores the necessity for immediate and substantial action to tackle challenges across its diverse targets, notably in areas such as reducing slums, enhancing public transport access, mitigating disaster risks, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Attaining SDG 11 by 2030 necessitates global, national, and local cooperation. We must transition from the ordinary to a visionary mindset to turn the New Urban Agenda into an actionable reality. To rescue goal-11 and counter setbacks within seven years, we must prioritize critical issues and strategic entry points with increased focus.

High-impact responses: To accelerate progress, focusing on strategic, high-impact actions that address structural and systemic bottlenecks is imperative. These actions should generate multiplier effects and maximize returns on investment. They must be adaptable to local contexts while offering scalability.

Sustainable finance: Governments face the formidable challenge of optimizing limited resources amid competing demands in an increasingly urbanized world. Sustained incremental investment is critical to prevent sliding back on SDG targets. Reform in the international financial architecture, municipal fiscal framework, and increased transfers from national to local governments are crucial areas of improved attention.

Inclusive and sustainable urbanization: Prioritizing planned city expansion is urgent to mitigate the risks associated with unplanned growth. Effective metropolitan governance beyond jurisdictional boundaries is essential for comprehensive urban planning. Building compact, socially inclusive, well-connected cities while establishing trust in urban institutions is imperative.

Integrated policies and planning: Encouraging countries to develop agile and comprehensive national urban policies is of paramount importance. Strengthening regional development planning and governance structures enhances linkages across the urban-rural continuum.

Housing as a central focus: Housing can't be viewed as a stand-alone sector but as fundamental rights vital for renewing the social contract between governments and their citizens.

Transportation and Mobility: Achieving sustainable transportation systems is vital. This entails the development of efficient and green public transportation networks, integration with walking and cycling options, Transit-oriented development (TOD) policies, and adopting technology-driven and zero-carbon mobility solutions. Integrating informal transport networks into planning is also crucial.

Data and digital transformation: Urban data disaggregation is critical to advancing inclusive and equitable urban development. Investments in frontier technologies, urban foresight, and social organization and mobilization can drive inclusive digital transformation. Addressing the digital divide and incorporating gender-responsive and spatially aware insights into decision-making processes is crucial.

Resilient Building Practices: Building institutional capacity and promoting multi-sectoral collaboration are vital for developing and implementing effective national strategies aligned with disaster risk reduction frameworks. Innovative design and strategy should prioritize universal access to safe, inclusive green spaces. Urban areas are major contributors to climate change and engines of climate innovation and action and, thus, at the frontline of delivering solutions.

Achieving SDG 11 demands a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach. It involves multiple facets, including SDG financing, urban planning, technological innovation, capacity building, and agile policies. The urgency arises from pressing challenges like slum reduction, public transport, disaster risk, environmental sustainability, and climate action. Meeting SDG 11's ambitious 2030 targets require immediate global, national, and local actions, aiming to foster inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable urban development worldwide.



Advancements in Pursuing the SDGs Among IsDB Member Countries



Dr. Arif Oduncu
IsDB

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth by the United Nations constitute a universal call to action, aiming to eradicate poverty, safeguard the environment, and foster prosperity worldwide by 2030.

For IsDB Member Countries (MCs), primarily comprised of developing nations, these goals hold immense significance, offering a structured path toward comprehensive and sustainable socioeconomic growth. Evaluating the extent to which IsDB MCs have advanced in accomplishing the SDGs is not merely an intellectual exercise; it is a practical imperative. These goals encompass a wide range of developmental aspirations, including poverty eradication, quality education provision, gender equality promotion, and climate change mitigation. Consequently, gauging progress provides valuable insights into societal well-being, economic health, and environmental conditions.

The report titled “Progress Toward the SDGs: Assessing IsDB Member Countries in 2023” aims to provide comprehensive

IsDB MCs’ SDGs Achievement by 17 Goals



insights into the trajectory of IsDB MCs in their pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It endeavors to address critical inquiries regarding whether these countries are on the right path and which specific SDGs pose the most formidable challenges. The findings presented in this report serve as a valuable compass for policymakers, development agencies, and stakeholders, offering guidance on where progress is lacking and where opportunities for accelerated development lie.

As of the year 2023, IsDB MCs have achieved an overall SDG score of 62.6,

Overall IsDB Score



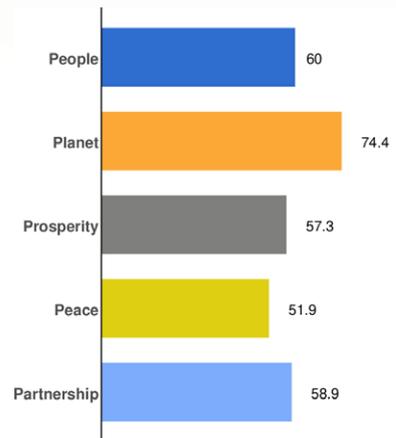
signifying that, collectively, they have made substantial strides, encompassing slightly more than 60 percent of the 17 SDGs. While this score suggests commendable progress, it also underscores the imperative need for intensified efforts if IsDB MCs are to successfully meet the ambitious 2030 SDG targets.

Upon closer examination of this progress through the prism of the 5Ps dimensions (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership), the most formidable challenges facing IsDB MCs come to the forefront within the Prosperity dimension. This dimension exhibits the lowest score, primarily attributed to limited advancements in SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). Conversely, a relatively brighter performance emerges within the Planet dimension, propelled by notable achievements in SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). This commendable performance can be correlated with the developmental stage of these countries and the corresponding environmental implications.

The categorization of SDG accomplishments in IsDB MCs offers a nuanced perspective on their advancement. Encouragingly, there is a positive trend wherein none of the SDGs within the IsDB’s purview fall below the “Unsatisfactory”



Achievements by 5Ps



5Ps by SDGs



category, denoting that none have achieved below 40 percent of their respective targets. Nevertheless, it’s noteworthy that nine out of the 17 SDGs are placed in the “Fair” category, reflecting progress that spans from 40 to 60 percent.

In addition, six SDGs—namely, SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land)—attain a “Satisfactory” level of progress, demonstrating achievements ranging from 60 to 80 percent. Remarkably, two SDGs stand out distinctly in a shade of dark green, signifying “Very Satisfactory” achievements—SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13

IsDB MCs categorization of SDG accomplishments

Sustainable Development Goals	Performance
	Very Satisfactory (80% and above)
	Satisfactory (60% up to 80%)
	Fair (40% up to 60%)
None	Unsatisfactory (20% up to 40%)
None	Very Unsatisfactory (less than 20%)

(Climate Action). These two goals proudly boast accomplishments that surpass the 80 percent mark, marking significant progress in these critical areas.

An in-depth examination of regional variations among IsDB MCs unveils a stark contrast in their progress toward achieving the SDGs. Countries depicted in various shades of green on the color-coded map showcase commendable SDG scores, indicating their significant strides in pursuing these goals. Notable among these high-achievers are the Kyrgyz Republic and Azerbaijan, shining brightly with the deepest hues of green on their SDG profiles, a testament to their exceptional dedication to the SDGs.

In sharp contrast, some nations, such as Chad and Yemen, are marked by foreboding red shades, signifying comparatively lower SDG performance. These countries confront formidable obstacles on their path to meeting the SDG targets, underscoring the urgent imperative for the Islamic Development Bank to adopt a more tailored, country-specific approach to provide targeted assistance. Furthermore, this disparity underscores the crucial role of enhancing

collaboration between the IsDB and its Member Countries to effectively address their distinct concerns related to the SDGs.

The disparities observed among regions within the IsDB membership serve as a poignant reminder of the intricate and multifaceted terrain that the organization navigates. These variations underscore the imperative for the IsDB to craft a strategy that is not only nuanced but also highly adaptable to accommodate the diverse needs and challenges encountered across its membership. Such an approach is vital for effectively advancing sustainable development initiatives that can cater to the unique circumstances and priorities of each region. It exemplifies the organization's commitment to inclusivity and its mission to foster equitable progress and prosperity throughout its diverse and dynamic membership base.

Despite the variations in progress, certain common trends emerge among IsDB MCs, shedding light on shared achievements and challenges. At the forefront stands SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) as the most formidable challenge, holding the top priority status for 25 MCs. This SDG demands

significant advancements, as it plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and prosperity through the development of industry, innovation, and infrastructure. The second most daunting task is tackling SDG 5 (Gender Equality), which underscores the gender gap prevailing across IsDB MCs and emphasizes the imperative of empowering women throughout these nations.

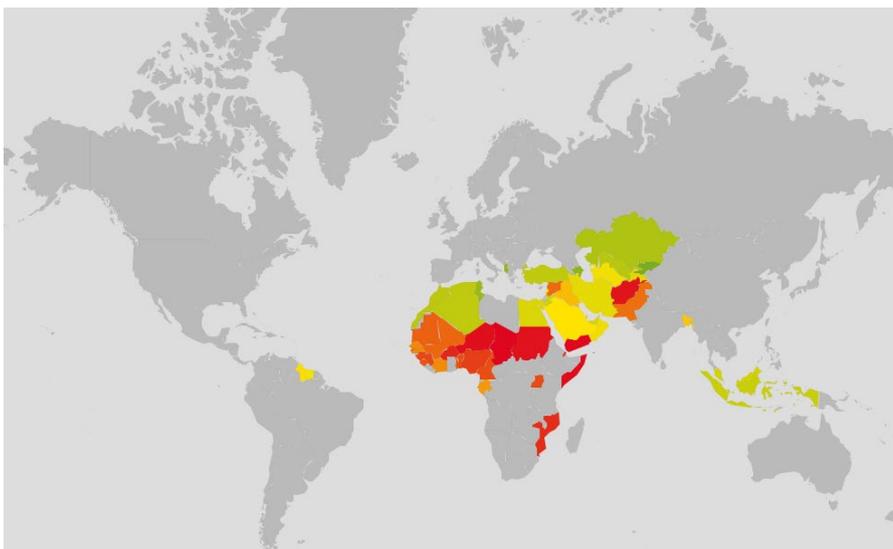
To emphasize the positive aspect, SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) shine brightly with exceptionally high scores. Remarkably, more than 85 percent of MCs achieved a status of "Very Satisfactory" progress, surpassing 80 percent of their respective targets. These favorable outcomes can be attributed to the early stages of economic development within IsDB MCs, as well as the potential accuracy and comprehensiveness of data pertaining to these specific SDGs.

In summary, while IsDB Member Countries have undeniably made noteworthy strides toward the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, there lie formidable challenges along the path to realizing the 2030 targets. These challenges span across a diverse spectrum of dimensions, encompassing economic infrastructure, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. IsDB's role as a financial institution and development partner emerges as pivotal in bolstering MCs' efforts to surmount these hurdles and sustain the momentum toward SDG achievement.

The comprehensive assessment conducted in "Reaching the SDGs: Progress of IsDB Member Countries, 2023" stands as an invaluable instrument for the formulation of policies, allocation of resources, and the cultivation of international collaboration. It underscores the necessity for customized approaches that account for the distinct challenges and opportunities embedded within each MC. Furthermore, it accentuates the significance of reinforcing partnerships among MCs, development organizations, and stakeholders to collectively address the intricate and interconnected challenges posed by the SDGs.

As we chart our course ahead, IsDB and its collaborative partners must redouble their efforts to expedite progress in the areas of greatest challenge, with an unwavering commitment to ensuring that no segment of society is left behind on the expedition toward a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for all IsDB Member Countries. This collective pursuit embodies the essence of our shared commitment to global development and the realization of the SDGs' transformative vision.

IsDB SDG Achievement by Member Countries



Trends: Feminisation of global forced displacement



Dr. Sandra Iman Pertek
Gender and Social Development Specialist,
University of Birmingham
Department of Social Policy, Sociology and
Criminology - Research Fellow

The Project Lead for the "Protecting
Displaced Women and Girls in the Muslim
World" Initiative, International Committee of
the Red Cross ICRC

Forced migration has doubled in the past decade. The number of forcibly displaced people continues to rise due to armed conflicts, disasters and climate emergencies. In 2023, 114 million are estimated to be forcibly displaced. More and more women and children undertake dangerous refugee journeys due to armed conflict and war, climate emergencies and economic inequalities. They often travel alone and without financial resources.

Forced migration experiences are traumatic and increasingly feminised with women being disproportionately affected by the continuum of violence, discrimination and socio-economic exclusion. The "OIC Women and Development Report 2021" underscores that women make up for more than half of the world's refugees and internally displaced persons. It is also estimated that over half of the world's forcibly displaced people are hosted in Muslim-majority countries, most of which lack migration laws and displacement preparedness plans.

Current forced displacement trends

The ISDB countries, many characterised by fragility, host and generate a significant proportion of refugees worldwide. Some Muslim-majority countries have historically hosted significant populations of displaced people, playing a crucial role in providing refuge to those fleeing conflicts and persecution in neighbouring countries. For example, Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for decades and Lebanon has hosted Palestinian refugees for an extended period, in addition to Syrian refugees.

According to the UNHCR "Global Trends Report 2022", three Muslim majority countries are among the top five of refugee hosting countries, namely Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pakistan (along Colombia and Germany). Muslim countries are also among leading countries of origin of refugees, including Syria (6.5 million), Afghanistan (5.7 million), and Yemen due to ongoing crises. Similarly, some Muslim countries have some of the highest refugee densities globally, for example in Lebanon 1 in 7 persons and in Jordan 1 in 16 persons is a refugee. Observing an upward trajectory of displacement, in recent years there has been a significant increase in asylum applications from Afghanistan, Syria, and Sudan. In 2022, the UNHCR recorded the highest-ever number of new asylum applications, totalling 2.6 million from over 140 nationalities in 155 countries.

Conflict-induced forced displacement profoundly impacts all countries affected at different levels and across sectors – including regions of origin and those of refuge. In particular, some countries experience a disproportionate economic burden of forced migration. The proportion and prevalence of displaced people in Muslim-majority countries has been influenced by various factors, including international resettlement programs, responsibility sharing commitments, government policies, and the overall capacity of these countries to host and support displaced populations. Forced displacement trends are dynamic and evolving, and the specific numbers can change over time due to rapid shifts in global crises and humanitarian efforts.

Feminised forced displacement

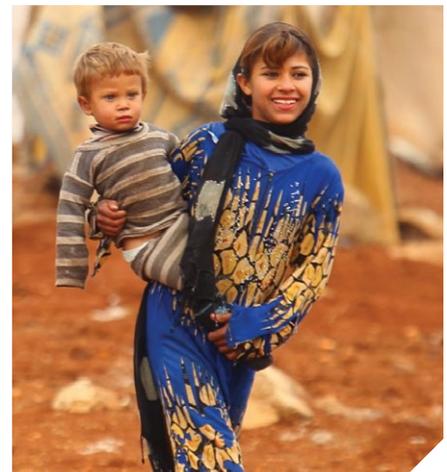
Forced migration trends are increasingly feminised, as seen through the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, where most displaced are women and children. Women as often primary caregivers with restricted access to economic resources may be restrained from fleeing or be highly dependent on smugglers and traffickers. Displaced women and girls are disproportionately vulnerable to cumulative risks of exclusion and discrimination. With ruptured social networks, language barriers and documentation, and limited awareness of rights and where to access support, they face multiple risks across different locations and stages of forced migration from conflict and transit to refuge settings. Displaced women face a range of socio-economic challenges, including barriers in

accessing work, childcare, education, safe accommodation and health services in new locations due to their precarious legal status. Especially displaced women who are still unregistered or miss documentation are most vulnerable.

Risks along forced migrant routes include physical, sexual and psychological violence, trafficking, modern slavery and other forms of exploitation perpetrated by persons in authority, smugglers, traffickers, border control officials, militia, their partners and other migrants. Those who have experienced violence often lack the opportunity to seek protection or treatment. Thus, the needs of displaced survivors are largely unmet as the protection and provision of mobile services remains scant. Actions promoting refugee integration and access to health, work, education, and safe accommodation are essential to enable them to rebuild their lives. For example, enabling livelihood opportunities and vocational trainings help strengthen resilience of displaced populations.

Call for innovative solutions

Feminised forced displacement is a global challenge requiring concerted efforts and innovative solutions to support the protection and inclusion of forcibly displaced populations in conflict-torn countries, countries of transit and refuge. With Muslim majority countries remaining among the top countries hosting largest numbers of refugees, ISDB plays an important role in addressing forced displacement challenges. It recognises the need to promote the development of inclusive and women-sensitive interventions to minimise their socio-economic vulnerability and aid dependency.



- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142827>
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From Accountability and Learning to evidence-based evaluation: a roadmap to SDGs for Developing Countries



Abdourahmane Dit Baffa Keita
IsDB

Introduction

If the world is struggling to make significant progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, development organizations and actors must think and work in new ways, including in accountability and learning. We have confidence in that a good mechanism of accountability and learning can make a major contribution. With reference to SDG, this briefing offers two examples: (i) exploring the role and importance of evaluation in SDG achievement, and (ii) shifting attention from accountability and learning to evidence-based evaluation in achieving SDG. Such approaches can help all development actors including monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning specialists to create accountability and learning plans, identify leverage points, and reveal new ways to demonstrate progress.

Evaluation, a valuable tool for SDG

"The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for follow-up and review processes that examine progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such processes are needed at international and regional levels, but especially at the national level" (Thomas Schwandt et Al, 2016). According to EVALSDG (2016), "Evaluation combines evidence with sound ways of thinking about value-based criteria, or sometimes principles. Essentially, it is critical thinking. It aims for reasoned judgments of the merit, worth or significance of policies, programs, strategies and systems". It can transform our planet into a more prosperous and sustainable world and can modify people's living conditions and well-being for better. Thus, evaluating the SDG builds national monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets. This assumes that evaluation results feed into national development plans and enable measurement of how far policies and programs are addressing the inter-related set of SDGs and their targets, given specific country priorities and needs across sectors and countries. The importance of evaluation for 2030 agenda is twofold: 1) evaluation SDG means of demonstrating challenges associated with monitoring, measuring and setting indicators, and 2) importantly, it's the vehicle for measuring and reporting on national progress toward realizing the SDGs and their targets.

However, measurement of progress towards SDGs and their target is not enough in view of the complexity of the SDGs and their achievement. It is also crucial to evaluate the

policies, strategies and programs that are intimately tied to accomplishing the 17 SDGs and their targets, whether such initiatives relate directly to one or many SDGs. Assess if national policies and strategies are doing the right things, doing things rights, if resources properly allocated and used, what lessons are critical for improving development impact of future policies and strategies related to achieving SDGs.

... but embedding accountability and learning into national monitoring and evaluation plan can drive sustainable changes in Developing Countries

There is another aspect to consider in achieving the 2030 Agenda, going beyond the evaluation of SDGs. Evaluation is a valuable exercise for demonstrating how sustainable development is being realized across social, environmental and economic sectors. However, countries can take a more strategic and systematic approach by simultaneously embedding accountability and learning approach into national evaluation plans of SDGs. In this way, countries can design and conduct evaluations to inform ongoing and future programming. Also, aligning monitoring, evaluation, and learning efforts across the strategy and policy levels towards assessing whether their national strategies and policies will deliver sustainable changes. This approach encourages a shift in perspective of the 2030 Agenda, moving from traditional evaluation to systematically balance and respond to the needs of all stakeholders when making decisions. This will ensure that all stakeholders, including the most marginalized and vulnerable, play an active role in the decision-making processes towards SDGs implementation. And give opportunity to enable countries to share their implementation experiences including successes, challenges and critical lessons learned with a view to accelerating and improving implementation of the entire 2030 Agenda.

Defining 'accountability and learning'

Traditionally, accountability describes how those who authorize third parties to act on their behalf verify that authority is exercised in accordance with those which have been agreed. Nowadays, accountability also includes the right of everyone to demand accountability for decision-making or actions that affect them. According to HAP standard, accountability is the means by which power is exercised responsibly. It is a process that requires considering the opinions of different stakeholders and being accountable to them, in particular those affected by authority or power. According to OECD-DAC, "accountability is the obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis a vis mandated roles and/or plans. This may require a careful, even legally defensible, demonstration that the work is consistent with the contract terms". But the accountability doesn't stop there, it also concerns implementer's relationship with beneficiaries, partners and other stakeholders, such as local governments. Accountability to beneficiaries is to provide them the opportunity to express their opinion, influence the way interventions are designed and implemented and determine the results they want to see. It also requires that implementer provide the

space and the means to involve all stakeholders in the work of community building.

In summary, accountability means not only giving a voice (to the beneficiaries), but also an opportunity to influence decisions that affect how organizations, projects choose to work with them and how to do it. It also means empowering organizations to be accountable in a way that influences the policies, priorities and actions, locally, nationally and globally.

Learning, at its simplest, is engaging with others, asking questions to make sense of what is happening in a project and how it happened with the intent to make decisions to improve the project through adaptive management. It's also a process of engaging with others to make sense of a project, policy and strategy by taking time to pose questions, challenge assumptions, and discuss issues based on available data, observations, discussions with participants, partners and other stakeholders. Conducted with specific purpose and intention, learning can improve decision making to make things better.

Summing up, accountability and learning together are about taking responsibility for listening to the needs, concerns and perspectives of all stakeholders (especially supporters and donors, as well as partners and the communities the project support) to learn from program experience and knowledge, as well as good practice, to continually improve the quality of projects, policies and strategies for the benefit to the people we serve.

How accountability and learning can support SDG in Developing Countries

The 2030 Agenda being perceived as a political force for change by promoting the concept of sustainable and development changes, approaching only evaluation in the context of SDG is too narrow a focus. Evaluation can and must play a more important role in sustainable development by generating robust evidence to measure progress against SDGs targets. But embedding accountability and learning to evaluation will expand the focus of evaluation leading to action, decision-making and influence more the SDGs achievement. This implies moving beyond focusing on outcomes only, to examining the inclusiveness, transparency and accountability of strategies and policies to achieve innovations in SDGs implementation. This enables adaptive management, helping to ensure that SDGs is agile and responsive to the need of countries at national and regional level. Undoubtedly, Evaluation only will not be effective without mechanisms for engaging and holding governments answerable at the global level for the commitments they make. The value added of accountability and learning is the ability to facilitate mutual learning and knowledge sharing on SDGs among countries within the region, and to provide a channel for smaller states to have a voice on development cooperation issues at the global level. Accountability and learning with good evaluation inform policymaking, facilitates adaptive management, enhances government and organizational learning, demonstrates responsibility, and informs and empowers citizens. This system, together, can contribute to better resources allocation and new ways of thinking in designing and implementing policies and strategies intimately tied to accomplishing the 17 SDGs and their targets.

Aligning Sustainable Development Goals in Maldives Member Country Partnership Strategy 2022-2025



Raian Farooq
IsDB

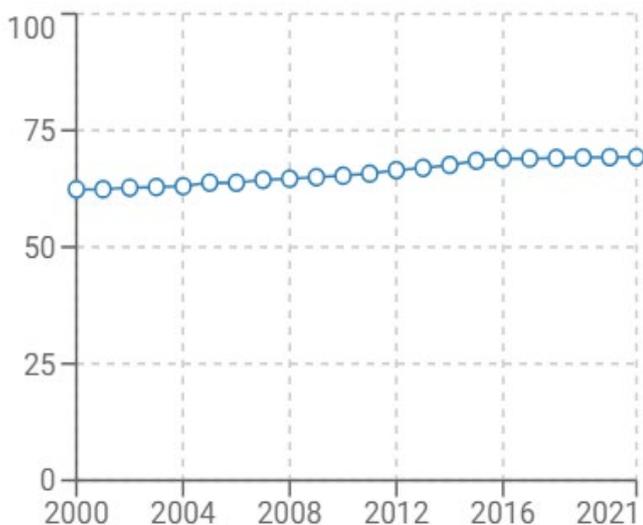


Golam Mortaza
IsDB

Maldives has been gradually progressing towards achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through faster attainments in SDGs regarding poverty, education, health, clean water and sanitation and affordable and clean energy (Figure 1). However, a range of major and significant challenges remain in the areas of zero hunger; industry, innovation and infrastructure; gender equality; reduced inequalities; and life below water (Figure 2).

With overall SDG Index Score of 71.3 out of 100 above the regional average of 67.2, the latest SDG assessment in 2023 placed Maldives in the rank of 68 out of 166 countries. As of 2023, out of 17 SDGs, Maldives achieved only 2 SDGs (SDG 1: No Poverty; and SDG 4: Quality Education) and also on track in maintaining SDG achievement, along with SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). In reaching

Figure 1: Progress of Maldives in overall SDGs

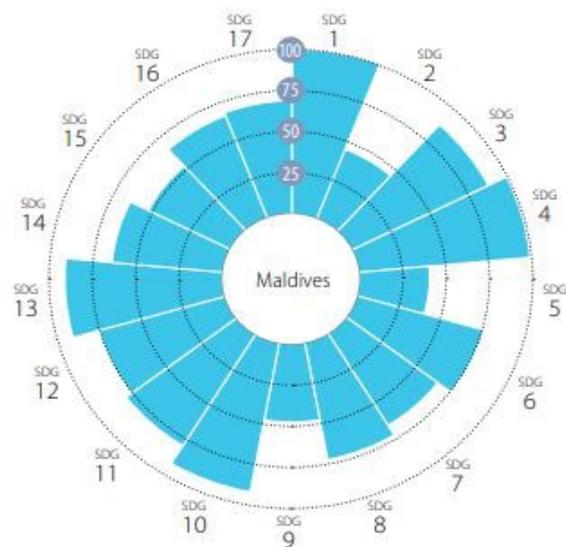


Source: UNDP 2023 (<https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/maldives>)



targets, challenges remain for 2 SDGs (SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; and SDG 13: Climate Action). Significant challenges remain for 7 SDGs (SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being; SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; SDG 15: Life on Land; SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals). Finally, major challenges

Figure 2: Average Performance by SDG in 2023



Source: UNDP 2023 (<https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/maldives>)

MCPS Pillars, Focuses and Cross-Cutting Areas	Relevant SDGs
MCPS Pillar 1: Strengthen local economies and empower communities	
Resilient agriculture and fisheries and marine resources and guest house tourism; inclusive and quality human capital development & skills; ICT and digitization; local economies including MSMEs; and community empowerment	SDG 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); SDG 3 (Good health and well-being); SDG 4 (Quality education); SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure); and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)
MCPS Pillar 2: Ensure environmental sustainability and promote resilient society	
Clean and renewable energy; green and sustainable urban infrastructure and services; and resilient communities	SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation); SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy); SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production); and SDG 14 (Life Below Water)
MCPS Pillar 3: Improve quality of Island life and enhance business environment	
Strategic infrastructures and logistic hubs for regional economies; social housing infrastructure facilities; regional connectivity through trade facilitation and investment promotion; business environment improvement; SMEs development; Promote private sector financing including PPPs	SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)
Cross-Cutting Areas	
Innovative Islamic financial products and services; climate change mitigation and adaptation; women and youth; and Reverse Linkage/RCI opportunities	SDG 5 (Gender Equality); SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); and SDG 13 (Climate Action)

remain for 4 SDGs (SDG 2: Zero Hunger; SDG 5: Gender Equality; SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy; and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production). The outstanding challenges in major SDGs in Maldives are real concern, calling for further efforts and supports, particularly from strategic development partners including IsDB Group.

The approved IsDB Group's Member Country Partnership Strategy (MCPS) 2022-2025 for Republic of Maldives well recognizes the major development challenges of Maldives in achieving SDG targets. The MCPS Pillars and its focuses and cross-cutting areas were designed in such a manner so that those contribute significantly to SDG targets and achievements (Table 1).

The MCPS Pillar 1, with an objective of making a resilient life for Maldivians, focuses on strengthening local economies and empower communities through supporting agriculture and affordable tourism, human capital development, digitization, MSMEs and community empowerment. These focuses will directly contribute to food security and sustainable agriculture (SDG 2), improved wellbeing of citizens (SDG 3), high quality education and skills (SDG 4), better digital connectivity (SDG 9) and improved local economies and community empowerment (SDG 10).

Similarly, the MCPS Pillar 2, which sets an objective of making the lives of Maldivians sustainable through developing resilient and sustainable infrastructures and facilitating community development, will contribute to ensuring environmental sustainability through investing in affordable, clean and renewable energy (SDG 7) to reverse the country's dependence on imported fossil fuels, building green and sustainable urban infrastructure and services in water and sanitation sector (SDGs 6 & 11) to ensure access to safe water supply and better waste management and facilitating resilient communities (SDGs 12 & 14).

Finally, with an objective of improving the quality of life of Maldivians and economic diversification through improved strategic infrastructure and enhanced conducive business environment, the MCPS Pillar 3 will make contribution through investing in connectivity, logistics hubs and social housing for facilitating regional economies (SDG 9), and enabling business environment and private sector financing including PPPs (SDG 8).

The alignment of MCPS cross cutting areas and the respective focuses with SDGs goals is equally important as majority of cross-cutting areas highly focuses critical areas of SDGs as well. For example, MCPS cross-cutting area of focusing on women and youth will support mainstreaming perspectives of women and youth in meeting their respective needs in Maldives (SDGs 5 & 8).

Though a right kind of alignment between MCPS Pillars and SDG targets is placed at the strategic level in the MCPS, a more specific alignment with individual SDG targets will be ensured at the project programming and processing level through alignment of project specific output and outcomes indicators with SDG targets.

As a result, the ultimate success of contributing toward SDGs targets and goals by IsDB Group relies largely on how the targets are being set and then implemented at the project level and other interventions by IsDB Group entities. For that, a proactive programming approach needs to be adopted for choosing implementable projects and interventions aligning with MCPS pillars and its focus areas. Most importantly, during project appraisal, the respective project team needs to be well mindful of aligning relevant project-specific SDGs targets with those at the MCPS level in a meaningful manner. Of course, the importance of regular monitoring of the progress of achievements during the project review missions can't be more emphasized.

Social Entrepreneurship – A Potent Financial Instrument to Achieve the SDGs



Sharjeel Ahmad
IsDB

A private solar lighting company based in Bangaluru, India, was one of the many institutions that enthusiastically responded to the urgent healthcare needs during COVID-19. Serious patients requiring urgent access to oxygen and ventilators benefited greatly from the company's COVID crisis management initiatives. The company partnered with public and civil society organizations to provide critical services for COVID care hospitals, isolation centers, therapeutic care units, and health staff quarters. In addition, it extensively nurtured the use of sustainable building material, solar powered solutions, and efficient equipment during the second phase of the crisis.

Another Indian private company operating in waste management and recycling was seen to be actively involved in COVID response, providing "PPE (personal protective equipment) Kits, Oximeters, Thermometers, Oxygen concentrators and Medicines to the frontline workers, individuals and families."¹ A low-cost private hospital and cardiac center came forward to offer quarantine facilities to economically weaker sections of the society free of cost. Apart from their generosity towards COVID-19 response, two common threads bind all these companies – these are all social entrepreneurs and they have unprecedentedly interfaced with other local and national economic agencies to successfully implement the required COVID response.

A greater aspiration and question from these two common threads is this – if social entrepreneurs can interface with other economic agencies and successfully deliver in the short term (COVID response), what role could these two common threads play in the run up to the 2030 Agenda? Let's recapitulate!

Social entrepreneurship is a form of business that operates in the social and human development arena and aims to address some of the most pressing challenges facing society and the planet. It aims to create



positive social and environmental impact while also generating economic value. Social entrepreneurs often operate in sectors and regions that are underserved or neglected by the mainstream market and government and target the needs and aspirations of the poor and marginalized populations.

Needless to state, social entrepreneurship is closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the global agenda for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. Although social entrepreneurship is not a new concept, it started getting greater tractions during the COVID-19 era, as is also evident from the frontline examples from India cited above. As also stated by the World Economic Forum², "Social innovators are tackling some of the world's greatest threats – and by working more collaboratively, are shifting the entire landscape of the social change sector." While social entrepreneurs may have been working exhaustively since long, their interfaces and partnerships with other economic agencies like governments, communities, and financiers have seen a promising ascent during the COVID-19 era.

World Economic Forum 2020 saw the launch of Catalyst 2030, a global movement of more than 600 social entrepreneurs from across 180 countries. The primary goal³ of Catalyst 2030 is "creating innovative, collaborative, and action-orientated approaches to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030". One of the strongest benefits of Catalyst 2030 is that it offers an affluent and cohesive outreach platform to social entrepreneurs and beneficiaries. Catalyst 2030 has also been able to galvanize

and accelerate partnerships between social entrepreneurs and government agencies, philanthropists, and financiers. Catalyst 2030 now has more than 486 members, serving 180 countries, with an outreach of 4 billion beneficiaries and an annual spend of more than US \$2.2 billion.

Social entrepreneurs can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in various ways, like providing affordable and accessible products and services that improve the quality of life and well-being of low-income and marginalized communities; creating decent jobs and economic opportunities for women and youth; enhancing employment inclusiveness for other minorities like migrants and people with disabilities; and promoting climate action by offering alternative products and solutions to reduce environmental degradation and greenhouse gas emissions.

While social entrepreneurship is emerging as a strong niche for enhanced trade and business and economic throughput in general, it requires complimentary impetus and organized impulsion like Catalyst 2030 to ensure effective synergy. Catalyst 2030 is global; however, local and national governments in respective countries must also recognize the importance and impact of social entrepreneurs in achieving the 2030 Agenda and galvanize them to become more holistic and inclusive economic actors. Recognition and ramification of small and medium enterprises was at the fulcrum of economic reinvigoration for many developing countries earlier; could a similar innovative impetus for the social entrepreneurs dissipate the SDGs financing gaps in the years to come?

1. Chakraborty, Monalisha and Parida, Prasanta. 2021. Exploring the aspects of Social Entrepreneurship during Covid 19 pandemic in India. Bhubaneswar, India: KIIT University
2. Pearson, Kristine and McElwee, Colin. 2021. How collaborations with social entrepreneurs are helping to make the SDGs a reality. Switzerland: World Economic Forum
3. Ibid

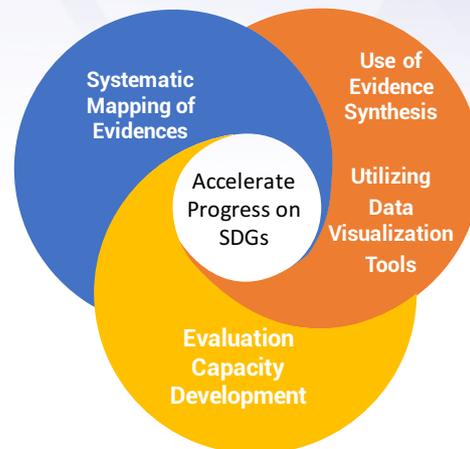
Enhancing Use of Evidence Accelerates Progress on SDGs



Ehtisham Ul Hassan
IsDB



Golam Mortaza
IsDB



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been the shared goals of the world since their adoption in September 2015. As a universal agenda, SDGs call on all nations to pursue economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability in accordance with good governance and accountability. However, the successful country-specific operationalization and result-oriented achievement of SDGs require the design of goal-based strategies with clear baselines, public discourse on efficient implementation priorities, and effective follow-up mechanisms. The realization of those steps depends on timely and comprehensive evidence being available to inform decision-making for program and policy design and implementation.

The world is exactly halfway through the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda implementation and still significantly behind the targets, primarily due to a weak global economy, the impacts of the climate crisis, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Progress has been made in poverty reduction, maternal and child health, and gender equality, but not enough to achieve the SDGs by 2030. There is limited investment in the evidence synthesis to learn **'what works and why'**, and the achievement of SDGs is highly dependent on the use and uptake of the available evidence for impactful interventions.

Highly sustainable and impactful program and policy decisions are needed to accelerate progress on sustainable development to achieve off-track results and for which various approaches are being used with weak links among local, national, and global targets. The SDGs result monitoring system is not systematic enough to report real-time progress data generated at local sub-national, or national levels. There is still a need to maximize the synergies between Agenda 2030 and the operational plan of the development programs implemented at the local, national, and regional levels, and also monitor the extent of institutionalizing SDG targets and actions in national and sub-national planning, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting processes. Hence, it is time for a mid-term evaluation of monitoring progress on SDGs through **a systematic mapping of evidence, utilizing data visualization and evidence synthesis** for revising SDG targets toward a more realistic achievement by 2030. This also requires **enhanced evaluation capacity development** for organizations and countries.

Need for systematic mapping of evidence: In order to achieve sustainable solutions, adopting a systematic approach through mapping all available evidence is required. This will help to guide the tracking of the SDGs results at the sub-national and national levels. Having such a centralized evidence repository will specifically inform **'what works, and where at what scale and in what context'**. In this regard, it will be strategic to prioritize the focus on those SDGs where the evidence gap is significantly large such as SDG 10 (reduce inequalities within and among countries). Accordingly, evidence mapping is critical for facilitating learning systematically to inform the scaled-to boost the progress on the SDGs.

Need for evidence synthesis: UNDP and Unicef jointly set up the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition, systematically and comprehensively collating evidence from evaluations on progress towards the SDGs. This coalition aims to synthesize rigorous and evaluative evidence organized around the five pillars (Partnerships, People, Planet, Prosperity, and Peace). The synthesis of evidence from impact evaluations, systematic reviews, evaluations undertaken by the UN, and Voluntary National Reviews, will provide lessons and findings on, i) What interventions and approaches work for achieving the SDGs, and ii) How and why they work, in which contexts and for whom. **Therefore, it is critical to synthesise evidence generated from operations, self-evaluation, and independent evaluation** to learn what, how, why, where, and for whom interventions/programs work.

Need for data visualization: Adopting user-friendly, readily available data aggregation and visualization platforms is important to promote data-driven decision-making at National and global levels. Lack of timely evidence and poor access to it are among the most frequently reported barriers to promoting the use of evidence and increasing evidence-informed policymaking. For instance, without information on geographically desegregated data on how many people still live in multidimensional and extreme poverty, it is impossible to identify the relevant actions needed to end poverty in all its forms, everywhere. Utilizing the SDGs Global Dashboard is critical to monitor the institutional investment desegregated by counties. In this regard, data visualization helps to understand the differences in SDG progress between the countries.

Need for Enhanced Evaluation Capacity Development: Enhancing Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) is instrumental in ensuring that organizations and governments can make data-driven decisions, be accountable to their stakeholders, and continuously improve respective projects, programs, and policies. It is critically important to achieve better outcomes, maximize the impact of interventions, and contribute to the overall effectiveness of development efforts through using evidence gap maps and evidence synthesis. In this regard, more investment is required: (i) to build the evaluation capacity of staff, practitioners, and decision-makers; (ii) to utilize data and technology-based solutions for synthesizing the evidence; and (iii) to make those accessible to stakeholders for evidence-driven/informed decision-making. The focus should also be placed on strengthening stakeholders' institutional capacities and statistical capabilities to effectively undertake an evaluation of SDGs. ECD also contributes to strengthening the capacity of the National system to collect and analyze SDG performance data in IsDB Member Countries.

Global Advocacy At the 78th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA78), 2023



Amir Hamza Syed
IsDB



Nedzad Ajanovic
IsDB

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is the largest International gathering of the Heads of States/Governments et al. as well as most of the UN Institutions, MDBs and other international agencies. The Objective of the UNGA is to promote international co-operation among all nations and development institutions in the political, social, cultural, economic, educational and health fields.

The United Nations granted IsDB Group the Observer status in April 2007, and this helped strengthen cooperation with the United Nations and its agencies, funds and programs. In total there are 74 UN Program, Agencies and Funds, including 17 UN Specialized Agencies, for example FAO, IFAD, UNHCR and WHO that each have own process for admitting members and appointing their administrative head. IsDB has partnership agreements with over 26 UN institutions.

This year in 2023, H.E. the President, IsDB led the delegation to UNGA this year from 18-22 September. This year's theme of UNGA was "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all." The IsDB Delegation participated at SDG Summit 2023, Climate Ambition Summit 2023, High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, Global Education Forum High Level Meeting which were the main events at this year's UNGA.

"We cannot afford to waste this historical moment that holds the potential to alleviate poverty, hunger and starvation while working collectively to safeguard the planet from the impact of climate change", said Dr. Muhammad Al Jasser, President, IsDB.

IsDB President, representing Global MDBs told the Ambition Summit at UNGA78: "We unite to amplify our collective endorsement of UN Secretary General António Guterres' special initiative on Early Warnings For All which aims to ensure that early warning systems protect everyone by 2027".

At the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, Dr. Muhammad Al Jasser stated: "To make a difference, all global institutions have to come together in a multilateral collaborative way. If we act singularly, we are not going to have the punching power to make significant changes in the circumstances of developing countries."

H.E. the President held high-level meetings with Principals from the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO).

Extension of the MoU was signed by the President of IsDB and the Administrator, UNDP until 2030 which coincides with the UN Agenda 2030 and achievement of SDG goals. As UNDP is the main United Nations organization for achieving SDGs, the extension of the MoU will help the effective realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the following areas: (i) **Project development and**

support to government implementation in key areas, such as capacity development, crisis response and recovery, poverty reduction, gender equality and women's empowerment, youth employment, disaster risk reduction and climate change, amongst others; (ii) **Development of Islamic Finance and private sector partnerships** to mobilize finance for the SDGs, including advancing the global Islamic impact investing; (iii) **Strategy Development/SDG alignment**, working together to align key IsDB Member Country Partnership Strategies (MCPs) to the SDGs; contribute to each other's strategies and programmes; and (iv) **Promoting systematic institutional cooperation** – from broadening channels of information exchange, research, analysis and contacts, to promoting south-south cooperation and reverse linkages at regional and national levels, to collaboration on corporate services, key events and joint monitoring and communications to operationalize the MoU and action plan.

New MoU was signed with the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), which provides safety and security services for United Nations agencies, departments and other partners, as part of the United Nations Safety Management System (UNSMS). The UNDSS manages a network of security advisers, analysts, officers, and coordinators in more than 125 countries in support of around 180,000 United Nations personnel, 400,000 dependents, and 4,500 United Nations premises worldwide. In 2018 the Bank submitted the first request to partner with UNDSS and enrol to the UNSMS. On 2019, the Bank joined the Saving Lives Together (SLT) framework for security collaboration aims at supporting the safe delivery of humanitarian and development assistance by SLT partner organizations. During the same year, IsDB participated in the first UNDSS annual security symposium and the 2nd symposium the following year.

The Vice President Operations signed a new MoU with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). The UNOSSC plays a crucial role in providing advisory and consulting services to all stakeholders on SSTRC. It works with a wide range of partners to harness emerging innovative financing mechanisms as well as development solutions through SSTRC in order to support member states in solving development challenges. In recent years, the Bank has expanded its partnership with UNOSSC, particularly since 2012. During this period, the two institutions collaborated to provide platforms for sharing expertise and development solutions, published joint reports and organized training programs on SSTRC to strengthen individual as well as institutional capacities. There has also been very productive collaboration during the preparations for the landmark 2nd High-Level UN Conference on SSTRC (also known as BAPA+40), during which the Bank validated its framework for national institutional arrangements for SSTRC, known as the "National Ecosystems for SSTRC".

IsDB participation in number of side events with strategic and internationally recognized development partners that were well organized and attended. Messages and outcomes of the events were well communicated at UNGA and beyond. IsDB Group will continue to actively engage in key regional and international fora, such as UNGA, and engage with relevant institutions in MCs and strategic development partners as part of its Global Advocacy efforts. IsDB will continue to plan and prepare well in advance for organization of side-events and bilateral meetings on the margins of the next UNGA in order to achieve the best results from its attendance.



The SDGs Montage



The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) held a meeting on the sidelines of the Digital Government Forum in Riyadh to discuss ways to strengthen collaboration and drive the Sustainable Development Goals. Dr. Al Jasser highlighted the Bank's pioneering initiatives, such as designating an envoy on SDGs and establishing an SDGs Community of Practice (CoP).



IsDB and BADEA sign an MoU for Sustaining Development Support to Palestinian People. The signing took place on the sidelines of the Saudi-Arab African Economic Conference held in Riyadh and was signed by IsDB President, H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al Jasser, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors at BADEA, Dr. Fahad Aldossari.



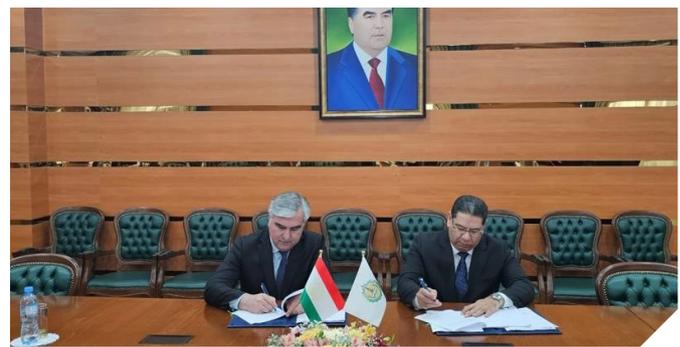
The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group and the Industrial Development Bank of Türkiye (TSKB) have signed a US\$ 100 million financing agreement – Post Earthquake Economic Recovery (PEER) – to enhance economic recovery and sustainable growth in the 17 provinces impacted by the twin devastating earthquakes. The PEER project will directly contribute to SDG 9 "Build resilient infrastructure, and other SDGs, including SDG 8, SDG 13, and SDG 17.



The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) President, H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al Jasser, has announced that the IsDB will provide over \$1 billion in climate finance to support its Member Countries affected by fragility and conflict in the next three years. The President declared IsDB's intent during a session on Climate Action as part of the ongoing COP28 events in the UAE.



The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) has formalized two financing agreements with Guinea and Burkina Faso during the Saudi-Arab-African Economic Conference held in Riyadh. The primary aim of this initiative is to elevate the living conditions of rural populations in Guinea, aligning with the government's commitment to ensuring clean water and sanitation for all, in harmony with SDG 6.



The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan have signed financing agreements to support the National Education Development Strategy of the country (phase-II). The key expected results of the project are to provide access to 17,376 students and improve the quality of learning opportunities for over 800,000 students.



'Just Transition' in the Eye of the Beholder!



Dr. Rami Ahmad
IsDB

One buzz word these days, especially for us in the developing world, is 'Just Transition.' Practitioners in the global development community seem to be satisfied with this term, liberating themselves from the guilt of the past or the burden of addressing the root causes of the global problem facing humanity. But, what's implied by 'just'? And who is funding the 'just' part of the 'just transition'? And who was responsible for this problem in the first place?

WEF cites the lack of sufficient climate action as the major global risk for the next decade. Sure, the developed world, with its scientific might and capabilities, has finally learned about the catastrophe awaiting mankind because of over two centuries of industrialization. They have, rightly, rallied the efforts and got the rest of the world to agree in Paris (2015) to deal with the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees (1.5 degrees on best effort basis) Celsius above pre-industrial levels. An objective that most rational people will not dismiss, despite the tremendous challenge.

To keep things in context, however, the whole content of Africa is responsible for less than 4% of global pollution. Needless to mention that most countries in the Global South have been colonized in one way or another and have not historically contributed to the problem. As they gained independence and embarked on their development journeys in the past few decades trying to catch-up or leapfrog, they found themselves facing strict guidelines depriving them from the same cheap energy sources that got the Global North to where it is today. And if they don't conform, they will risk funding possibilities and, not to mention, they will be accused of not helping protect the planet!

The irony is that Germany, in the aftermath of the drop of the Russian gas supply, has reactivated its coal-fired power plants with absolutely no guilt at all; maybe understandably, citing economic necessity. Uganda, on the other hand, was criticized and denied funding for building infrastructure to benefit from its newly discovered oil resources.

The dilemma here is that without reliable energy supply, development efforts will stifle or be ridiculously slow, at best. A meager progress that will probably kill any hope for many countries to prosper or reach a minimum reasonable level of development, such as achieving the SDGs.

Clean energy technologies are developed in the North and are still expensive. Despite the declining cost, many developing countries are highly indebted and cannot afford high cost borrowing for new generation plants, let alone do away with existing plants that use cheaper and more readily available sources of energy. Developing countries should be allowed to utilize their mineral resources to generate the energy required to attain their development aspirations; at least for the next 10-15 years to avoid substantial delays in development gains. Hopefully, by then, technology around cleaner sources of energy would have been advanced and become more affordable. So, 'Just Transition' should imply a full consideration of the pace of social and economic development and the realization of the growing gap between the Global North and the Global South.

Of course, a logical path to pursue, if the world is serious about this Just Transition, is for the rich countries to own their piece of the mess and take responsibility for causing the problem in the first place. This is from a technical point of view, not even addressing the historic adverse impact of colonization in the past couple of centuries. This could be manifested by committing to transferring technology, building capacity, and helping substantially in funding economic and social development in the least developed countries; in particular, the clean and affordable energy (SDG7) as a major enabler for progress and impactful development.

To be fair, G20 countries pledged USD 100 Bn per year, and agreed to some rechanneling of the SDR amounts issued by IMF in the aftermath of the covid crisis. And yes, COP28 has declared a

commitment to multiplying renewables (X3 by 2030), boosting energy efficiency, and cutting down on emissions. The jury is still out to see the actions and the impact that would be achieved.

All MDBs have committed to increasing their funding to climate action and Just Transition; although one would think the priorities should be balanced and be fully aligned with the pressing needs and the national development plans of the concerned countries. Countries with some borrowing capacity have embarked on ambitious programs for Just Transition. Indonesia, for example, with the support of MDBs like IsDB, WB, AsDB and AIIB, has launched a national transformational program during its presidency of the G20 in 2022. However, Indonesia is an example of a middle-income country that has the capacity to borrow and implement. Many LDMCs do not, unfortunately!

Developed countries are moving forward with serious climate action initiatives and programs to achieve the Paris objectives, but they should not expect that developing countries have necessarily the same perspective. Leaving aside the political correctness of signing agreements, for the two perspectives to converge, only sincere demonstration of taking responsibility and a genuine commitment to contributing to the wellbeing of developing countries, will ensure collaboration of all parties to save mankind and protect the planet!

This reminds us of the powerful metaphor used in the Hadeeth of Prophet Mohammad (ﷺ); in comparing a person who does right to the one who does wrong is like: "The example of people drawing lots for seats in a boat. Some of them got seats in the upper part while the others in the lower part; those in the lower part must pass by those in the upper one to get water, and that troubled the latter. One of them (i.e. the people in the lower part) took an ax and started making a hole in the bottom of the boat to get water. The people of the upper part came and asked him, 'What is wrong with you?' He replied, 'You have been troubled much by my coming up to you, and I have to get water.' Now if they prevent him from doing that, they will save him and themselves, but if they leave him (to do what he wants), they will destroy him and themselves.

قَالَ قَدْ أَخَذُوا عَلَيَّ يَدِيهِ أَنْجُوهُ وَتَجَوُّوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ،
وَإِنْ تَرَكُوهُ أَهْلَكُوهُ وَأَهْلَكُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ."