



COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES & THE UN 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, adopted unanimously by 193 United Nations Member States in September 2015, constitutes a historic global effort, creating an action plan for the entire world to follow, aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring prosperity for all.

The mission of the Community of Democracies (CoD) to support democratic institutions and promote the democratic values enshrined in the Warsaw Declaration is firmly anchored in the 2030 Agenda. This connection is recognized in the Agenda when it reaffirms that there can be no sustainable development without peace, nor peace without sustainable development; acknowledging the importance of democracy as a precondition for economic and social development.

The 2030 Agenda created a visible frame for the Community to strengthen its role at the global level and within multi-stakeholder efforts, to strengthen democratic principles and institutions, promoting its implementation and in particular of Goal 16.

Vital aspects of democracy, such as good governance, rule of law, human rights, peace, and security are recognized in Goal 16, which calls upon countries to “***promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels***”.

The commitment to pursue a more peaceful environment is a historical first on such a global scale and Goal 16 is the driving factor which will encourage respect for human rights, the rule of law, equal access to justice for everyone and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. In addition, as an organization dedicated to strengthening democratic norms and institutions throughout the world, the CoD views Goal 16 as a necessary foundation for stable progress on all other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The relationship between Goal 16 and other SDGs can be seen in the following examples:

- Fighting corruption is essential in supporting economic growth (Goal 8) by restoring trust in the economy through consistent market-based transactions;
- Ensuring inclusive and representative decision-making is a vehicle for promoting gender equality (Goal 5); and

- Ensuring equal access to justice for all is an important step in reducing economic inequalities (Goal 10).

Promoting and Supporting the Implementation of Goal 16

Capitalizing on efforts made by CoD's Governing Council member states in multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives around the 2030 Agenda and the global indicator framework including: the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Promoting Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, and the Friends of Governance for Sustainable Development; and taking advantage of the Community's role as a global intergovernmental coalition with broad geographical participation of states, and other stakeholders including civil society, the Community has a structure that facilitates the necessary multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral approach needed to support the advancement of the 2030 Agenda.

Seeking to engage in efforts to promote the implementation of the Agenda and its 17 SDGs, the CoD understood that its demanding nature would require pursuing partnerships involving all stakeholders in society to meet the commitment of "leaving no one behind", and that it would also be crucial to preserve the integrity of the Agenda ensuring that goals, like Goal 16, were not sacrificed when priorities were made, noting that an effective legal framework and strong democratic institutions would be critical to ensuring all SDGs were achieved.

Given the centrality of Goal 16 and knowing its critical nature to affect progress towards all Sustainable Development Goals, the CoD in line with its mission and with the financial support of the governments of the United States, Japan and Sweden, developed a set of Global Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16.

Seeing the need to fill the gaps left by the current set of global indicators, which fell short of covering the full spirit of Goal 16, the supplemental indicators aimed to facilitate better measurement of critical aspects of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, supporting the comprehensive achievement of Goal 16, and, in doing so, helping to enable the achievement of the Sustainable Development Agenda as a whole.

The CoD was well positioned to bring together the perspective and the necessary expertise to create the set of voluntary supplemental indicators, having the ability to consult with both its member states, and with civil society, academia, as well as other global democracy partners and stakeholders, such as the UNDP.

To develop the indicators, the CoD carried out an eight-month consultative process in 2017, convening a "Group of Experts" who provided key input and assisted the Technical Lead, Dr.

Havard Nygard (Senior Researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo), in developing the set of voluntary supplemental indicators for the 12 targets under Goal 16. In the construction of the indicators, the CoD drew on a range of international legal frameworks, academic study, policy research and also put special emphasis on the Warsaw Declaration.

Additionally, to guide the selection for the supplemental indicators, the CoD drew on the following set of criteria:

International comparability- Indicators should be equally relevant, at least in theory, to all countries, and that an indicator for one country can be compared to the same indicator for another country, presuming that the same methodology has been used to collect the data.

Validity/Relevance - The chosen indicator must be relevant to the overall target and cover issues not adequately covered by existing indicators. The extent to which an indicator is relevant both for the overall target and for principles in the Warsaw Declaration was considered. Implicit as well in the study's understanding of relevance is that the indicator is also a reliable measure of the target and/or principle.

Simplicity - Indicators should be simple to communicate and easy to interpret. However, when relevant and necessary, composite indicators, essentially indices, may be used.

Feasibility - Data must either already exist for the indicator, or it must be clear that it is feasible to collect the proposed data. Generally, indicators are prioritized that are already used and in existence and in which there is experience with the behavior of the indicator and an experience base or established methodology or cross-country data for the indicator.

Policy actionable - Indicators should, at least in theory, be susceptible to policy interventions so policy makers can monitor and effect change. This also entails that indicators be sufficiently specific. The indicator should first and foremost be nationally useful and be able to inform national policies.

The indicators developed by the Community of Democracies are meant as a supplement and voluntary non-prescriptive tool for states to use in measuring progress towards Goal 16. Specifically, they represent a supplementary framework that can be used to measure and track progress along dimensions of peace and conflict, human rights, good governance, rule of law, and fundamental freedoms, which are at the core of SDG16 and that were not adequately covered by existing global SDG 16 indicators.

The Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16 were presented at the 26th Governing Council meeting of the CoD in Washington D.C. on September 14, 2017. The importance of the supplemental indicators as a tool was further highlighted in the *Declaration of Washington*, as

agreed at the Ninth Community of Democracies Ministerial Conference on September 15, 2017, where the Governing Council of the CoD welcomed the voluntary adoption and implementation by Participating States, as appropriate, of the additional supplemental indicators developed in order to achieve the full scope and spirit of Sustainable Development Goal 16.

In 2018, the CoD has continued to encourage the advancement of SDG 16 and promote the Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16 in different multilateral fora at both global and regional levels. Activities carried out include: the *Busan Democracy Forum 2018* organized in January by the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD) in coordination with Asia Democracy Network (ADN), Asia Development Alliance (ADA) and with the cooperation of the government of the Republic of Korea and the Metropolitan City of Busan. The Forum provided the CoD the opportunity to engage in a conversation on Goal 16 as the enabler of the 2030 Agenda with approximately 300 democracy stakeholders, including civil society from the Asia region; and the *Inter-Regional Dialogue on Democracy (IRDD) workshop on “The Role of Global and Regional Organizations in the Advancement of Sustainable Development Goal 16”*, carried out by International IDEA in coordination with the CoD and the Office of the United Nations in Geneva (UNOG), at the Palais des Nations in the margins of the 37th session of the UNHRC in March.

Both the Busan Democracy Forum and the IRDD workshop provided an opportunity for the Community of Democracies to present the Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16 and have a meaningful discussion on challenges, good practices and lessons learned regarding the advancement of the 2030 Agenda and more specifically on Goal 16.

Looking Ahead: Championing the Advancement of the 2030 Agenda

While Goal 16 creates a visible frame to contribute in strengthening of democracy worldwide, and its elements of peace, just and inclusive societies are central to the mandate of the Community, other Sustainable Development Goals of particular importance to the work of the CoD include: Goal 5 which sets out to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; and Goal 17 on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development, particularly through the sub-target on strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships.

The Community of Democracies and the Sustainable Development Goals

While democracy is core to the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs that have been identified as most relevant to the work of the Community are: SDG 16 (promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building

effective, accountable institutions at all levels); SDG 5 (to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); and SDG 17 (strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development).

Within these, the following SDG targets are particularly connected to the work of the Community of Democracies:

SDG 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

SDG 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

SDG 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

SDG 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

SDG 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

SDG 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.

SDG 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

SDG 17.16: Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

SDG 17.17: Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

As the world continues to move along the road map for sustainable development for the next 12 years, the Community of Democracies has undertaken several activities to promote SDG 16 and will continue to seek opportunities such as:

- Continue to play a key role in keeping the focus on the integrity of the 2030 Agenda and supporting the effective implementation and reporting on the achievement of Goal 16 and its interlinkages with the rest of the Agenda, at the global, regional and national levels.
- Encourage its Governing Council member states to lead by example and use the Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16 as a tool in their national planning, monitoring and Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, as they prepare for the discussion that will take place during the High Level Political Forum in 2019 when Goal 16 comes under review.
- Identify and share best practices amongst CoD governing council member states and the wider democratic community for national level implementation plans and monitoring efforts on Goal 16, including by keeping the issue in the Agenda at Governing Council meetings.
- Continue to interact with international and regional organizations, multi-stakeholder initiatives and other multilateral efforts, including civil society, facilitating synergies aimed at promoting the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Agenda and in particular of Goal 16.
- Continue to promote a broader discussion on all the 2030 Agenda targets on peaceful, just and inclusive societies (SDG16+), in international fora and within multi-stakeholder initiatives.