

# Trajectories for Sustainable Development Goals

## Framework and Country Applications

Susanna Gable, Hans Lofgren,  
and Israel Osorio Rodarte

*Foreword by Mahmoud Mohieldin*





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1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433  
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# Foreword

The experience with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has provided many lessons which could usefully be applied to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs continue to tackle the issues that the MDGs attempted to solve, but they go further, highlighting a global partnership to end extreme poverty and protect the planet for the next generations, while leaving no-one behind. A major issue confronted during the MDG era was managing financing and service delivery gaps at the country level. Thus identifying specific service delivery and financing solutions to close attainment gaps lies at the crux of meeting our development goals.

In 2013, discussions around the Post-2015 Agenda were taking shape. A High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons (HLP) was established by the UN Secretary General on this agenda and, in addition to producing a report on how to eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development, occasioned multiple engagements on how to best tackle the world's most pressing challenges. In this context, I was involved in several meetings with leaders and members of the HLP. Two of these meetings were of direct relevance and significance to this work: the first was with H.E Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia, and Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Post-2015 development planning; the second was with H.E Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, then-Coordinating Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance of Nigeria. The emphasis of these meetings was the importance of overcoming the financing and service delivery challenges that the SDGs pose. Later discussions with H.E Maria Kiwanuka, then-Minister of Finance of Uganda, confirmed this priority. Conversations with these distinguished leaders, policymakers, and other influential individuals highlighted the demand for a tool to address these challenges which featured so prominently in countries' experience with the MDGs.

Meanwhile, a team of prominent experts at the World Bank was working on various approaches and models to analyze MDG progress. They were asked to assist with the development of a framework through which the ability of countries to achieve the new goals could be assessed. After deliberations and technical discussions, the decision was made to proceed with a practical approach to the questions at hand using case studies of a representative group of countries. Their selection was based on a variety of criteria which was not limited to per capita income and initial conditions, but also included access to natural resources, size, and geography.

The framework applied in this publication consists of four steps, first illustrated through a pilot study on Uganda:

- Benchmarking current level of progress for each SDG for the country being analyzed relative to other countries, given Gross National Income (GNI) per capita
- Projecting the country's values for SDGs by 2030, given projected business-as-usual development of GNI per capita
- Turning to determinants of SDG outcomes and seeking to identify ways of achieving outcomes that are more ambitious than those of business-as-usual. This includes discussion of potential changes in policies and spending in priority areas
- Discussing ways to expand fiscal space for priority SDG spending, including additional domestic or foreign financing and efficiency gains.

This framework may be used to analyze the likely progress in SDGs and their determinants and discuss policy and financing options to accelerate progress. This publication includes ten examples of geographically dispersed low-income, middle-income, landlocked, fragile, natural resource-rich, and small island countries. The countries included are: Ethiopia, Jamaica,

Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal and Uganda.

While I believe that there is value in this publication for government officials and development practitioners working on these ten countries, I hope additional value comes from sharing and applying the relevant lessons learned to other countries. Ultimately, I trust

this framework improves policymakers' ability to identify and address opportunities and challenges for achievement of the SDGs.



Mahmoud Mohieldin  
Corporate Secretary and President's Special Envoy