



Mapping Joint Programming contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals



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The Mombasa to Nairobi railway line is Kenya's biggest infrastructure project since gaining independence.

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

The new European Consensus on Development from June 2017 provides the framework for a common approach to development policy for EU institutions and Member States and is a commitment towards working better together to address global challenges. However, Joint Programming (hereafter: JP) is not a 'new' tool for European external action, since closer coordination and complementarity between the Union and the Member States has been promoted, especially within the context of global aid effectiveness, for over a decade now.

On the basis of previous EU commitments to implement Joint Programming as a key tool for increasing the EU's and EU member states' aid effectiveness¹, first EU Joint Programming processes were launched in 11 pilot countries in 2012 and the pioneer Joint Programming documents were finalised in 2013. In the following years there has been a slow but steady increase in the number of Joint Programming processes globally, reaching a total number of 60 countries in 2018, among which 26 have already finalized their joint strategy documents, and twelve of which include a joint monitoring or results framework.

In 2015, the world's nations made a global commitment towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) by 2030. Since, first efforts have been made by a number of countries in tracking and monitoring progress towards the 2030 Agenda within their own territories – notably through the UN-guided SDG localisation and Voluntary National Review (VNR) processes. Given that the EU, together with its Member States, continues to be the biggest donor worldwide, its collective assistance has the potential of significantly contributing to the progress of developing countries towards the 2030 agenda.

In this new post-2015 context, it is therefore time to acquire a more comprehensive picture of how the EU and EU Member States Joint Programming processes and documents are supporting the SDGs, as well as to identify remaining gaps. A previous study commissioned by EuropeAid's and the EEAS' Joint Programming teams² highlighted that SDG targets had not been well integrated into joint results frameworks to date.

The present analysis therefore aims to help understand what is – and what is not yet – happening with regard to SDG localization at country level, and use this information to identify further opportunities / proposals for going forward.

The main findings from section III (core analysis) of this Study can be summarized as follows:

1. Linkages between national priorities and SDGs within Joint Strategies

- SDGs have, in most cases, merely been used as an “added” reference within joint programming documents and results frameworks.
- The more fragility-specific SDG 16 targets are generally not cited in the joint strategies and accordingly, links to other sectors (security, migration, humanitarian aid) are not made.
- SDG integration into national plans has not happened in a comprehensive manner yet within most of the case study countries and a persistent lack of ownership of the SDGs can still be observed, both amongst partner countries and international development partners to date.
- European donors’ decisions on the type of JS priority areas and related objectives to select for JP are still mostly based on the type of programmes and sectors supported by the EU and MS in country.
- Accordingly, the decision of referencing one SDG over another is not usually based on a “gaps analysis”, but rather on a mapping of EU sector presence and identifying related SDGs.
- A key challenge for the appropriation of SDG indicators is that the latter are often not measurable at country-level due to the lack of and/or poor quality of appropriate data.
- In most countries, the costing and financing of SDGs, as well as the task of linking SDGs to national and local planning and budgeting processes are also still a work in progress.
- Voluntary National Reviews are of limited use when

assessing EU contributions to SDG progress.

2. The role of Joint Programming for promoting SDG progress within partner country policy processes and dialogue

- Joint EU-MS policy dialogue provides strong, but underused means for SDG promotion.
- Identifying and mapping key influencers – but also spoilers - of change for SDG progress should become part of the JP process joint analysis exercise.
- There is a need to further enhance HoMs’ role in lifting JP and SDG progress discussions beyond the aid/ cooperation sphere.
- Due to its mandate and mission to support SDG progress at country level, the UN should be seen as a key ally for joint advocacy and action at both national and local levels.

3. The Effect of Joint Programming on (including non-financial) joint implementation

- JP is a tool for making joint (financial) implementation more “legitimate, codified”, formal and systematic.
- Cross-sector joint (financial) implementation remains challenging, but JP can help by bringing donors together under broader joint cross-sector objectives (e.g. governance, nutrition, job creation).

On the basis of these findings, this paper also provides a set of (non-exhaustive and non-prescriptive) **recommendations and guidance options for both EU donor country level missions and HQs (section IV. and annex II)** on how to better ensure that Joint Programming supports the achievement of the SDGs at partner country level.

The skyline of Phnom Penh, Cambodia has been altered by a number of new skyscrapers as the country responds to rapid urbanisation and a growing middle class.



2. Methodology

The present analysis focuses on nine case-study countries, selected on the basis of 2 main criteria: A) Countries with a finalized or advanced draft joint strategy including explicit references to the SDGs – preferably within Joint Result Frameworks (JRF) or B) Countries where JP processes were initiated in the post-2015 period (after the launch of the 2030 Agenda):

Bolivia; Senegal; Ghana; Laos; Nicaragua ; Palestine; Cambodia (1st strategy, extended until 2019, with updated, Joint Results Framework 2017-2019); **Kenya** (second strategy); **Ethiopia** (second strategy).

As only three JP countries have, to date, used annual monitoring reports (Cambodia, Bolivia) or a Joint Programming Mid-term review (Laos), providing an analysis about the actual and directly attributable impact of Joint Programming on SDG goals and targets achievement seems not feasible at this stage in time. Rather, the analysis has mainly been limited to mapping the “desired” SDG impact, as reflected in existing Joint Programming documents.

The analysis is mainly based on a desk study and screening of existing Joint Programming Documents in the aforementioned case-study countries, complemented by a set of interviews with the Heads of Cooperation of the EU Delegations in those countries³, as well as some interviews with relevant EU HQ officials responsible for SDG and results monitoring. Preliminary findings from the interviews have also been presented and discussed with EU and EU MS participants at the Joint Programming Global Learning Workshop organized by DEVCO and EEAS in Siem Reap, Cambodia in December 2018. Related feedback and conclusions have been incorporated into this final draft.

The study questions were centred around the following 3 axis:

- I. How were EU and national priorities linked with SDG goals within the Joint Strategy so as to raise their profile and make them relevant to international processes and debates? What was the reasoning behind including - or excluding - certain SDGs? (N.B.: A point of specific attention in those 4 case countries considered as fragile⁴ was be the way that Joint Strategies address SDG goal 16 and related targets, by going beyond development cooperation and linking it with other important sectors in that context, such as security, migration, humanitarian aid, etc.).

2. How are the national development plan and sector policies addressing SDGs? How can the EU group at country level influence discussions on SDG progress within the national policy dialogue (means)?
3. Has it led to new opportunities for (including non-financial) joint implementation at country level?

The core text of this relatively brief study is structured around these three axes, by including best practice examples (so-called “deep dives”) from the case study countries and their respective joint programming documents, as well as a few other countries (e.g. Colombia) or institutions (e.g. IMF) mentioned during the Cambodia workshop consultation.

The status of each case study country has been summarized in a synthesis table (see table “Detailed case study country answers to study questions”), which maps whether and how SDGs are reflected in national development plans, JP strategies, as well as the date of the latest VNR. It also includes a qualitative assessment about the impact of joint EU policy dialogue on SDGs country progress to date as well as the impact of JP on joint implementation. This assessment was made, by the consultant, on the basis of the perceptions captured during the interviews with regard to these questions – the qualification “weak, strong or fair” was attributed according to the type of the answers given by the interviewees response to the study questions (detailed responses can be found in annex), but does neither necessarily reflect the interviewee’s opinion, nor is it based on a set of fixed variables/ criteria.

Last but not least, this paper also provides (in annex) some guiding options for incorporating SDGs into EU/MS joint programming processes, which can be used to amend/ improve the new JP guidance package, and which will help the EU and MS translate the new European Consensus into practice, namely by progressively replacing individual bilateral strategies through a joint programme.

The study will also complement and feed into the discussions between the EU and EU member states with regard to a new non-paper on ‘working better together’ in practice in pursuit of the SDGs, which looks at EU and MS Joint Programming, Joint Results Frameworks and Joint Implementation.

A few useful definitions and concepts:

UN Maps⁵

Mainstreaming, Acceleration, Policy Support (MAPS) is the common approach adopted by the UNDG to frame its support for SDG implementation at country level.

- **Mainstreaming** helps governments to land and contextualize the agenda at national and local levels; ultimately reflecting the agenda in national plans, strategies and budgets. This means mapping what a country is already doing, and where it may need to change direction. It is also about continuing to sensitize national stakeholders about the new agenda.
- **Acceleration** supports governments and national stakeholders to target resources at root bottlenecks to sustainable development, paying special attention to synergies and trade-offs across sectors.
- **Policy Support** refers to coordinated and pooled policy support to countries that demand it, making the thematic expertise housed in different UN entities available in an effective and coherent way.

MAPS Engagements are envisioned as a one year investment in missions, initiatives and support packages. Upon country demand, MAPS Engagements allow the UN to support countries in achieving the SDGs in areas including, but not limited to:

- Gap analyses of national development achievements and priorities
- Analytical frameworks and programming on equity and leaving no one behind;
- Strengthened country coordination and financing structures with a development results focus;
- SDG-related data and statistical support and analysis;
- New and innovative partnerships on specific "accelerator" issues;
- Targeted programmatic work on joint/integrated approaches for the SDGs;
- Addressing specific SDG challenges faced by countries in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

As of April 2018, 31 integrated policy support missions have been deployed to support SDG implementation, including 11 to Africa, 10 to Europe and Central Asia, 6 to Latin America and the Caribbean and 4 to Asia and the Pacific.

Voluntary National Reviews (VNR)

As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven" (paragraph 79). These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the high-level political forum (HLPF) meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC. As per the 2030 Agenda, regular reviews by the HLPF are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders. While the first round of voluntary reviews is mainly aimed at assessing how SDGs have been integrated at national level, subsequent VNR are supposed to focus on reporting on actual SDG progress at country level. Published VNR can be accessed at the following link: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>

SDG nationalization and SDG localization

SDG nationalization implies integrating the SDGs and Agenda 2030 into national plans and policies. "Localizing" the SDGs, on the other hand, is the process of taking into account subnational contexts in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, from the setting of goals and targets, to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress. Localization relates both to how local and regional governments can support the achievement of the SDGs through action from the bottom up and to how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy.

In its "**Roadmap for localizing the SDGs**", aimed at supporting cities and regions to deliver the 2030 Agenda, the UN describes four key steps to take, to that end, namely:

1. **Awareness-Raising:** Getting to know the SDGs at subnational level
2. **Advocacy:** Including a subnational perspective in national SDG strategies
3. **Implementation** of the SDGs at local level
4. **Monitoring** evaluating and learning from experiences.

More details and guidance about each of these steps can be found at <http://localizingthesdgs.org/library/view/55>

3. Core Case Study Analysis

3.1 Linkages between national priorities and SDGs within the Joint Strategy and rationale behind the choice of certain SDGs

An overall conclusion which can be drawn from the study is that there is a common consensus among respondents about the need to better integrate SDGs into Joint Programming processes and joint results frameworks, through improved guidance and a greater focus on coordinated European support to data collection and analysis at country level.

3.1.1 A question of who “owns” the SDGs: SDGs within EU Joint Strategies and national development plans

SDGs within Joint Strategies and joint results frameworks

A first screening of existing (draft or finalized) joint strategies in the case study countries revealed that **SDGs have, in most cases, merely been used as an “added” reference** – i.e. they mention a certain sector or result and then refer to the relevant SDGs as applying to that sector or result. In all but one (Bolivia, which includes aid effectiveness indicators) case study countries, such links were made, mostly within the Joint Results Framework (JRF) or when describing the JP priorities (Palestine), by usually quoting the reference number(s) of relevant SDGs goals – in some cases also more specifically SDG indicator reference numbers (e.g. in Cambodia). However, SDG indicators and targets themselves are not directly used to monitor JRF results.

Interviews held under this study revealed that such practices are mainly grounded in the aid effectiveness “ownership” principle, whereby national (as opposed to the international SDG) results frameworks continue to be seen as the main reference documents for donor results frameworks and indicators – in some cases complemented by those used in EU and MS bilateral programming (so as to better reflect a specific programme result) or joint strategies on gender or CSO roadmaps. In a few cases, another reason given was that the JRF was elaborated before SDG indicators were known (before or in the run up to 2015 launch), but the more prominent reason for not using them is that EU donors would prefer to see them being localized and integrated into national frameworks first.

Even in the case of Nicaragua, where six SDG goals were literally used as Joint Strategy priorities, this was done at outcome level only within the Joint Results Framework, and associated indicators were, once again, not those proposed by the SDG framework.

Deep dive: SDGs as JP objectives in Nicaragua

In the absence of clear national sector definitions and related sector strategies, the EU group decided to use SDGs as a guiding reference for the Joint Strategy 2018-2020 objectives. An SDG mapping exercise was elaborated, showing contributions of each partner to SDGs. Partners identified six sustainable development goals to which their cooperation is contributing and where EU group can take a lead within the policy dialogue: SDG2, SDG4, SDG8, SDG13, SDG16. Chairs were designated for each of these SDGs who would lead on related JP work. Within the JS results framework, these SDG goals are used at outcome level, but associated specific objective indicators used in the matrix have been taken from other sources – notably DEVCO results framework. According to respondents, the use of SDG indicators for monitoring was rendered difficult due to the incompatibility of three types of indicators: SDGs; DEVCO and EU partner programme results framework; as well as the Government’s own, very output-based national results framework. SDGs have been placed at outcome level because related progress is perceived as being beyond the direct control of the EU donor group. Even for the DEVCO results indicators used, no baselines, targets nor means of verification were provided, due to problems with national data availability and/or quality.

SDG 16 within Joint Strategies in fragile states

As in the case of the other SDGs, SDG 16 is merely referenced as goal or target in the joint strategies in those case study countries classified as fragile (Ethiopia, Kenya, Palestine, Laos). When looking at associated indicators within the JRF, it is notable that all of them pertain to the areas of good governance, justice and accountability/ transparency/ anti-corruption (SDG targets 16.5-10). The more fragility-specific SDG targets 16.1-4. are not cited in the joint strategies and accordingly, links to other sectors (security, migration, humanitarian aid) are not made.

National plans and policies

Against this light, it should be noted that **SDG integration into national plans has not happened in a comprehensive manner yet within most of the case study countries:** According to 2018 studies⁶, only

2 out of the 40 countries reporting to the UN on SDG implementation in 2017 stated that their national policies and frameworks already align to the SDGs. This is echoed by the findings of the present study: While 3 out of 9 countries have already integrated the SDGs into their national development plans, 7 out of 9 case study countries appear to have at least initiated their SDG localization processes and 5 have already published a VNR (see table in annex), it appears that only one country (Senegal)⁷ is allegedly using SDG indicators as monitoring indicators within its new national development plan. In all other countries, simple references were added (as done in the joint strategy documents) to relevant SDG goals/ indicators. Nonetheless, UN mapping exercises conducted in several countries (e.g. Bolivia, Laos, Ghana) have helped showing the compatibility between national and SDG indicators. In Ethiopia, a recent OECD mission in 2018 assessed if energy could become a pilot sector for aligning national policies to the SDG framework.

Deep dive: Ghana's SDG localization process.

According to an OECD report from 2017, Ghana played a key role in the formulation of the 2030 Agenda. The government prioritizes SDG-based planning and budgeting. All local governments were encouraged to align existing plans to the SDGs. The government has mapped all 169 SDG targets to ministries, departments and agencies. The UN mapping exercise revealed a 70% overlap between the goals and priorities of the 2018-2022 National Plan and the SDGs and targets. An SDGs Indicator Baseline Report was developed and published by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), in collaboration with the United Nations (UN) and the Ghana Statistical Service in September 2018, which should help with integrating SDG indicators and targets into the new national development plan.

In conclusion, a persistent lack of ownership of the SDGs can still be observed, both amongst partner countries and international development partners to date. The main reasons for this are outlined as follows, for both the donors and partner countries.

3.1.2 Programme-based choice of SDG references on the donor side

While trying to align the JS results' and indicators' wording with that used by national results frameworks, European donors' decisions on the type of JS priority areas and related objectives to select for JP are still mostly based on the type of programmes and sectors supported by the EU and MS in country. Accordingly, the decision of referencing one SDG over another is not usually based on a "gaps analysis", but rather on a mapping of EU sector presence and identifying related SDGs – in other words: looking at where the EU group can (rather than should) achieve results. In Laos, for example, an MDG gap analysis was included in the Joint Strategy, but the JP priority and SDG choice was not directly based on this analysis. Rather, the gap analysis was merely added as an additional justification for the choice of priority areas. In one country (Cambodia), it was mentioned that SDG 15 on forestry and land issues had not been included due to political sensitivities about it.

Generally-speaking, country-level EU partners would welcome **more guidance and action from EU and MS HQ** on how to more strategically prioritize SDGs within JP processes, while trying to align three different dimensions: EU and MS global results frameworks, country-level programme results and partner country government national results frameworks. More specifically, advice is needed about which results framework to prioritize and hierarchy to adopt within a JRF, and which SDG indicators to prioritize, so that they are in line with EU and MS global results frameworks. As EU HQ has recently reviewed its global results framework to make it more SDG-aligned, a good, first step has already been taken to ease EUDs' future work in this area.

Missed opportunities for SDG integration: JRF reviews. Many JRF were kept indicative and adaptable, so as to allow for their adaptation to (often still pending) national results frameworks. However, in very few countries (e.g. Cambodia, Palestine) this has actually materialized in a review of the JRF after JS finalization, which also allowed for SDG streamlining (only in Cambodia).

3.1.3 SDG data collection and analysis as key challenges for partner countries

On the partner country side, the first reason why countries have not gone further in the use of SDG indicators seems to lie in the fact that many of the currently still applicable national development plans had already been published when the SDG framework was launched. It can therefore be expected that SDGs will be better integrated into future national development plans, also due to the UN's advocacy

in this area. Senegal, for example, in its first VNR (2018) explicitly commits to fully integrating the SDGs within its next development plan (PSE phase II – 2019-23).

A second, widely perceived key challenge to the appropriation of SDG indicators is that the latter are often not measurable at country-level due to the lack of and/or poor quality of appropriate data. Another, connected challenge relates to the ability of appropriately interpreting, analysing and using available data.

Deep Dive: SDG implementation and localization challenges in Ethiopia:

According to a recent UN study⁸, the challenges faced by the Ethiopian government in implementing and localizing the SDGs include, among other:

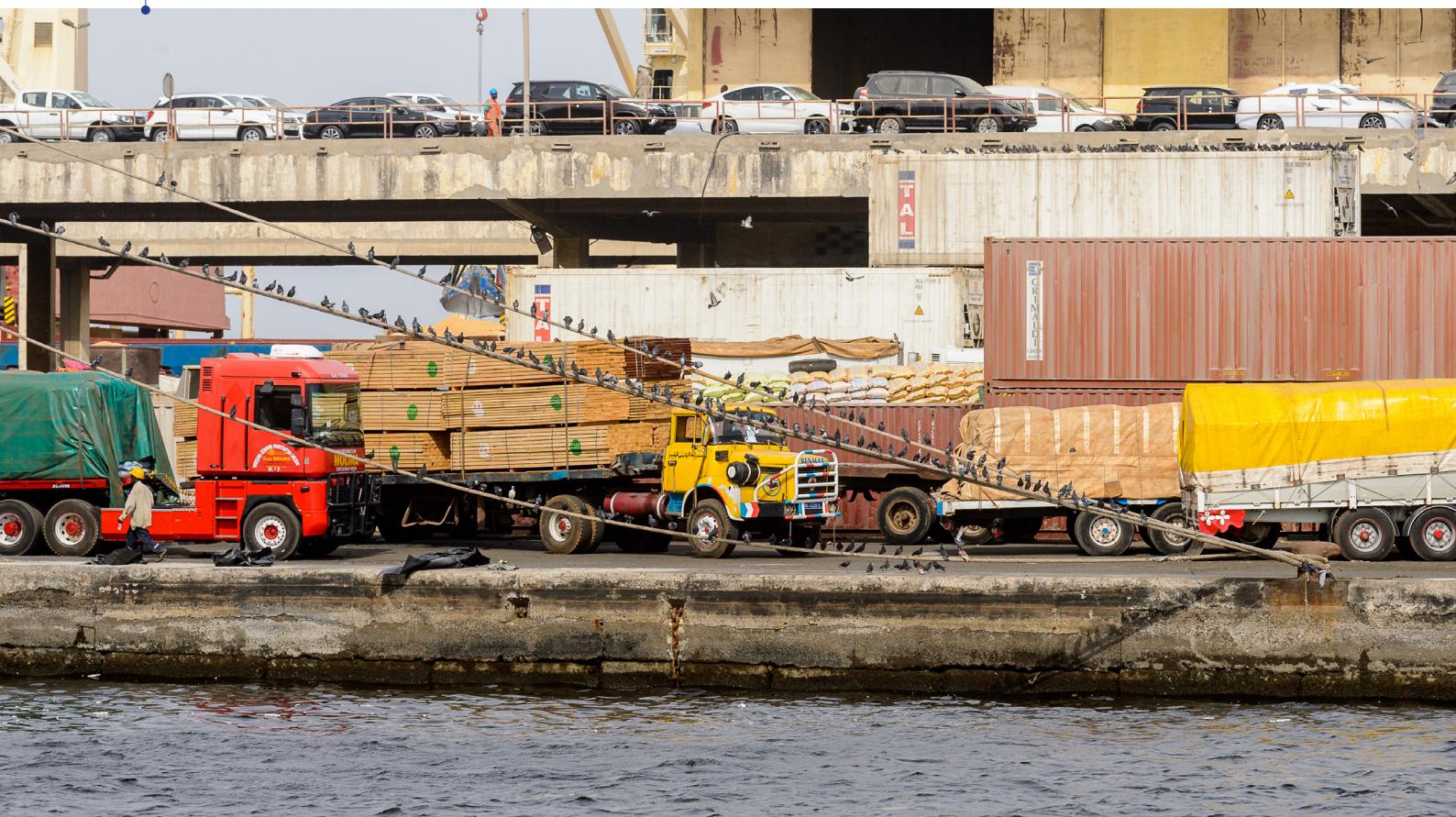
- Varying degree of understanding of the content of the SDGs and the alignment of their goals to the national development framework indicators of GTP II (national development plan).
- Limited technical capacity to come up with SMART indicators both for GTP II and the SDGs.
- Limited data and statistics to inform baseline and target indicators at the country level.

These findings are echoed by the conclusions of the latest Workshop for the 2019 Voluntary National Reviews at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which took place in Geneva in October 2018⁹: Participants highlighted that the main challenges encountered in the preparation of the VNRs were centred around data availability and statistical capacity, cross- and interinstitutional coordination for SDG implementation, and engaging stakeholders.

Deep dive: Information on SDG progress in VNR of 5 case study countries:

The following table highlights how the first VNR published by five case study countries have addressed a few of the key questions related to SDG progress, implementation and financing. As the table shows, this first set of VNR has, in line with the UN's related recommendation, mostly been focused around highlighting progress with regard to SDG nationalization processes. The rather patchy, preliminary findings with regard to actual SDG progress included in the reports reveal considerable data collection deficiencies. In most countries, the costing and financing of SDGs, as well as the task of linking SDGs to national and local planning and budgeting processes is still a work in progress.

Trucks line the docks at the Port of Dakar, the third largest port in West Africa.



Questions	Senegal	Palestine	Ethiopia	Kenya	Laos
How was progress on SDGs measured?	The report details for each SDG and each target, the state of public policies to achieve the 2030 objectives, the baseline situation of the indicators and the state of progress over the 2015-2017 period. The analysis shows that the national plan already contains almost four fifths of the priorities of the 2030 Agenda and two thirds of its M&E framework priorities.	Progress on SDG indicators and targets was assessed, despite the absence of a national results framework, on the basis of available data captured in an SDG baseline established for and annexed to the VNR. However, the baseline still shows many gaps related to data collection problems at local level.	First VNR focused on evaluating 6 SDGs only: 1,2,3,5,9,14 – plus 17 as a cross-cutting goal. Much of the information for more recent years is based on estimates.	The review mainly covers early action undertaken to nationalise the SDGs, as well as preliminary progress made in the implementation of all the 17 SDGs, including SDG 16, on the basis of available data.	Progress is measured over the period 2005-2015, which indicates that no new data had been used since evaluating the MDGs.
How SDGs are used in planning, budgeting, local government plans or are mapped to ministries, departments and agencies?	Pending	The responsibility of the established “National SDG Team” is to determine sustainable development priorities in Palestine and integrate them within the national framework for planning and budgeting processes, lead and coordinate the preparation of national reviews of progress towards the SDGs. To support the National SDG Team, 12 SDG working groups were established. The relevant governmental institutions in close collaboration with the relevant UN partner agencies lead the 12 SDG working groups. The working groups are composed of representatives from NGOs, private sector and academic institutions with expertise in the relevant SDG.	No information available.	No information available.	No information available.
Government strategies for financing the SDGs?	Pending.	No information available.	Report mentions that SDG financing strategy is a work in progress.	No information available.	A vague financing strategy for addressing funding requirements of national goals and priorities is mentioned in the VNR, but SDG costing is said to be a pending task.



The Akosombo Hydroelectric Power Station on the Volta River supplies energy to most of Ghana and half of Togo.

Supporting capacity-building for SDG data collection and analysis is therefore seen by donors as a key area for enabling countries “to do their job” with regard to SDG integration and localization. More specifically, respondents flagged the following, possible activities to be considered in the context of Joint Programming:

- Jointly mapping existing SDG initiatives in order to reduce fragmentation, avoid duplication and leverage existing SDG data.
- Discuss options for supporting the establishment, by the partner country government, of a web-based “SDG tool” (such as in Colombia) to enable more informed decisions and increase accountability.

Deep Dive: Colombia’s web-based, EU donor-supported SDG data tool - www.ods.gov.co

In Colombia, and with support from the Swedish cooperation, the government established a web-based SDG data tool, where both national and local-level data relevant to each SDG indicator is uploaded and updated by the relevant authorities. SDG progress can be visualized for the country as a whole and/or by regional department. The tool also includes a data availability mapping graph (<https://www.ods.gov.co/tools/data-availability>), which shows the availability of information for each of the 169 SDG targets in Colombia.

- Organise joint data field missions in different sectors, to look at data from social services and feed back to the national level.
- Assess and advise on how to better link SDG data analysis to budgetary planning.
- Costing of SDGs – The recently launched SDG costing exercise carried out by the IMF and SDSN could be good tool for seeing how the EU group could contribute to covering these costs.

Deep dive: SDSN and IMF SDG costing tool:

At the last UNGA 2018, the IMF and SDSN Financing team presented the preliminary findings on their research work about the domestic budget needs, costs, and potential revenue sources for achieving selected SDGs in the world's emerging and low-income developing countries (LIDCs), defined as the world's 59 countries with per capita income below \$2,700 which are eligible for IMF concessional assistance. The IMF presented its ongoing work to estimate baseline costs for achieving key SDG thresholds in the healthcare, education, and infrastructure sectors, including an analysis of LIDCs' additional spending needs as measured against multiple country growth scenarios through 2030. The results point to a significant gap in the available domestic revenues – both real and prospective – for achieving the SDGs in these sectors.

3.1.4 Joint strategy follow-up and results monitoring

A key factor when looking at how Joint Programming can contribute to SDG progress is not only to look at how SDGs are integrated into joint programming documents, but also at how follow-up is provided by the EU group, in order to monitor JP and SDG progress.

Once again, **assessing whether indicators are measurable is key for effective JP and SDG monitoring:**

As outlined in the JP documents of all case study countries, Joint Strategy follow-up is (theoretically - according to the monitoring sections within the joint strategies) supposed to be assured at the very minimum, through annual reports (mid-term report in Laos).

However, the few, already existing reports (Cambodia, Bolivia, Laos) tend to be more qualitative rather than quantitative in nature, due to aforementioned difficulties with the reliability and accessibility of data in many partner countries. This puts into question the purpose of using indicators, baselines and targets in the first place.

More importance needs to be placed, at the JRF design stage, on the availability of appropriate and regularly updated **means of verification (sources) at national and local levels, before selecting specific indicators** – this is particularly relevant if promoting the use of SDG indicators, since they tend to be broader. One may need to accept that, in the short- and medium term, monitoring on the basis of baselines and targets can only be done at output-level in country – while progressively supporting governments in building their capacities for reporting against SDG indicators.

For the same reason, HQ levels may need to elaborate their own system in the medium term to show how all country level data is contributing to SDG indicator progress. Joint Programming, but at the level of EU and MS Headquarters, could help in harmonizing these systems, and the upcoming, new MFF 2021-27 could be an opportunity for making funding available for such HQ-based (not only country-based) Joint Programming initiatives.

Discussing JP progress “when and where needed”:

More regular follow-up of JS implementation, beyond annual reports, is done in some countries by using the (monthly or weekly) Cooperation Counsellors meetings and including JP as an agenda point (Cambodia, Ethiopia, Laos). In a number of countries (e.g. Cambodia, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Palestine), sector-/ issue specific JP meetings are also organized, where needed/ upon demand. Generally-speaking, there is a preference for using existing coordination mechanisms rather than creating new ones and for centring JP discussions around specific sectors or issues of common interest, rather than having regular, general JP meetings. In Bolivia, for example, JP thematic groups are only activated if there is an added value in doing so, on top of national coordination group meetings.

Voluntary National Reviews are of limited use when assessing EU contributions to SDG progress.

One way in which the actual contribution of EU joint programming, EU assistance and joint dialogue to SDG progress at partner country level could, potentially, be measured is through the Voluntary National Reviews.

However, in only two (Palestine and Senegal) of the five countries which have already published a VNR, specific references were made to the contributions of European partners in particular to the country's SDG progress. Palestine highlights the partnership with the EU as being “one of the most important strategic partnerships due to the continued support of the European Union to the Palestinian people and government in strengthening the Palestinian institutions and in attaining sustainable development”. In Senegal, some references to specific EU programmes are made – i.e. to EU budget support in the forest sector, contributing to improving national budget commitments to the sector. The Integrated Coastal management project financed by the EU is also mentioned as being a climate change priority project.

In most other VNR reports, however, a mere, general mention was made of “development partners contributions”. It may be worth engaging, as EU group, on a more regular basis with established SDG secretariats or units in country to discuss how donor contributions could be made more “visible” and quantifiable in the VNR context.

Palestinian fishermen use nets to haul their catch in from the Mediterranean Sea.



3.2 The role of Joint Programming for promoting SDG progress within partner country policy processes and dialogue

Joint Programming provides strong, but underused means for SDG promotion. In 4 out of 9 countries, the impact of joint EU policy dialogue on SDGs country progress to date can – potentially - be classified as “strong”¹¹⁰ (see table below for reference). In most of these countries reasons mentioned were the sheer weight and volume of EU assistance in country, specific trade preferences granted by the EU (e.g. Everything But Arms initiative in Cambodia) as well the use of budget support and subsequent strong presence of EU donors within the policy dialogue mechanisms (as mentioned in Kenya and Senegal). Speaking as one, European voice, in some cases on basis of joint policy briefs/ position papers elaborated as part of JP, is also seen (e.g. in Laos) as contributing to increased influence, visibility and impact of the EU group. Such power of leverage could also be used for joint messaging around off-track SDGs, or the need for interlinking SDGs. While the means for promoting SDG progress as an EU group therefore exist, SDGs have, to date not been a strong focus within neither the policy nor the political dialogue within most countries. Some respondents would like to see HQ provide them with better guidance on why and how to promote SDGs within the policy dialogue. One key obstacle mentioned is that in many countries, national coordination mechanisms – especially the more technical groups - still largely operate through development partners, with only sporadic participation from the government.

In one case (Ethiopia), it was mentioned that the current Euroscepticism within the EU also negatively influences the JP process at country level, and that the space for working together has been shrinking as a result. In addition to that, the Aid for Trade agenda focus of certain MS (NL in particular) resulted in both scepticism towards EU action and towards aid as a modality.

HoM’s potential role in lifting JP and SDG progress discussions beyond the aid/ cooperation sphere:

Due to their engagement in a political dialogue with the government, HoMs could play a key role when it comes to promoting a more integrated approach to SDG progress and to using JP as a framework going beyond development cooperation. In some countries (e.g. Bolivia) HoMs have helped increasing JP visibility within the political dialogue. In many countries, however, their role within the JP process – beyond endorsing JP documents – has been largely ceremonial, while HoCs are still mainly in charge of follow-up and leading JP discussions. For example in Ghana, where JP has largely been a cooperation exercise

led by HoCs, despite the decreasing role of aid in Ghana (5% of GNI in 2015), vs. other forms of financing. According to a 2017 OECD report, rallying around the 2030 Agenda can, however, lift the development co-operation dialogue to the benefit of all parties, including Ghana’s newer development partners who were not part of the previous institutions of mutual accountability. To that end, HoMs however need to be involved in the discussions. There are already positive examples of such involvement in certain countries, such as in Palestine, where the political nature of the dialogue in certain sectors (e.g. justice) has resulted in HoMs taking the lead in following up on results. In other sectors (e.g. education), HoMs and HoCs in Palestine are co-responsible for joint results monitoring, to the extent that HoM’s engagement has, at times, even led to an overly political nature of the dialogue whereas more operational cooperation issues were sidelined – nonetheless, their participation was deemed of high value in what is a highly politicized context.

Another point flagged by respondents was the **absence of national SDG secretariats in programming and technical dialogue discussions.** With the positive exception of Palestine, established national SDG secretariats at partner country level do not tend to engage in development partner programming or more technical sector discussions. In Palestine, the National Policy Agenda team in charge of acting as a counterpart for JP was also the counterpart for the UNDAF and UN SDG process, which facilitated the cross-referencing of SDGs throughout the JP process. It is also interesting to note that there is a particular incentive for SDG progress in Palestine, as participation in international processes are seen as key for supporting the country’s self-determination agenda. In most countries, however, potential incentives for SDG progress, as well as UN and government entry points for SDG dialogue are not sufficiently leveraged to date by the EU group and within the Joint Programming process.

Joint stakeholder and SDG entry point analysis.

Generally-speaking, identifying and mapping key influencers – but also spoilers - of change for SDG progress should become part of the JP process joint analysis exercise. The impact of external powers and events on the socio-economic situation of many fragile and conflict-affected states is a particular aspect which needs to be taken into account when looking at how to promote SDG progress in those contexts. In other words, joint policy dialogue may, at times, also need to be taken forward beyond the partner country’s national borders in order to have an impact on SDG progress within its borders. The increased leverage provided by Joint Programming to the EU as a group could be a valuable asset for pushing such a dialogue forward.

Deep dive: “Beyond border” obstacles impeding SDG progress at local levels in Palestine

In the State of Palestine the Prime Minister's Offices spearheaded the nationalization of the SDGs. However, the capacity of local authorities to deliver on many of their responsibilities (potable water, roads, mobility, waste management among others) is hindered by Israeli zoning policies and other obstacles (e.g. discriminatory planning regime), and by a lack of funding. As a result, several issues such as housing shortages, overcrowded and limited public open spaces and poor sanitary conditions, have had a much more acute impact.

The UN as a key ally for promoting SDG progress at both national and local level: Many respondents under this study have also highlighted the need for going to the subnational level in order to strengthen local ownership of the SDGs. This often implies “reading” SDGs in the local language and narrative, as well as supporting local “SDG transformers”, such as civil society and the private sector, among others. In most case study countries, the UN is, however, seen by respondents as the primary entity in charge of following up on SDG nationalization and localization processes. As outlined above (Section: “Methodology”), the UN has developed a sophisticated SDG

follow-up system, called “MAPS”, under which it can provide targeted support to partner countries’ SDG localization and data collection/analysis processes. Accordingly, UNCTs also have a mandate with regard to SDG monitoring, which can also help Joint Programming M&E processes. In Kenya, for example, a UNCT M&E interagency group for SDG monitoring has been established and the EU group has expressed an interest in linking-up the Joint Programming monitoring and follow-up process to this work. Further action should be taken in other countries to establish a true UN-EU partnership on SDGs at partner country level.

Deep dive: UN Partnership and Support to SDG localization processes in Ethiopia.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Ethiopia is assisting the government in rolling out the SDGs at the national and sub-national levels. In June 2016, a joint Government of Ethiopia and UNCT SDG Action Plan was prepared to facilitate the national campaign in Ethiopia. Specifically, the UNCT aims to strengthen national capacity for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and financing of the SDGs in national development plans and programmes, as well as supporting the establishment of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Nicaragua is among the first Latin American and Caribbean countries to invest in wind energy as part of the government's move to diversify the country's energy mix.



3.3 The Effect of Joint Programming on (including non-financial) joint implementation

JP as a tool for making joint (financial) implementation more “legitimate, codified”, formal and systematic.

As pointed out by many respondents, a clear distinction needs to be made here between financial joint implementation (JI) and non-financial joint implementation (e.g. policy dialogue) initiatives when it comes to evaluating the effect of Joint Programming. While JP has in some cases had, as mentioned above, a strong added value for non-financial joint implementation, its effect on financial JI can, to date, only be seen as “fair” (see synthesis table in annex), as most countries confirmed that joint implementation initiatives had preceded - and were therefore not a direct result of - Joint Programming. However, in all countries, JP is said to have formalized joint implementation and to have made it more systematic and structured, “legitimate and codified”. In some cases (e.g. Ethiopia) JP documents included a list of possible areas for joint implementation.

Cross-sector joint (financial) implementation remains challenging, but JP is helping. Cross-sector and cross-SDG implementation continues to be a challenge due to the often compartmentalized nature and silo way of working of the partner countries’ national ministries – sometimes even between departments within a single ministry. The matter becomes even more complex when going beyond the development aid sphere, where attempts of working jointly at times also clash with strong and differing national interests on the EU donors’ side, such as for example in the areas of trade and security. In Bolivia, for example, the attempt, from the cooperation side, to push for a joint chamber of commerce was rejected due to already powerful existing bilateral EU MS chambers of commerce in country.

However, there are positive examples where the EU as a group, funding different sectors under one single programme, have achieved to bring together officials from different line ministries – e.g. in the case of the “Go blue” coastal and urban development programme in Kenya; or in the case of the joint governance and administrative reform support in a number of other countries (e.g. Cambodia). In this context, Joint Programming is seen as helpful in that it can unite donors under a broader, cross-sector and more

strategic objective, such as, for example good governance, job creation or nutrition (Laos, Ethiopia) and thus also incentivize joint cross-sector financial implementation towards this common objective.

Deep dive: Kenya’s “Go blue” coastal and urban development programme,

co-funded by the EU, several EU member states and the UN¹¹, has three, interlinked objectives, covering various sectors: Economic development, job creation/ security and holistic sustainable development. According to EUD, Joint Programming has helped bringing together member states and committing to one strategic approach for this programme. The programme responds to the current government’s political ambitions on expanding the “blue economy”, as described in its “Big Four Agenda”, while however adding a sustainability dimension to job creation in this area, in line with EU values and the principles of the SDG framework.

Deep dive: Laos’ joint nutrition programme:

Within the JP process in Laos, the EU group decided to label “nutrition” as a sector, so as to have a more comprehensive, multi-sector approach including crops diversification, WASH, etc. This created a collective thinking among EU partners– e.g. instead of looking only at levels of productivity, EU partners involved in the agro-sector are now supporting the diversification of crops so as to provide a more nutritious food basket: France, for example, has since tweaked its interventions in the agro-sector to make it more nutrition-centred. Germany is now also more active in contributing to nutrition-relevant infrastructures.

The shared JP ambition of better geographic (rather than sector) division of labour is also seen by some (e.g. Kenya) as a potential avenue for promoting more cross-sector, joint approaches.

Another message emerging from interviews under this study is that Joint (financial) implementation “takes time” – notably because it implies adapting donor programmes and rules, as well as getting joint programmes through their approval procedures. While an immediate impact of Joint Programming on joint (financial) implementation may therefore not be visible in the short-term, the associated increased visibility of the EU group as jointly supporting the government within the policy dialogue is seen by

many as a driving factor for joint implementation in the long-run.

When going beyond the question of Joint Programming and looking at whether the SDG framework has, as such, brought about any improvements on cross-sector/SDG implementation at partner country level, the answer is not clear-cut: A screening of existing VNR among the case-study countries, summarized in the following table, shows that most countries have established **cross-sector SDG committees**, but whether these committees will achieve a more cross-sector collaboration for interlinking the SDGs still needs to be evaluated.

Laos' national development agenda includes several large-scale government-backed projects, including the development of special economic zones along the Laos-China railway.



Deep dive: Information about cross-sector SDG committees, as per 5 studied VNR

Questions	Have the SDGs brought about any improvements on cross-sector/SDG implementation at partner country level, for example through the set-up of inter-agency committees?
Senegal	No information
Palestine	The Palestinian council of ministers issued a decree establishing a national team to lead the implementation of the SDGs under the overview of the PMO. Tasked with coordination for the implementation and follow-up of the SDGs amongst all related stakeholders, including members from NGOs and the private sector.
Ethiopia	Public Wings' platform governed by the 'Charter of Citizens' have been formed under each government executive organs providing the enabling environment for the government organs to coordinate the discharge of their responsibilities along with the involvement of stakeholders. The Public Wings platform shall hold quarterly joint meetings to deliberate on common agenda and make decisions.
Kenya	Inter-Agency Technical Committee (IATC), comprised of officers from key government Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs, civil society organizations and private sector).
Laos	In September 2017, the President of the Lao PDR issued a Decree on appointing the Prime Minister to chair the National Steering Committee for SDG implementation, with members of the Committee drawn from all concerned ministries, ministry- equivalent agencies, and mass organizations. The Committee appointed the National SDG Secretariat, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, as well as SDG focal 17 points within each of the relevant line ministries to lead and take ownership of each SDG, ensuring smooth coordination and collaboration within the government.

4. Recommendations for Making JP Processes more “SDG-sensitive”

On the basis of the aforementioned findings, the following table attempts to provide some suggestions and ideas for answering the following key question: “What do we need to do differently so that Joint Programming supports the achievement of the SDGs at partner country level?”. It establishes recommendations for both EU donor country level missions and HQ-levels, followed by some preliminary, (non-prescriptive) guidance which can be used within Joint Programming guidance tools.

JP members' partner country missions	JP members' Headquarters
I. Ensuring linkages between national priorities and SDGs within the Joint Strategy	
Consider using actual SDG indicators as key JP performance indicators, if measurable at partner country level, according to UN-supported partner country SDG baseline reports (where available) and SDG data availability mappings. Put high emphasis on the availability of means of verification when selecting key indicators.	Align global results frameworks indicators with SDG indicators and harmonize EU and MS global results frameworks. New MFF 2021-27 could be an opportunity for making funding available for such HQ-based (not only country-based) Joint Programming initiatives.
Take into account UN SDG gaps analysis (where applicable) when formulating JP priorities and results.	Issue harmonized guidance for country level EU and MS missions on what hierarchy to adopt when identifying JRF-usable indicators within global (incl. SDG), country programme or national results frameworks.
Within fragile settings, strategically use SDG 16 conflict and fragility related indicators and targets within JRFs to promote a more integrated approach at partner country level.	Issue supportive guidance on how to use SDG 16 for a more integrated approach.
Use foreseen JS/ JRF review opportunities for integrating the SDGs.	Allow for comprehensive JRF reviews.
Map existing SDG and data collection and analysis (incl. SDG costing and SDG budgetary planning) capacity-building initiatives (notably UN MAPs) at partner country level and identify possible gaps where joint EU support could have an added value.	Keep funding and rules flexible to allow for joint and harmonized data capacity-building initiatives of EU partners at partner country level.

JP members' partner country missions	JP members' Headquarters
I. Ensuring linkages between national priorities and SDGs within the Joint Strategy cont.	
Discuss options for supporting set-up of a web-based “SDG data tool” (e.g. Colombia) capturing national- and local level data.	Foresee funding for financing web-based SDG tools in the context of EU Joint Programming.
Organise joint data field missions in different sectors, to gather data from social services and feed it back to the national level.	Foresee funding for data field missions in the context of joint programming. Issue guidance on how to structure these missions..
2. JP and SDG monitoring/ follow-up	
Discuss JP and SDG progress “when and where needed”, by using as much as possible existing coordination mechanisms (e.g. cooperation counsellors meetings; national mechanisms). Centring JP discussions around SDG progress could help address scepticism towards both EU action, as well as aid as a development tool.	Allow for synergies in JP and bilateral annual reporting, so to avoid higher workloads on country-level missions.
Engage, as an EU group, on a more regular basis with established SDG secretariats or units in country to discuss how donor contributions to SDG progress could be made more “visible” and quantifiable in the VNR context..	
3. EU policy dialogue influence on national SDG progress	
Undertake a Joint stakeholder and SDG entry point analysis by identifying key influencers – but also spoilers - of change for SDG progress, as part of the JP joint analysis exercise	
Link up SDG monitoring within JP with ongoing UN (MAPS and SDG localization and monitoring) processes and groups (e.g. UNCT M&E interagency group on SDG monitoring in Kenya).	Assess how to improve the EU-UN partnership on SDGs, at all levels.

JP members' partner country missions	JP members' Headquarters
3. EU policy dialogue influence on national SDG progress cont.	
Discuss joint (EU and UN) messaging around SDG progress, especially with regard to off-track SDGs and SDG interlinkages, within the context of joint programming. Involve national SDG secretariats in programming and technical dialogue discussions.	Issue guidance on why and how to promote SDGs within the policy dialogue.
Promote the stronger involvement of HoMs so as to lift JP and SDG progress discussions beyond the aid/ cooperation sphere.	Use the “beyond development” nature of the SDGs as a basis for providing HoMs with a clear mandate for advancing SDGs.
Take the dialogue to the local level, by reading SDGs in the local narrative and language, as well supporting local “SDG transformers” (e.g. civil society, private sector, other).	
4. JP and its effect on joint implementation	
Use JP to further promote cross-sector financial and non-financial joint implementation at partner country level.	Ease funding instruments, procedures and tools to allow for cross-sector joint implementation.
Promote/ support the set-up and/or intensify collaboration with national cross-sector SDG committees.	
Initiate multi-stakeholder partnerships around one cross-sector SDG issue (e.g. child labour) can be a good way of starting the dialogue.	

Notes

1 - The joint EU position agreed for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in November 2011 (Council conclusions 16773/11) committed to “implement joint programming at the country level to reduce aid fragmentation and promote harmonisation” – following 2009 Council Conclusions on aid effectiveness.

2 - <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/joint-programming/documents/report-joint-results-framework-joint-programming>

3 - The end number of interviews and case studies included in the report will depend on EUD staff's availability and responsiveness to interview requests.

4 - Ethiopia, Kenya, Laos, Palestine - according to the OECD's States of Fragility 2018 report – see list at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/OECD%20Highlights%20documents_web.pdf

5 - MAPS website: <http://www.2030agenda.undp.org/content/2030agenda/en/home/more/MAPS.html>

6 - Progressing national SDGs implementation: An independent assessment of the voluntary national review reports submitted to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2017. BOND, March 2018. https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/progressing_national_sdgs_implementation_2018_2.pdf

7 - This conclusion was drawn from the interview with EUD in Sénegal. However, the new National Development Plan (PSE 2019-23) is not yet accessible online.

8 - Accelerating the implementation of agenda 2030 on sustainable development: Approaches by African countries in the localization and implementation of sustainable development goals. UN Women, 2017. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321759420_ACCELERATING_THE_IMPLEMENTATION_OF_AGENDA_2030_ON_SUSTAINABLE_DEVELOPMENT-_APPROACHES_BY_AFRICAN_COUNTRIES_IN_THE_LOCALIZATION_AND_IMPLEMENTATION_OF_SUSTAINABLE_DEVELOPMENT_GOALS_SDGS

9 - Conclusions available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21097SUMMARY_Geneva_workshop_FINAL.pdf

10 - This is a qualitative assessment attributed on the basis of the perceived weight and impact of speaking as one voice among EU partners within the policy dialogue, as described by the interviewees in the case study countries. It is not based on a set of objective criteria. All interview responses can be read in the annexed synthesis table.

11 - Programme was, at the time of writing this study, still been at formulation/ design stage.

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ANNEX 1: Synthesis table – Country Case Studies

	SDG nationalization within national plans (links ¹ or use of SDG goals and/ or indicators)	SDG localization: status.	VNR (date or N/A)	SDGs within JP JRF (links or use of SDG goals and/ or indicators)	Impact of joint EU policy dialogue on SDGs country progress to date (weak/ fair/ strong) ²	Cross-sector joint implementation initiatives implemented or in pipeline (Y/N)– JP impact (weak/fair/ strong) ³
Bolivia	No link but UN mapping on linkages.	Initiated.	N/A	No links, but mention	fair	Y-fair
Cambodia	Links expected to be in new plan	Ongoing	2019	Links – SDG indicators	strong	Y-fair
Ethiopia	Links SDG goals	Ongoing	2017	Links – SDG goals	weak	Y-fair
Ghana	Links SDG goals	Ongoing	2019	Links – SDG goals	weak	Y-fair
Kenya	Links expected to be in new plan	Ongoing	2017	Links – SDG goals	strong	Y-strong
Laos	Links SDG goals	Ongoing	2018	Links – SDG goals	strong	Y-fair
Nicaragua	N/A	Not Started	N/A	Links - SDG goals and indicators	weak	Y-weak
Palestine	No NRF	Not Started	2018	Links – SDG goals	strong	Y-fair
Senegal	Use of SDG Indicators ⁴	Ongoing	2018	Use of SDG indicators	fair	Y-fair

¹ “Links” refers to the simple reference of SDG goals and indicators (numbers) considered relevant for specific sectors. The use of indicators implies that the actual wording of SDG indicators and targets is taken on and used for monitoring progress.

² Qualitative assessment made by the consultant, on the basis of interviews held (see details in table below).

³ Qualitative assessment made by the consultant, on the basis of interviews held (see details in table below).

⁴ According to interview – new national development plan 2019-2023 not public yet.

ANNEX 2: Review suggestions/ options for Joint Programming Guidance manual

Section 6. Preparing a Joint Results Framework

The Consensus makes joint monitoring and results frameworks core elements of the joint response to maintain momentum, inform dialogue and enhance mutual accountability. Experience of Joint Programming Documents to date shows that successful results frameworks are as much as possible aligned to national processes for results management.

Joint results frameworks can become a tool for information sharing, monitoring, evidence-based actions and mutual learning. Managing for results is about systematically collecting and analysing information to assess how programmes are performing against expected targets - and how improvements can be made for future performance. Relying on partner countries' statistical, monitoring and evaluation systems might be a challenge and may need to be accompanied by efforts to strengthen national statistical capacity and information systems.

Alignment to an existing country results framework can provide a stronger and more credible platform for subsequent policy dialogue. Ideally, the framework can also help better highlight the contribution of the respective European partners to the achievement of specific results either in financial terms or through specific projects and programmes.

A regular monitoring round can be instrumental in evidence-based discussion and policy dialogue with sectoral Ministries and national stakeholders (civil society, private sector) and provide the basis for learning from experience. It can also allow for the joint results framework or the Joint Programming Document to be updated and revised as needed. If substantial updates are made to the Joint Programming Document, as a result of the monitoring process, HQ approval may subsequently need to be sought (see Chapter 7). When choosing results and objectives to be put in the joint results framework, a good balance between quantity, level, measurability and the existence of baselines should be achieved. Too many results and indicators at different levels (operational/macro-level) will make the task of measuring them more difficult.

In the absence of a country results framework, global frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, can provide a credible option and can also refer to partner country engagements at global level, such as the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) 40 regarding the implementation

of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Activities to prepare a results framework

Results frameworks should support national ownership and leadership, to develop institutional capacities and to facilitate an enabling environment for strengthening national systems. Results frameworks should also support better coherence across bilateral policy and programmes of participating partners, and facilitate consistent support for partner country progress towards national and Sustainable Development Goals. Possible activities:

1. Agree with participating development partners on the purpose of the results framework

The purpose of the results framework can be discussed at the outset of the Joint Programming process, to ensure common understanding of the purpose of the results framework.

Results frameworks can be used:

- to underpin policy dialogue by signaling key priority messages, including with regard to off-track SDGs and the need for interlinking SDG;
- to improve accountability in terms of project/ programme results;
- to contribute to overall monitoring of national and sustainable development goals, so as to provide visibility for the European and participating partners in terms of their combined impact in a country; and
- to monitor the commitments to the development effectiveness and 2030 agenda.

2. Define the scope of the results framework

It is important to consider some key principles for a high-quality results framework. Among them are the influence of global agendas and commitments, the country's own political economy and incentives for delivering development results, the impact of country-external factors and/or powers on national results progress, accountability for the results (national, sector, agency level), and the extent to which the results framework can be managed and monitored.

Results frameworks can be quite detailed, specifying the information down to a given activity, or can remain at the higher (outcome and output) level. The extent of detail needed should be decided at country level: experience to date suggests that higher-level results frameworks are more useful in terms of assessing the overall direction of change in a partner country and helping focus on the big picture of sustainable development that the joint results are contributing to.

Tip: it may, for example, be useful to undertake a joint SDG entry point analysis by identifying key influencers – but also spoilers – of change for SDG progress, as part of the JP joint analysis exercise. The aim would be to show to what extent results can be influenced and at what level.

To keep results frameworks manageable and understandable for a range of national stakeholders, it is useful to reflect on how to select the outcome/output results to include in the framework. A smaller number of representative results might be easier to monitor and communicate than an exhaustive list of everything that is desirable.

3. Review the adequacy of the national results framework

A review of the adequacy of country results framework and monitoring system (including data) can support an agreement on whether the national framework is 'good enough' to align to. In the absence of a national results framework, participating partners should consider what other strategic frameworks they could align to (for example the SDG framework).

In this context, it is advisable to:

- Assess the quality of national indicators and existing gaps

To assess the quality of the indicators, it may be worth organizing a multi-stakeholder consultation. To that end, build-in time for consultations (within JP roadmaps): There should be an open, in-depth discussion among participating partners about how each partner currently monitors results and at what level. Sharing participating partners' existing results frameworks and monitoring processes, as well as reviewing the country results framework, can help provide clarity as to the expected and achievable results from the Joint Programming Documents. Consultations

with other national stakeholders (government, parliament, CSOs, academia and the private sector), as well as UN organizations can help determine representative/selective results for a sector based on key challenges and country priorities. Participating partners can use the consultations to discuss on national priorities and gaps in policies and legal frameworks, as well as the institutional capacities of state and non-state actors.

Tip: As a first step, key challenges per sector/priority should be identified and participants challenged on where they see gaps in the aforementioned mapping on partner and national indicators in order to address these challenges. The UN's SDG gap analysis for partner countries can (where applicable) also be helpful in this context. On the basis of gap analysis, see if SDG indicators could complement national frameworks to make them more comprehensive.

- Assess the status of SDG nationalization and localization processes (how many national indicators match/ respond to SDG indicators?)

Tip: Ask UN resident coordinator whether such a matching exercise has already been undertaken by the UNCT in country, in the context of their UN MAP exercise. Use this analysis to complete aforementioned mapping by adding a column on matching or associated SDG indicators, by priority sector.

Joint results frameworks can also include a mix of country results framework indicators and other indicators (such as SDG indicators and indicators on aid effectiveness) as appropriate to the country context and the agreed scope.

4. Consider including assumptions and risks

The joint analysis will have provided some consideration of critical assumptions in the local context, notably poor/weak governance issues, risks and mitigating measures. These assumptions can be included in the results framework logic. Attention should also be given to risks

and assumptions related to country level data collections, evidence generation and data processing, and support for national statistical and information systems. Cooperation projects can have unintended negative impacts on the environment and human rights. Such as Agenda 2030, European Neighbourhood Policy, EU Global Strategy, Development Effectiveness agenda, Rights-Based Approach. Such as disadvantaging certain groups, interfering with participation rights and labour rights or contributing to forced displacement. It is therefore important to abide by the 'do no harm' principle and carry out the required analysis and mitigation.

5. Consider how to include cross-cutting issues and joint values

Joint Programming Documents are underpinned by the common values of participating partners. These include commitments to promote gender equality, environmental sustainability, an enabling environment for civil society, protection for human rights and democratic governance. These common issues should be reflected in the joint results framework in a way that facilitates reporting on related results. This could be further achieved through the inclusion of specific indicators; through reference to existing agreed activities (such as the Civil Society Roadmap, Gender Action Plan and Human Rights and Democracy Country Strategies); and through emphasis on these issues across all sectors (by including disaggregated data and reference to environmental impacts are just two such examples at sector level).

6. Formulation of the joint results framework

Aspects that could be included:

(i) selected strategic priorities (objectives). Priorities should be strategically adopted to demonstrate an understanding of the local political economy in such a way that promises access to and influence in policy dialogue relating to domestic resource mobilisation and using development cooperation resources to deliver on global goods (e.g. the SDGs);

Identify a **limited set of related key indicators where EU joint action (financial or non-financial) can make a change.**

This can be an EU partners-internal exercise, where previously identified indicators and gaps are challenged against their added value and measurability for the Joint Programming process. The level of detail of indicators depends on what makes sense in a given country context – what is key is to ensure that each indicator can be measured by using existing sources of verification. So, within the results framework, the columns on "Means of

Verification", as well as "Baselines and targets" should be given particular attention.

Tip: The UN supports partner countries in carrying out SDG baseline assessments, along with mappings showing which SDG indicators can be measured at country level, using national means of verification. Where available, such assessments can be useful for the selection of JRF indicators.

Tip: Where possible in terms of measurement, use the wording of the SDG indicator within JRFs, so as to allow for SDG progress reporting. If not feasible, consider including a column in the joint results framework that links and matches each joint results indicator to relevant SDGs.

Tip: Within fragile settings, strategically use SDG 16 conflict- and fragility related indicators and targets within JRFs to promote a more integrated approach at partner country level.

- (ii) outcome indicators measuring outputs and intermediate outcomes which can be directly linked to Joint Programming interventions, as a collection of implementation results in bilateral/multilateral/Joint Programming Documents;
- (iii) development effectiveness indicators to monitor improvements in the effectiveness of participating partners' development cooperation, as measured against aid fragmentation, division of labour, use of country systems, etc.;
- (iv) process and impact indicators measuring the extent to which the working principles of a rights-based approach are effectively applied in external cooperation programmes;
- (v) where possible, baselines and targets to help with assessing progress in achieving the outcomes;
- (vi) links to other joint strategies, such as the CSO Roadmap, Gender Action Plan and Human Rights and Democracy Country Strategies - although certain aspects of these could be directly incorporated into the Joint Programming Document and their indicators taken on board in the joint results framework;

7. Monitoring and follow-up

Joint strategies should include a narrative showing how JRF indicators will be monitored.

Aspects that could be included here:

- (i) clarity on the division of labour among the participating development partners for monitoring and reporting on specific indicators or the results framework;
- (ii) a defined frequency for monitoring and reporting on the results of the Joint Programming Document and thought as to how to share progress with a range of stakeholders in appropriate formats.
- (iii) Engage, as an EU group, on a more regular basis with established SDG secretariats or units in country to discuss how donor contributions to SDG progress could be made more "visible" and quantifiable in the VNR context.
- (iv) Discuss joint (EU and UN) messaging around SDG progress, especially with regard to off-track SDGs and SDG interlinkages, within the context of joint programming. Where applicable, link up JP group with UN M&E interagency groups on SDG monitoring. Involve national SDG secretariats in programming and technical dialogue discussions.
- (v) Promote the stronger involvement of HoMs so as to lift JP and SDG progress discussions beyond the aid/ cooperation sphere.

In **Cambodia**, the European partners did not wish to create a parallel system for monitoring results, but rather boost existing national processes.

The European Strategy results framework was therefore aligned with the Government's own strategy and associated national processes for results management including the national process of agreeing joint monitoring indicators between government and the development partners in 19 sectors. The results framework in Cambodia was intended as a concise framework that includes the outcomes which are of particular importance for the European external cooperation programmes and which provide a platform for policy dialogue. In this context, one representative output indicator was selected for each area of European partners' focus and support, as well as some additional indicators in areas European partners felt were not covered by the 19 sectors but which were important for the group. The results framework was originally 14 output indicators although after the first monitoring report this was expanded to 21 to better capture the breadth of European support in Cambodia (the added indicators covered higher education scholarships and TVET, anti-corruption, green energy, sustainable production, social protection, support for the CSO enabling environment and climate change).

Experience shows that the following principles were key for Cambodia:

- use of the joint results framework as a tool for policy dialogue,
- importance of alignment to country priorities,
- selectivity in the choice of results to be monitored,
- references to the SDGs targets that the Joint Programming priorities contribute to, and
- keeping the joint results framework understandable for external stakeholders and manageable for the European group.

Role of HQ

HQs should be consulted on the joint results framework, which often forms part of the Joint Programming Document. The final version of the results framework should be shared with HQ colleagues and with the Joint Programming Helpdesk/functional mailboxes.

HQs should:

- Align global results frameworks indicators with SDG indicators and harmonize EU and MS global results frameworks. New MFF 2021-27 could be an opportunity for making funding available for such HQ-based (not only country-based) Joint Programming initiatives.
- Issue harmonized guidance for country level EU and MS missions on what hierarchy to adopt when identifying JRF-usable indicators within global (incl. SDG), country programme or national results frameworks.
- Keep funding and rules flexible to allow for joint and harmonized data capacity-building initiatives of EU partners at partner country level.

Issue guidance on why and how to promote SDGs within the policy dialogue.

In **Nicaragua**, EU and Member States mixed four different results frameworks to produce a tailored joint results framework. In the absence of clear national sector definitions and related sector strategies, the EU group decided to use SDGs as a guiding reference for the Joint Strategy 2018-2020 objectives. An SDG mapping exercise was elaborated, showing contributions of each partner to SDGs. Partners identified six sustainable development goals to which their cooperation is contributing and where EU group can take a lead within the policy dialogue: SDG2, SDG4, SDG8, SDG13, SDG16. Chairs were designated for each of these SDGs who would lead on related JP work. Within the JS results framework, these SDG goals are used at outcome level, but associated specific objective indicators used in the matrix have been taken from other sources – notably from the National Plan for Human Development, the EU Results Framework and the results framework of each participating agency.. Mechanisms for coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the results were outlined and now include an annual update of results. This annual update requires discipline from all partners, but allows for regular adjustments of the results framework as needed.

ANNEX 3: Detailed Case Study Country answers to Study Questions

Questions Countries	Linkages between national priorities and SDGs within the Joint Strategy	Joint Strategy follow-up and results monitoring	National Development Plan or Strategy incorporates or links to SDGs	EU policy dialogue influence on national SDG progress	JP and its effect on (incl. non-financial) joint implementation
Bolivia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JS 2017-2020 elaborated before SDG finalisation. JP focused on process (Aid effectiveness and working together) whereas SDGs are results-based. Indicators are process indicators at this first stage. In current strategy only short mention of the SDG framework, but no link in results framework. Possible task for JS phase II (e.g. 2021-27) – but it would be linking SDG to those sectors where we are working in, not the other way round. EUD needs to do that for EU MIP as well, regarding country-level contribution to DEVCO global indicators. Usually only 3-4 country level indicators match with DEVCO indicators though, because priority are national results indicators. Would be good to provide some guidance from HQ level on how to standardize JP in line with SDG, without comprising flexibility to adapt framework to local realities. Guidance, rather than prescription of method. Ultimately, JP will allow to discuss overcrowded and orphan sectors, but right now we are starting by better information-sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st annual monitoring report finalized in beginning 2018, although JS only officially launched in May 2018 – but implementation started in 2017. No mid-term review planned as JS only for 4 years. Despite only having process indicators for JS monitoring, first annual report goes beyond analysis of AE indicator progress, by also providing an overview of EU aggregated results by sector when and where they are comparable / can be aggregated. Not complete picture of sector; but snapshots. The report also shows where better coordination amongst EU donors, incl. through the JP process, has contributed to / helped achieving these results. EU JP Groups with designated leads to meet at the minimum once a year to prepare data for report. Beyond report coordination among EU partners: Groups only activated if added value on top of national coordination groups, to be used as needed to talk among Europeans. 	Social and Economic Development Plan 2016-2020. No explicit reference to SDGs, but UNDAF made an analysis showing clear links between plan's objectives with SDG goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within national coordination groups, SDGs do serve as a reference, but the groups are mostly donor-internal. Government very aware of SDGs and happy to use them as in line with their own objectives. Dialogue with Civil Society/ Private Sector: Private sector not involved. Civil society: no full-fledged consultation process on JP yet – beyond already existing process under CSO roadmap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of non-financial joint implementation going beyond cooperation sphere: Education: Scholarships. Public event organized with all EU MS to promote Erasmus and other EU programmes in Mali. Goes beyond our bilateral cooperation, because it is not in the strategy. Joint events in the area of culture is another example of non-financial joint implementation going beyond cooperation programmes. Trade could be a topic for better working together; but often hampered by national EU donor interests: attempt, from the cooperation side, to push for joint chamber of commerce was rejected due to already powerful existing bilateral EU MS chambers of commerce in country. Jl: Even before JP, e.g. basking funds, but JP has reinforced Jl and more systematic consideration of opportunities of working together – be it to pool funds or to better coordinate separate programmes. Cross-sector cooperation: Government still working in silo / compartmentalized, even within the same Ministry – e.g. working with each deputy ministry within one ministry (environment) to link water management and river management. EU donors tried to bring 2 together, and it was challenging. More challenging even when cross-ministries. HoMs back the JP process, but are not involved in content/ JP discussions. HoMs take on more of a visibility role for JP – already big added value, as it helps process to be known.

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Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JS 2014-18 elaborated before 2015- no reference in main document. Second Joint Strategy post-2019 to be elaborated. However: updated Results Framework 2017-19 includes "links" to SDGs and associated indicators- but does not actually "incorporate" them – i.e. use these indicators for monitoring. Instead, Joint Monitoring Indicators agreed upon between all partners and government are the main source, complemented by CSO roadmap and Gender Action Plan indicators. Certain SDGs have not been included for political sensitivity reasons- e.g. SDG 15 indicators on forestry and land issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second JS monitoring report under way Results indicators were adapted after the first monitoring report to better reflect Cambodian realities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rectangular Strategy used as a more strategic, long-term reference document for the Joint Strategy does not refer to SDGs. SDG localisation efforts are under way, but no clear results available to date. SDGs are expected to be mainstreamed through new National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP 2019-2023), for which Ministry of Planning is in charge – i.e. doc. does have the same status at national level as the Rectangular Strategy, for which PM is responsible. First national voluntary review on SDG progress expected to be published in 2019. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU group is the only donor group in country able to engage in a high-level dialogue with the government, notably due to the high volumes of EU aid channelled to the country. Moreover, the possible withdrawal of the Everything but Arms (EBA) initiative, currently under discussion, has already provoked reactions from the government. While SDGs have not been directly promoted by EU group yet within that dialogue, the results obtained by using the above influence of EU group are most likely to have had a positive effect on SDG progress – the latter will become clearer during next year's national voluntary SDG review. Good progress documented during past years on governance / administrative and PFM reforms supported by EU donors. Some issues where progress on reforms still lacking, e.g. land issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EEU group's declared intention and first steps taken to better work together through non-financial joint implementation and policy dialogue in Cambodia dates back to 2008 (before start of JP process in 2013). However, JP has institutionalized the EU group's reinforced coordination efforts, making it more structured and visible. Many past and ongoing joint implementation initiatives, in all its forms, including blending and non-financial (e.g. joint policy dialogue on 3 key national reforms- Decentralisation, Admin. Reform, PFM). In some (not all) cases, these joint initiatives can be seen as a result of JP reinforced coordination. Cross-sector action for a more comprehensive and interlinked approach to SDG progress continues to be a challenge. First efforts were made, however, to ensure a better cooperation between line ministries for the implementation of the three key reforms mentioned above.

Questions Countries	Linkages between national priorities and SDGs within the Joint Strategy	Joint Strategy follow-up and results monitoring	National Development Plan or Strategy incorporates or links to SDGs	EU policy dialogue influence on national SDG progress	JP and its effect on (incl. non-financial) joint implementation
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethiopia has an internal and a public version of Joint Programming strategy 2017-2020. Only the internal version includes Joint Results Framework, as it was difficult to agree amongst the 18 present donors on an official and public results framework at a time when political circumstances were less favourable than they are now (post-election period) in the country. Moreover, people were reluctant to report against JP results framework over their own results frameworks. "Contributions" of shared overall objectives ("JP Cluster") to relevant SDG goals are highlighted in results framework, but no SDG indicators used for monitoring. Source of indicators: European donors own country strategies and programmes. Using SDGs as a preferred source in future is viewed positively as a means of harmonizing partners' different monitoring and reporting exercises. However, JP reporting and the process as such is seen by European partners as an additional burden and its added value is often questioned. Guidelines are seen as too complex. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP steps and progress are discussed during monthly HoCs meetings, when and where there is a specific need for that. Paragraph in JS on monitoring strategy, but strategy only just launched and no annual monitoring yet. Most discussions on working together happen in a specific sector (rather than general JP meetings). Migration: only-EU meetings. Agro-industry: EU group and a larger group. Smaller MS prefer the larger meetings. EU-only groups are used to discuss specific joint interventions. Current Euroscepticism within your Europe also negatively influences J^P process at country level: Space for working together has been shrinking as a result. Plus Aid for Trade agenda focus of certain MS (NL in particular) – so both scepticism towards EU action and aid as a modality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II) (2015/16-2019/20) Volume II: Policy Matrix", the national results framework, includes references (numbers) of SDG goals and targets which are relevant to national objectives. However, SDG indicators as such are not used for monitoring & reporting, also because document was elaborated before 2015. OECD mission in 2018 assessing if energy can be pilot sector for aligning national policies to SDG framework. VNR done in 2017. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy dialogue is not happening in Ethiopia between EU-only and Govt – only within larger development partner group. There is no interest from the government for EU Joint Programming and for establishing a particular dialogue on this. NRV: mentions development partners' contributions in general – not EU in particular. Further guidance from HQ level on how to focus the promotion of progress on SDGs and EU SDG focal sector selection for working together as an EU group would be welcomed by country level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP process has enabled EU donors to come together and talk – value of this space is recognized. JI also discussed in this context. Internal Joint Programming document includes list of suggested joint implementation initiatives in annex, in areas where working together was perceived as having an added value – e.g. natural resources management/agriculture, governance, gender etc.) Includes broader areas of joint implementation (e.g. nutrition, job creation) where cross-sector and cross-ministry collaboration is required – e.g. job creation includes joint implementation in area of labour standards, agro- value chain development, labour market skills, access to finance etc – as well as a "Job compact" (jobs for refugees programme) to which two European donors contribute (EUD, UK), through budget support, using harmonized BS monitoring indicators. Other cross-sector example: Basic Services Delivery Group: - a follow-up of the Promotion of Basic Services Programme, the BSDG refers to a group of multi-lateral and bilateral agencies supporting decentralized basic service in Ethiopia (WB, DfID, Austria, Italy, African Development Bank, EU) through different but harmonized initiatives, following a common result framework.

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Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisional joint results framework included in the Joint cooperation Strategy 2017-2020 was based on Ghana's Growth and Development agenda 2014-17 objectives and indicators JRF should be updated according to new national results framework 2018-2021, once finalized. Provisional JRF includes links to SDG goals, but does not use them as objectives, nor their related indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JAnnual JP monitoring exercise foreseen, but no report available yet. The respective facilitator for each sector will collect the data for reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to an OECD report from 2017, Ghana played a key role in the formulation of the 2030 Agenda. The government prioritizes SDG-based planning and budgeting. All local governments were encouraged to align existing plans to the SDGs. NDPC has mapped all 169 SDG targets to ministries, departments and agencies. The government has identified 70% overlap between the goals and priorities in the 2018-2022 Plan and the SDGs and targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key question here: How can Joint Programming address the government's aim of a partnership beyond Aid, towards financing for development? To date, JP in Ghana has largely been a cooperation exercise led by HoCs, despite decreasing role of aid in Ghana (5% of GNI in 2015), vs. other forms of financing. According to a 2017 OECD report, rallying around the 2030 Agenda can, however, lift the development co-operation dialogue to the benefit of all parties, including Ghana's newer development partners who were not part of the previous institutions of mutual accountability. The UN and development partners have offered policy notes and dialogues on priorities and opportunities within the 2030 Agenda, yet some find they miss a platform for such dialogues (OECD 2017 report). 	Joint cross-sector implementation example, among others: Job creation: Employment/private sector/TVET.

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Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JS II indicative results framework includes lose reference to SDG goals (not indicators) and no baselines, nor targets, as indicators, baselines and targets should be aligned with (to date non-existing) national results framework. In the absence of a finalized MTPIII (to be launched in Oct. Nov. 2018) during the time of elaborating the second JP strategy, the latter is, so far, aligned with the economic and development agenda elaborated by the Jubilee Party government led by President Kenyatta, known as the Big Four Plan., as well as the MTPIII's overall goals, as communicated by the government. Results framework to be finalized once MTPIII is final and hopefully includes results framework. Question from EUD: What is SDG prioritisation at HQ level? More guidance needed here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU DPs will meet once a year at an Annual EU Development Forum to take stock of progress made with respect to the operationalisation of the Strategy. This process will rely on existing national processes and data, as well as project specific data. OECD reporting: Kenya case study for OECD for SDG monitoring. In mid 2018, UN launched its development assistance framework (UNDAF) – we want to sit together and discuss how can UNDAF and Joint cooperation strategy be aligned at least in terms of the results monitoring by sector. UN has created an interagency group on M&E responsible for building a results framework that each agency will report to and UN Resident coordinator is open to sharing experience with JP partners on that. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is expected that the Joint Cooperation Strategy (JCS) will support the MTP III's overarching goals, the second of which reads as (ii) Meeting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Medium-term plan 3 should have own implementation national results framework which should, according to EUD, incorporate SDG dimension (to be confirmed once published). In 2017, Kenya published its first VNR, highlighting good progress made with regard to the SDG roadmap and implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VNR 2017 makes only a general reference to the contribution of development partners to SDG progress. JS II doc includes valuable section on lessons learnt from the first JP phase, based on JP II analytical inception report. <p>Lessons learnt on dialogue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP phase I was instrumental in enhancing not only dialogue among EU partners, but also engagement with other external DPs, including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the private sector: EU co-operation appears less fragmented than that of the wider group of development partners Phase II should further capitalise on the fact that the EU is one of the main development partners in Kenya (in terms of ODA but also in terms of investment and trade). Need to present an evidence-based narrative to the GoK on the advantages of working jointly and build a Theory of Change that clearly depicts what are the benefits of "delivery as one" for Kenya. Opportunity: We are likely to go back into budget support in Kenya. Some MS perceive JP's added value in being to speak as one voice so as to advance together towards more ambitious goals, such as SDG implementation. Challenge: EUD continues to play a lead role as major donor in this dialogue, while EU MS often have very limited development cooperation with Kenya and/or are phasing it out as Kenya moves towards achieving middle-income status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons learnt from JP phase I, as stated in JS II: Phase I has led to increased EU implementation in specific sectors. Potential for joint implementation varies from sector to sector – this should be further analysed in JPII. Non-financial joint implementation: Division of labour and joint analytical work is an avenue we would like to look at, for sure, through JP. Includes ambition to look at better geographic DoL of EU/ MS in Kenya – i.e. how to divide up in counties, rather than sectors – so this would be in favour of cross-sector approach. BS will be opportunity for enhanced cross-sector policy dialogue- e.g. on Economic governance. New, cross-sector JI example, currently at design stage (Action doc still to be approved – "funding still to be committed by EC"):"Go Blue" - Coastal and urban development – 3 objectives: Environment, economics, job creation/ security. Holistic sustainable development – 3 sector areas which are all interlinked. Partially work with several EU member states and UN. Without JP process we should have not had this strategic approach of bringing in the member states in this programme. Often the process of JP as such is the added value – rather than the agreed results.

Questions Countries	Linkages between national priorities and SDGs within the Joint Strategy	Joint Strategy follow-up and results monitoring	National Development Plan or Strategy incorporates or links to SDGs	EU policy dialogue influence on national SDG progress	JP and its effect on (incl. non-financial) joint implementation
Laos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Strategy 2016'-2020 includes results framework which links each specific objective selected for strategy to one or more relevant SDG goals – however, SDG indicators are not used for monitoring, also because strategy was elaborated in 2015. Results framework includes baselines and targets, and highlights "unfinished business" or remaining gaps with regard to reaching former MDG targets and how the strategy proposed to contribute to addressing these gaps. As JS replaced MIP in Laos, EU HQ also needed to be "convinced" about including multiple results going beyond EU programmes, while ensuring that EU funding was still focused on 3 focal sectors only. Disclaimers needed to be included. High transaction costs at the beginning, but appreciated now that there is only 1 single instead of 2 (MIP and JS) documents. "Definitely worth the effort" (HoC EUD Laos). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint strategy mid-term review – or rather "Mid-term report" finalized in September 2018 by European Partners in consultation with sector ministries – not full review and Mid-term review done for MIP already (assessment of relevance of priorities and alignment with EU consensus and 5 Ps), which is the same as the JS (replacement case). Not create confusion. For each sector, sector evaluation fiche – progress, challenge – legal framework changes, overall policy goals etc. – technical, long report. More reader-friendly, shorter published version of report: describes in a qualitative manner JP contributions to country progress in the JP priority sectors, as well as areas for improvement. However, quantitative assessments of joint results indicators performance (according to set targets) was deemed too challenging as National Mid-term review of national plan ongoing and expected to be patchy in terms of reporting on national indicators. Monthly development counsellors meetings usually include JP as a first agenda point. Every 6 months, more in-depth JP working sessions are organized, on top of that. Annual reports are seen as a less meaningful exercise by the group – does not bring that much to JP approach in Laos – especially cause MIP annual reporting (EAMR) already reports on JP since it is the same document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laos carried out its SDG localisation process and added one goal on demining to the 17 SDG goals, for its country. 120 of the national plan indicators are share with the SDG framework. Laos also carried out a National Voluntary Review in 2018 for which all development partners were consulted through the Government's "SDG Secretariat". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP MTR allowed for pushing for more sector results reporting within national plan review. Joint policy dialogue briefs (shared policy analysis) on 7 JP priorities and other policy priorities allow EU group to speak as one group within the policy dialogue. In its VNR, the government highlights support received from development partners in general for ensuring SDG progress – but no donor is individually mentioned in the report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JP process has not led to new joint initiatives to date, but rather to better coherence between existing donor programmes and support. Within JP process, the EU group decided to label "nutrition" as a sector, so as to have a more comprehensive, multi-sector approach including crops diversification, WASH, etc. This created collective thinking among EU partners – e.g. instead of looking only at levels of productivity, EU partners involved in the agro sector are now supporting the diversification of crops so as to provide a more nutritious food basket: E.g. France has tweaked its interventions in agro-sector to make it more nutrition-centred. Germany also more active in contributing to nutrition-relevant infrastructures. Governance: EU group jointly formulated a governance-wide reform covering all government priority areas in this field – e.g. civil society, PAR etc. Includes joint implementation actions.

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Countries					
Nicaragua	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the absence of clear national sector definitions and related sector strategies, the EU group decided to use SDGs as a guiding reference for the Joint Strategy 2018-2020 objectives. SDG mapping exercise was elaborated, showing contributions of each partner to SDGs. Partners identified six sustainable development goals to which their cooperation is contributing and where EU group can take a lead within the policy dialogue: SDG2, SDG4, SDG8, SDG13, SDG16. Chairs were designated for each of these SDGs who would lead on related JP work. Within the JS results framework, these SDG goals and their related indicators are also used at outcome level, but the specific objective indicators used in the matrix have been taken from other sources – notably DEVCO results framework. Use of SDG indicators for monitoring rendered difficult due to incompatibility of 3 types of indicators: SDGs; DEVCO and EU partner programme results framework; and Government national results framework. SDGs seen as being more at outcome level (like in JP matrix here), but out of direct control of EU group on progress. Lux, ES and EU only general donors with comprehensive results frameworks. So DEVCO results indicators were accepted by group. Moreover, no baselines, targets nor means of verification are provided, due to scarce availability or problems with the quality of national data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In principle, no JP MTR foreseen for period 2018-20. JP process stalled since April 2018 due to political situation in country. Annual JP reports were done every year in October, but exercise halted now. EU & MS coordination meetings happen on a more frequent/ weekly basis, but it is not joint programming, rather: coordination. In a context of reduced donor programmes, joint programming is seen as non-feasible, for the time being – process on hold. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National development plan does not exist as such – only includes a list of project-type outputs, with very few outcomes and only a vague reference to SDGs. In MIC countries more generally-speaking national development plans are "out of fashion" – focus more on "development gaps" – not much appetite for sector approaches. Approach more multi-dimensional – informal sector, governance etc.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of SDGs in an overly output-based national plan reflects little existing interest from the government in achieving actual results. Policy dialogue is limited. The Government is in the lead as regards the exchange of information and opinions with the donor community, be it on a bilateral basis or by means of the ten "sectoral dialogue spaces" launched in 2016. Nonetheless, the government agreed to invite EU member States to join the negotiations about the EU cooperation priorities for 2014-2020, which has been seen as positive step. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are numerous joint implementation initiatives, e.g. in the WASH sector – big national programme where EU partners participate, but not necessarily as a result of joint programming, but on the initiative of the government.

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Countries					
Palestine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDG goals "corresponding" to each of the five "pillars" selected for joint strategy elaborated in 2016, for 2017-2020. Initial (interim) results framework of the JS was reviewed following NPA publication and national sector strategies in place, in mid-2017 and replaced by a sophisticated and detailed "Results-oriented framework" (ROF) including an intervention logic, specific indicators, baselines, milestones and targets for each sector "With sphere of influence of European Development Partners" in line with national sector policies. Issues about data collection for certain sectors though. SDG framework is not explicitly mentioned as a source for selected indicators, but many of them match the SDG indicators' phrasing. Exercise was decentralized to pillar leads – up to The ROF was signed by both HoMs and the Prime Minister. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-term review of JS foreseen, where SDG linkages can be reassessed. In some sectors (e.g. justice), the political and cross-cutting nature of the dialogue has resulted in HoMs (not HoCs) taking the lead in following up on results. In others (e.g. education), HoMs and HoCs are co-responsible for joint results monitoring. Involvement of HoMs sometimes crucial because politicization of core issues in sectors. However, not easy, because HoMs don't discuss development issues, and want to focus on more cross-cutting issues (Human Rights etc). Eg: Education: school books include incitement to violence produced against Israelis. But no talk about drop-out rates etc-side-tracked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPA unit is developing a national results framework, but still pending. EU JP ROF was in some case used as a reference by national counterparts within line ministries. Palestine has a strong interest in SDG localisation as it is in line with its internationalisation agenda and strategy of self-determination. National review of SDG progress done in 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Policy Agenda team in charge of acting as a counterpart for JP was also the counterpart for the UNDAF and UN SDG process. So cross-references to SDGs in JS happened quite naturally because processes were in parallel. However, implementation of the SDG agenda continues to be challenging – not least because of the particular context of Palestine and the significant impact that Israel's actions have with regard to SDG progress in Palestine – especially in sectors such as energy and water where permits for large-scale interventions have to be issued by Israel. It remains to be seen if a united EU group can also move things in its policy dialogue with Israel, with regard to removing obstacles to development in Palestine. Involvement of HoMs would be key in this context. EU is perceived as a family, joint actors with same values and principles – now. So this is an opportunity, but joint approach and positioning – also in light of SDG progress - needs to be backed by EU and MS HQ, to avoid drop-outs based on individual bilateral priorities or political stands. NVR highlights importance of partnership with EU (incl. MS) as "one of the most important strategic partnerships due to the continued support of the European Union to the Palestinian people and government in strengthening the Palestinian institutions and in attaining sustainable development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint strategy has "legitimized, codified and structured" (quote) largely already pre-existing joint programming and implementation initiatives. Joint implementation "takes time" – also due to donors' needs to adapt their programmes, rules and get it through their approval procedures. While immediate impact may not be visible in the short-term, the associated increased visibility of the EU group as jointly supporting the government within the policy dialogue was a driving political ambition behind joint implementation and Joint Programming.

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Countries					
Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JS 2018-22 Results framework includes reference of relevant SDG goals at the level of specific objectives. Plus, indicators used are aligned with national results framework indicators which have already been SDG localized. To that end, a comparative analysis was undertaken by the EU group to compare the Joint results framework indicators to SDG-localized national results framework indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual JP monitoring reviews on indicator progress foreseen – JP Strategy replaces the PIN, so annual monitoring of PIN matches JS monitoring, but it will be only a partial review with regard to our programmes, also because there are new instruments which are not taken into account within bilateral joint programming process - e.g. EU Trust Fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDG localisation already done and integrated into national results framework, which was the main reference for indicators in the JS. In 2018 Senegal published its first, very comprehensive National Voluntary Review highlighting good progress made on a high number of SDG indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff turnover is a problem in terms of both institutional memory and sustaining a meaningful dialogue on EU joint programming and SDG objectives within the national policy dialogue. Nonetheless, it is clear that policy dialogue, especially in the context of budget support provided by European partners, has had an impact on SDG progress in Senegal, as outlined in Senegal's National Voluntary Review 2018 – e.g. in the area of sustainable forest management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AfD – UE: Joint BS in WASH sector: JI in the energy sector in the pipeline. Partnerships in these and other areas precede JP but JP can reinforce and formalize coordination. Added value JP: Joint accountability and joint visibility. Important for EU HQ to allow for "learning by doing" by starting to implement the strategy, even if it is not perfect and does not 100% match guidelines. Most countries, including Senegal, are still at the stage of a first generation of JP documents – of testing process. Lessons learnt can be drawn once we have some implementation / operationalisation experience.

