

## Planning, implementation, follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals



### Regional survey by UNECE and the Regional UN Development Group for Europe and Central Asia

Geneva and New York, 2 December 2015

## Purpose

At the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York (25-27 September 2015), the Heads of State and Government adopted the 2030 Agenda, including the ambitious and far-reaching 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Entering into force on 1 January 2016, they will guide sustainable development efforts in all countries in the 15-year period until 2030.

In this context, this survey is sent to the Governments of 56 UNECE member States<sup>1</sup> to collect inputs on three crucial topics:

- The plans and approaches of governments to integrate the SDGs and targets in their national strategies and to implement them in their countries.
- The plans of governments to build and conduct monitoring and review at the national level for the SDGs and targets.
- The expectations of governments towards the regional UN system in view of SDG implementation and follow-up.

The survey is jointly conducted by UNECE and the Regional UN Development Group for Europe and Central Asia. The information received will be summarized and shared by their secretariats. It will serve to share experiences and to provide a practical overview of the first steps on the path to achieving the SDGs. Once the results are available, it is further envisaged to organize dialogues with and among member States in Geneva and New York in early 2016 to discuss and take forward the results.

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<sup>1</sup> The 56 UNECE member States are listed as follows. They include 17 countries in which the Regional UN Development Group (R-UNDG) works (marked with \*). In addition, the R-UNDG is active in Kosovo (under UN Security Council resolution 1244). Albania\*, Andorra, Armenia\*, Austria, Azerbaijan\*, Belarus\*, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia\*, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan\*, Kyrgyzstan\*, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova\*, Monaco, Montenegro\*, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia\*, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan\*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Turkey\*, Turkmenistan\*, Ukraine\*, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan\*.

## Questionnaire

Please complete

<b>COUNTRY:</b>	SWITZERLAND  Contact: Isabella Pagotto, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs FDFA, Swiss Development Cooperation Agency (SDC), <a href="mailto:isabella.pagotto@eda.admin.ch">isabella.pagotto@eda.admin.ch</a> Doris Angst, Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), <a href="mailto:doris.angst@are.admin.ch">doris.angst@are.admin.ch</a>
<b>AUTHORITY:</b>	
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<b>REMARKS:*</b>	

Please return the completed questionnaire by **MONDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2016** to:

**UNECE, Sustainable Development and Gender Unit (SDGU)**  
**E-Mail: [sdgu@unece.org](mailto:sdgu@unece.org)**

*The electronic version of the questionnaire is available at:  
[www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/sustainable-development/Regional\\_SDG\\_survey\\_final.docx](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/sustainable-development/Regional_SDG_survey_final.docx)*

\*The completed questionnaires will be posted on the websites of UNECE and the Regional UN Development Group for Europe and Central Asia (ECA R-UNDG). Please indicate under "Remarks" above if you prefer your reply not to be posted.

For questions or assistance, please contact:  
*Mr. Michael KUNZ, UNECE secretariat, Geneva*  
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**Note:** At the current stage and shortly after the adoption of the SDGs, there may be no consolidated government position yet on many issues raised in the questionnaire. You are therefore kindly encouraged to share any preliminary thinking or tentative considerations you may have that will help provide an informal insight into the state of planning and debate in your Government.

### Overall planning

Planning is a key step to embark on the path of SDG implementation. This includes the formulation of national (sustainable) development strategies and the integration of the SDGs in policy measures.

#### **Question 1:**

**What are the overall plans of your Government to translate the SDGs and targets into action and measures at the national and subnational level and integrate them in national strategies and other policy interventions? In addition, will new planning tools or processes be developed in support of the SDGs or will existing structures be used?**

*For the implementation of the 2030 Agenda Switzerland will build on existing instruments and strategies, notably for the national level this will be the Sustainable Development Strategy, for its international engagement the Dispatch on International Cooperation. At the level of indicators it will build on its national (Swiss) indicator system for sustainable development (MONET). The “Cercle Indicateurs” (sustainable development indicators for cantons and cities, in which 17 cantons and 19 cities are currently involved) is a basis for the monitoring at the subnational level.*

*The Sustainable Development Strategy is renewed every four years, setting out the priorities of the Federal Council (government) in this area. This strategy is an annex of the Legislature Plan and therefore linked to the predetermined cycle of our legislature planning. The strategy includes mainly national measures, but also a foreign policy priorities, including development cooperation. Regarding the subnational level, it is up to the local governments (cantons and municipalities) to define their own Sustainable Development strategies and policies. The national Sustainable Development Strategy underlines the importance of collaboration at all three levels of the State (federal government, cantons and municipalities) and constitutes a guideline.*

*The new Sustainable Development Strategy for the period 2016-2019 has been adopted by the Federal Council in January 2016. Its renewal started already in 2014 prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Therefore the SDS 2016-2019 represents only a first link with the 2030 Agenda and its objectives do not entirely correspond to a systematic translation of 2030 Agenda for Switzerland. The combined implementation of 2030 Agenda in terms of Switzerland’s national and international engagement, challenges the existing federal internal structures and processes.*

*In a transition phase of two years (2016-2017) the structures, procedures and responsibilities with respect to the implementation of 2030 Agenda by Switzerland will be clarified, including implications for future sustainable development strategies in Switzerland. This includes institutional and governance issues, the translation of the goals into our national context and their transfer into sectoral policies, the establishment of a national monitoring system, an analysis of the current state of implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Switzerland, a first comprehensive national report for the HLPF before 2018 and a strategy for stakeholder involvement. The work will be carried out by a wider working group including several relevant authorities/line offices across the federal administration.*

## Prioritization

One distinctive feature of the SDGs is their universality, i.e. the entire SDG agenda should be implemented by all countries of the world. Nevertheless, particular topics and targets will be of higher priority than others given a country's specific circumstances.

### Question 2:

**What is your Government's approach to identify SDGs and targets that have priority for your particular country context?**

*During the described transition phase 2016-2017 (see answer 1), Switzerland will contextualize and specify all SDGs and all targets, for Switzerland in terms of Switzerland's national and international engagement. A first product of this exercise will be a **baseline report across all SDGs and targets**. Based on this report a **gap analysis** will be carried out.*

*This analytical work will be a joint effort of the working group mentioned in answer 1 and the responsible authorities/line offices within the federal administration for the specific goals or targets within their respective fields of expertise (transfer of SDGs and targets into sectoral policies). It will also be part of their task to assess the **significance of each target** for Switzerland as well as to **identify additional aspects** within a specific thematic area that are of importance to Switzerland but not covered and/or go beyond the SDG targets. The **need for priority action** for Switzerland with regard to all SDGs and targets will be derived from that first analysis.*

## Adaptation

When devising national and local policies, experience suggests that global goals and targets may be adapted to national circumstances and that objectives, targets and indicators are developed and chosen that are in addition or complementary to the global agenda.

### Question 3:

**How does your Government foresee to transform global SDGs and targets into local objectives, targets and indicators ("localization" or "nationalization")?**

*See also answer 2 above:*

*During the described transition phase 2016-2017 Switzerland will contextualize and specify all SDGs and all targets for Switzerland in terms of Switzerland's national and international engagement. A first product of this exercise will be a **baseline report across all SDGs and targets**. Based on this report a **gap analysis** will be carried out.*

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## Governance and budgeting

The SDGs are widely seen as an integrated agenda that encourages holistic policy-making and cross-sectoral cooperation. As such, they may have an impact on institutional and governance structures as well as on processes for resource allocation.

### **Question 4:**

**Does your Government envisage any changes in the budgeting processes and governance structures due to the SDGs, and which institution in your Government will oversee SDG implementation in your country?**

*The national Sustainable Development Strategy defines sustainable development as a cross-cutting issue. Measures to implement the 2030 Agenda will be realized through the budgets of the competent line offices of the federal administration. This approach is intended to ensure that sustainable development can be integrated into all relevant policies and structures (mainstreaming). Ultimately, the Federal Council, Switzerland's highest executive authority, is the institution taking the decisions (as it was the case with the Federal Council decision on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on 18 December 2015). In addition, to an interdepartmental coordination structure, the respective line offices of the federal administration will be responsible for specific measures.*

*Switzerland has a very limited budget for financing specific projects and processes related to the overall steering and managing of the Sustainable Development Strategy and engagement, both at the national level and its international engagement in the Agenda 2030 process. This includes the indicator system for sustainable development, information events as well as the overall sustainable development process and planning.*

## Stakeholder involvement

SDG implementation will require forging partnerships and collaboration between a range of actors. This will also have a bearing on the work of governments with other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and academia.

### **Question 5:**

**How does your Government envisage to strengthen existing and build new partnerships with other stakeholders for the purpose of SDG implementation?**

*Switzerland has a tradition of involving a broad range of stakeholders in Sustainable Development planning; this was also the case in the current SD strategy 2016 - 2019 in the context of a broad participatory process. In line with the subsidiarity principle, Switzerland has also a long-standing tradition in directly involving foundations, civil society, private sector and others in the implementation processes.*

*Involvement of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the 2030 will be important. This effort will also need to be coordinated with the existing stakeholder involvement in the sectoral processes which are relevant for SDG implementation.*

*Within the transition phase 2016 to 2017 (described above) Switzerland will also reassess the involvement of stakeholders (beyond the federal administration) for partnerships contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It is planned to assess ways and methods how to include the contributions of stakeholders and how to account for their contributions in the national reporting of the 2030 Agenda.*

## UN role in planning and implementation

As recognized in inter-governmental fora, the UN will play a critical role in support of SDG planning and implementation. Some key UN functions and services include providing fora for policy dialogue and exchange; international legal instruments, norms, regulations and standards; policy advice and expertise; capacity-building and technical cooperation. Based on the feedback from its member States, the UN system at the regional level will work towards strengthening and improving regional UN structures and processes and inter-agency cooperation to provide the most 'fit for purpose' SDG-related services.

### **Question 6:**

**What are the expectations and needs of your Government regarding the role of the UN system in the region<sup>2</sup> in assisting with SDG planning and implementation? Please highlight possible areas of improvement as well as any suggestions you may have.**

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<sup>2</sup> UNECE, R-UNDG, regional or subregional offices or units of UN entities, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, UN Country Teams active in the region.

*At the regional level, a platform bringing together the Member States, the UN System and relevant regional organizations to exchange views, lessons learned (success and challenges) on planning and implementation could be of interest. See also answer provided to questions 10&11.*

*At the European level there are relevant exchange platforms for Sustainable Development which foster an active exchange between member states. This includes the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN). Furthermore, activities at the technical level within UNECE, the EU and Eurostat are important as well as activities within the OECD networks. It will therefore be crucial to ensure the dialogue with and involvement of those already existing networks. Exchanges of points of views and of experiences are very important, it is however crucial to coordinate those actions in order to avoid double work.*

*In addition, the UN system in the region can provide well-coordinated and efficient technical support to countries requesting it. Such support should take into account the experiences and lessons learned from other national reviews and recommendation and policy guidance provided by the HLPF.*

### Data and Monitoring

While the development of statistical indicators for the SDGs is ongoing, there are many calls for a “data revolution” to ensure that high-quality data will be available to monitor progress under the SDGs. This may involve more and better data, disaggregated data, new data sources, and building and strengthening statistical capacities on the ground.

#### **Question 7:**

**How does your Government envisage to address the need for data, to strengthen statistical capacities and to monitor SDG progress?**

*Under the lead of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO), the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and later the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Swiss Sustainable Development Indicator System MONET was developed by the FSO in a participative process 15 years ago and revised in 2009 and 2015. It offers an information platform on sustainable development to the citizens, the policy makers and the administration. The system is based on a sound conceptual framework and comprises some 75 indicators which are updated each year to measure progress of Switzerland towards sustainable development*

*The transition phase 2016 - 2017 (described above, see question 1) will include the extension of the national indicator system for sustainable development (MONET) with relevant indicators for the national and international goals and targets, in order to allow a regular reporting on Switzerland's progress regarding the implementation of the SDGs. This system of indicator will include, where relevant, the global indicators for SDGs of the UN Statistical Commission.*

*The national monitoring and reporting process/cycle will need to be well coordinated and integrated in the overall process of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (4-year cycle of national legislative period and cycle of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development).*

*The indicator system is one of the tools necessary to carry out a baseline report and a gap analyses (as described above, see question 1).*

## Assessment of progress

Based on a solid data foundation, it will be crucial to identify the reasons for SDG progress and shortcomings as well as to derive appropriate policy interventions and corrections.

### **Question 8:**

**How does your Government envisage to identify the drivers of satisfactory or unsatisfactory SDG progress and to draw the related policy conclusions?**

*Switzerland is currently developing a system in order to monitor SDG progress/lack of progress. The development of a baseline report and gap analysis are part of this exercise. It includes the development of a methodology for gap analysis to address policy coherence issues, interlinkages among the different targets, short falls, and quantitative and qualitative analysis.*

*The national indicator system MONET, as it is based on a frame of reference, allows an assessment of the progress as showed by the indicators. This neutral and statistical assessment will also be part of the report. This assessment is based on the work of the "Working Group on Indicator-based Assessment" directed by FSO on the request of Eurostat.*

## Reporting

National reports are recognized as important cornerstones in the future SDG follow-up process. Typically, they will be government-led and involve a range of other stakeholders. The format and content of national reports is expected to depend on data availability and other constraints. Sharing national reports for discussion and mutual learning could be beneficial for all stakeholders, including at the subregional and regional levels.

### **Question 9:**

**What is the current (even preliminary) thinking of your Government regarding possible modalities for reporting on SDG progress at the national level in your country, what are the constraints, and what should be the channels used to share these national reports internationally?**

*See answers provided to Question 1.*

*One key issue will be to coordinate the Swiss legislative cycle with the international reporting cycle and respective international reporting guidelines on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Duplications should be avoided and synergies between national and international reporting should be leveraged. Switzerland will seek a format that fulfills both global/regional and national reporting needs.*

*Switzerland sees the HLPF as the main global platforms to present national reports, while at the same time acknowledges that there will be other platforms to use for peer learning, such as the UNECE, OECD and informal group of committed governments. Switzerland will submit to the HLPF a comprehensive national report by 2018 and has decided to volunteer to share initial steps undertaken to implement the 2030 Agenda already in the first round of country reviews at the HLPF 2016.*

## UN role in follow-up and review

In addition to providing a possible regional platform (see question 11), the role of the UN in SDG follow-up and review could include statistical support, synthesis of national reports, preparation of thematic reports and other services.

### **Question 10:**

**What are the expectations and needs of your Government regarding the role and services of the UN system in the region<sup>2</sup> in SDG follow-up and review?**

*Switzerland expects the UN system in the region to provide, within existing structures and avoiding duplication, such complementary regional contributions to the global level follow up and review that may be required by the UN system.*

*We expect the UN System in the Region to collect the information and data in the region to be fed into the global process. We expect the UN to coordinate this task with other international organization such as OECD or Eurostat in order to avoid double reporting from countries.*

*Moreover, at the regional level, a platform bringing together the Member States with the UN System and relevant regional organizations as well as non-governmental actors to exchange views, lessons learned (success and challenges) on first steps towards the translation of Agenda 2030 into the national context, and in the future on follow-up and review, could be of interest.*

*Member States, including Switzerland and the UN System have provided input via a Questionnaire feeding into a report by the UN Secretary-General on the global architecture on follow-up and review published in January 2016. The discussion at the regional level should be conducted in this context. See answer provided to question 11 of this questionnaire.*

## Regional platform

The 2030 Agenda highlights the opportunities of follow-up and review at the regional level for peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets. Regional reviews should draw on national-level reviews and build on existing review mechanisms. Member States are encouraged to identify the most suitable regional forum in which to engage, supported by the Regional Commissions.<sup>3</sup> Earlier, the General Assembly had invited the Regional Commissions to hold annual meetings in preparation of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF).<sup>4</sup>

### **Question 11:**

**How could a regional platform for follow-up and review be designed that integrates national experiences and existing review mechanisms and channels the findings to the global level in a coherent manner?**

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<sup>3</sup> See outcome document of UN Sustainable Development Summit “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, paras 80 and 81.

<sup>4</sup> A/RES/67/290, para 13.

*Starting point is paragraph 80 and 81 of 2030 Agenda.*

*Due to the diversity of regional fora it will not be possible to have a similar approach across regions. Some sort of comparability / standardization across countries can be achieved through the global reporting guidelines proposed by the UNSG.*

*Regional level (UNECE region):*

*Any platform at the regional level should include the relevant multilateral actors and networks in the concerned region (UNECE, but also linking to other regional organizations, e.g. multilateral development banks, OECD, EU, Eurostat, regional networks, such as the European Sustainable Development Network).*

*It could be interesting to develop a voluntary regional peer review or peer learning approach. Within the UNECE region (incl. OECD mechanisms) several models to learn from or build on already exist.*

*A regional platform bringing together the Member States with the UN System and relevant regional organizations as well as non-governmental actors to exchange views, lessons learned (success and challenges) on the follow-up and review, could be of interest. Member States, including Switzerland and the UN System have provided input via a Questionnaire feeding into a report by the UN Secretary-General on the global architecture on follow-up and review published in January 2016. The discussion at the regional level should be conducted in this context.*

*What needs to be avoided is a duplicative reporting exercise at the regional and the global level (regional issues could be fed into the annual GSDR/and the SDG Trends Report). While the regional level is important, the universality of the agenda applying to all states calls for a knowledge exchange among countries, also from different regions, at the global level.*

*At the global level, we could have a lively – however limited in time - inter-active regional exchange among different regional approaches in a common session. It should, however, not replace country reviews / direct exchanges among countries of different regions at the global level. Countries in different regions may find to have similar challenges, while countries in the same region may find it difficult to find common issues and challenges.*

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