

ACHIEVING THE IMPOSSIBLE: CAN WE BE SDG 16 BELIEVERS?

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SUMMARY

For the first time, the international community, through their endorsement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, have set out a shared vision of the central role effective, accountable and inclusive institutions play in enabling sustainable development. This goal is not only important in its own right, but also contributes to the wider delivery of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Peace, inclusion and the delivery of basic services all rest on the effective and accountable management of power. The goal must also be read in the light of other aspirations, in particular Goal 5 – inclusive, and accountable means gendered institutions.

This paper discusses the trajectory for achieving SDG 16 and focuses on how development co-operation providers and other actors can better support developing countries to achieve the goal. The paper argues that while the challenges of achieving the goal are stark - given current rates of progress across most countries – there is no reason for defeatism. In order to speed up progress and change current trajectories, the development community needs to focus more on those factors that can either positively or negatively influence the speed of progress on governance reform. The paper identifies five: the political settlement, economic growth, the quality of international assistance, the presence of external incentives and global norms.

Capitalising on these factors, however, will require many development actors to radically change their practice (not just jargon) and genuinely do things they have not done before. The paper concludes by identifying four big shifts that development co-operation providers can make in order to accelerate progress towards SDG 16. These are to:

- Act politically
- Innovate radically
- Measure effectively
- Collaborate differently

¹ The views expressed are entirely those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views or policy of the OECD or its members. Any references to states or territories are without inference to their sovereignty or status. The author is grateful for the comments and suggestions of: Heather Marquette, Jörn Grävingholt, Frauke de Weijer, Nick Manning, Alina Rocha Menocal, Thomas Wheeler, Sarah Lister, Stefan Kossoff, Hetty Kovach and Tia Rappaana, responsibility for any errors remains the author's alone.

SECTION ONE – UNIVERSALLY UNEQUAL

So What's Different? SDG 16 is something that we have not had before, not just within the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but within development. Agreement on the role of institutions² is rare, particularly one that provides a basis for an agenda of action among all stakeholders. The novelty factor is heightened because this is no drab vision of institutions, but one that touches centrally on the connection between the structures of power and the people that they should serve.

As a result SDG 16 is more than simply a normative agenda, and equally it is more than just technical capacity building. It lays out the central role for institutions, encompassing both their function and their ethos and logically puts politics at the heart of institutions. [Francis Fukuyama's](#) sweeping work shows that politics are really the underlying driver of progress. Others write convincingly of the role of politics in shaping the instruments of state power - Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, Dani [Rodrik](#), and groups such as the [Political Instability Task Force](#), among others. SDG 16, with its emphasis on inclusion and accountability, recognises that it is the nexus of politics and institutions that shape directions of travel. Put simply, the strategies followed by those who dominate the '[political settlement](#)' in using or neglecting institutions impact greatly on development outcomes.

On these twin pillars of institutions and politics rest the prospects for stability, economic growth, and the ability to deliver on the expectations of ordinary citizens. It is not surprising that the 'World We Want' project undertaken by the UN for the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) process found that: 'Expectations of a more proactive role of governments come together with expectations of greater accountability of governments. Deficits in governance...are seen as hindering inclusive growth by squandering resources needed for development'(p25). SDG 16 with emphasis on both whether institutions work, and how they work, captures these challenges of ethos and capacity.

Sustainable Development Goal 16 and Targets

Goal: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

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

16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime

16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

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

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

16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

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

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

² This paper uses the term institutions to mean organisations and systems while recognising that the nexus of small 'p' politics, including norms, ethos, incentives, and institutions is crucial.

How far to go? The importance of SDG16 begs a question of how difficult will it be to achieve? Measuring progress towards achieving the proposed goal and targets is problematic (see below for a discussion of the official indicators), but there is a wealth of governance related data produced both by multilateral organisations and NGOs. The data does suggest some positive long term trends on individual areas within the goal – but here the phrase ‘long-term’ is important. There are also a significant number of states that remain a substantial distance away from achieving the overall goal – the ‘world we want’ mentioned above signals that large numbers of people view their national and local institutions as falling below the line/s.

Rates of progress are therefore the central question in determining prospect for achieving the goal. To assess progress on the quality of institutions we need to turn to assessments that aggregate information over time and that seek to look for trends within countries, as well as between them. Daniel Kaufman, Aart Kraay and Massimo Mastruzzi’s [Governance Matters VII](#) paper attempts to do just this, looking broadly at the question of whether institutions have, globally, been generally getting better or worse. Drawing on the Worldwide Governance Indicators the authors analysed aggregated data between 1996 and 2008 from across 215 economies. They found no significant trends in world averages with some countries making substantial progress on governance over the period and others showing deterioration.

Equally background work for the [2011 World Development Report](#), captured in Lant Pritchett and Matt Andrew’s ‘[Capability Traps](#)’, projected intimidatingly long timeframes for many countries to reach the institutional quality of Singapore. Those calculations suggest that on most measures it will take Haiti 600 years to reach Singapore – far beyond the 15 year timeframe of Agenda 2030. The 2011 report itself found that only a small number of fast reformers had achieved significant institutional reform within a generation: *“It took the 20 fastest-moving countries an average of 17 years to get the military out of politics, 20 years to achieve functioning bureaucratic quality, and 27 years to bring corruption under reasonable control. This did not mean perfection, but rather adequacy”* (p108). These fast reformers are, however, important exceptions, and include large states with challenging problems of scale, they offer a reminder that states can achieve remarkable transitions when political, economic and social factors combine.

Judging the gap for the ‘inclusive’ element of SDG 16 is also problematic. In gauging this we can look to indices such as Freedom House, and also recent work by Richard [Youngs and Thomas Carothers](#) on global protest movements, and efforts by the [V-Dem Institute](#) to construct measures of accountability. Each is a proxy, looking at aspects of political rights and voice; the collective picture is mixed – the gloomy picture of declining liberty painted by [Freedom House](#) is balanced by V-Dems claim of steadily expanding accountability. With [a global spike](#) in civil protests suggesting that citizen’s sense of possessing a formal ‘voice’ in the political process is still somewhat absent.

Perhaps an obvious aspect of the gap in inclusion relates to women – potentially simpler to assess than inclusion questions around ethnic, religious, youth, sexuality or disability where data may be more patchy. The OECD Development Centre maintains a [Social Institutions and Gender Index](#) that tracks five sets of issues including political participation and civil liberties. Their [2014](#) analysis showed some encouraging signs but with a critical gap in relation to slow progress on civil and political rights, commenting that only one member of

parliament in five is a woman (p9). This gap in relation to politics is underlined by a [2016 ODI report](#) that suggests the inclusion gap remains wide. [UN Women](#) bluntly state that 'In executive positions in government, however, women continue to be very much in a minority and confined mainly to gender-stereotyped portfolios' (p53).

The gap in relation to the headline goal is therefore significant. But let's also look at the gaps that need to be bridged in relation to the various 'targets' of SDG16; again the official indicators are put to one side for discussion later. Target 16.4 is an example (offering a relatively clear set of objectives), it calls for the international community to *significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime*. The World Bank and the OECD in 2014 produced a report on Stolen Asset Recovery ([Few and Far: the hard facts on Stolen Asset Recovery](#)), which found that there is a huge gap between the billions of dollars that are estimated stolen from developing countries and the amount recovered and return to developing countries by OECD countries. *'Only US\$147.2 million was returned by OECD members between 2010 and June 2012, and US\$276.3 million between 2006 and 2009, a fraction of the \$20–40 billion estimated to have been stolen each year'* (p2)

Within the same target area the problem of Illicit Financial Flows is made more difficult by the lack of an agreed measure, and therefore of an agreed quantification of the problem. Research undertaken by the OECD in West Africa (forthcoming) suggests illicit financial flows are a growing problem driven by wide ranging illicit economic activities from illegal gold mining to counterfeit drugs and human trafficking. UNODC has estimated that crime as a whole accounts for around [3.6% of global GDP](#) (or around 2.1 trillion dollars in 2013).

I have elsewhere suggested that these are part of a growing problem with transnational drivers and facilitators of ['alternative forms of governance'](#), helping organised crime to increasingly establish itself in local communities.

Across the goal we see that, as with 16.4, there are no safe, easily achievable, targets. Realistically, when taken at face value, the challenges of institutional reform and practical delivery within SDG 16 are great. In addition these targets are not themselves a linear path to the overall goal, only targets 16.6 and 16.7 (covering capacity, accountability and participation) arguably have a causal link to the overall aim. As a result stakeholders must work to deliver the targets while keeping a careful eye on the horizon to maintain a route towards the goal itself.

SECTION TWO – FIVE FACTORS INFLUENCING GOVERNANCE REFORM

SDG 16 is important, but extremely difficult to meet by 2030 on current trajectories. However, rather than admit defeat supporters of SDG 16 need to focus on potential drivers, or inhibitors, of change in the area of governance. This next section highlights five of the factors that can either enhance or slow down governance reform.

Political Paths to SDG 16

Perhaps the single biggest factor that impacts on the rate of change in governance reform in countries is politics. All institutions operate within the context of politics and any hope of progress rests with the political arena.

The political dimension includes issues both of the political settlement³ and also in relation to social constituencies and public engagement. For the former the overused term ‘political will’ is a misnomer, the real nexus between politics and institutions is often rooted in the actual options available to those who dominate political settlements in their management of power. In 2008 the paper ‘[States in Development](#)’ argued that the way in which states evolve is shaped by a dynamic relationship between a range of factors – none of which can be considered in isolation, each influences and changes the others. Within this dynamic [political settlements](#) shape state development, and in theory at least might be influenced towards greater inclusion and better governance. Unfortunately, however, the relationship between political settlements (and their ethos) and institutions is not well explored – including how institutions in turn influence their dominant political settlements.

So how does politics end up with the institutions it wants (and usually deserves)? A forthcoming [World Bank study](#) on the post-conflict public sector in five countries looked at the link between institutions and political stability and found that issues such as pay, and numbers employed were part of a trade-off relationship with issues of effectiveness and delivery. For ruling elite coalitions the civil service can be a means of managing power using multiple approaches simultaneously (mixing patronage with a capacity to use state instruments for delivery, coercion or persuasion). The balance will depend on internal and external pressures – institutional effectiveness can matter more in environments with an acute sense of threat or risk focusing the minds of leaders (as happened with several of the original ‘developmental states’). Even so, for dominant actors in a political settlement institutions can represent a tough arena of choices – to build capacity may open up new levers for power, while sacrificing others (e.g. patronage).

In focusing on the relationship between political settlements and institutions it is important not to lose sight of the evidence of popular concern and frustration. Social movements and social constituencies also impact on politics significantly. Where political settlements are entirely inflexible towards social constituencies they tend to fail and the potential for institutional weaknesses to act as a catalyst for grievance is real.

Politics is therefore both a drag and a spur to institutional progress depending on the relationship, capacity and pressures faced by political settlements and their willingness to respond to social constituencies in relation to the organised instruments of the state. As a result, achieving the goal is a political, as much as a mechanical/technical process; a question of shifting incentives, ethos and choices rather than moving budget completion rates. As a consequence the real constraints to progress can be a result of collective action problems rather than due to capacity. The [Africa Power and Politics](#) study pointed to the significance of collective action problems as an obstacle to change. Equally Lant Pritchett’s description of [isomorphic mimicry](#), suggests that the semblance of reform becomes a viable response when the the small ‘p’ politics of reform obstruct real change, or impose unrealistic expectations.

For stakeholders this means that there is a question as to the degree to which political settlements can be influenced, forming the first area addressed in the four big shifts below.

³ Political settlements, (the often unwritten understandings between elites on the management of power), have been much defined and explored, with the [Developmental Leadership Programme](#) in a paper by Edward Laws summarising many of the concepts involved

International Assistance Supporting Reform

Politics may, arguably, be the primary variable, but there are also other factors that influence events. These other variables include some that offer building blocks for those supporting SDG 16. For example while the role of external actors is limited it can play a part, there are signs that those countries receiving support for institutional reform can perform better than those who don't. Arguments over causality are acute whenever governance funding is linked directly to institutional change, yet work undertaken for the World Bank's project to develop [Indicators of Strength of Public Management Systems](#) (ISPMS) did provide some encouraging signs. Similarly portfolio reviews by the larger funders of governance reform projects, particularly the [World Bank](#) and [DFID](#), have found that support to sectors such as public financial management can produce positive results, even if investment in tougher areas such as civil service reform tend to lag.

Afghanistan is often cited as an example of investments by external donors in state development that have yielded low returns, despite relatively high levels of support for governance programming (by one measure approx. US\$18.2b since 2002). One way to read the Afghanistan experience is that aid will not buy the international community success on SDG16. After all, \$18 billion in a similar timeframe to Agenda 2030 has not done it yet.

However, although Afghanistan remains a state with problems that include corruption and relatively low capacity, it is a more effective state than before. The benchmark is the [ADB/UNDP/World Bank](#) needs assessment undertaken in 2002, which describes an institutional environment starting from a particularly low baseline. In the intervening period, public financial management assessments ([2013](#)) show that Afghanistan has built an imperfect but functioning system for public finances that reaches down to provinces. World Governance Indicators also suggest slow but steady progress, both on scores and ranking. Critical assessments, such as that by local think tank [AREU](#) in 2014, point to many continuing problems – but also recognise areas of progress, echoing the World Bank's [2002-11](#) evaluation suggesting key vulnerabilities but real progress.

Afghanistan is therefore an example of both the limits and the potential of development finance. Maximising the benefits of those efforts (e.g. without secondary civil service problems, duplication and parallel systems) is where funders need to apply lessons through innovation (see below).

External Incentives

In addition to external assistance another influence on degrees of change are incentives. Incentives can take many forms, among them, albeit less pronounced among Least Developed Countries, is 'accession.' International ambition characterised by accession programmes for trade blocs or global bodies has an important pull effect. The WGI measure for effective government suggests that on the whole periods of accession have been important for entrants and aspirants to the EU. While EU accession may be a compelling, but geographically limited, driver of change, it does underline the broader principle that very large 'carrots' can have an impact.

Global Norms

In addition global norms combined with facilitators such as access to media, also act as variables by changing levels of expectation. Norms re-write domestic definitions of what 'effective' or 'accountable' can mean, altering the balance of the dynamic between politics,

institutions and social constituencies. SDG 16 itself reflects a trans-nationalisation of expectations around institutions and follows in a tradition that has arguably proven its worth. [May Miller-Dawkins](#) of ODI has suggested that ambitious international goals and the processes to monitor them do themselves become mechanisms to drive progress. The role of norms in providing a focus and language for protest is also important within dynamics of protest, social pressure and coalitions for change. In addition countries such as Afghanistan, point to the role of global norms and their benchmarks, particularly the role of international legitimacy and recognition.

At the domestic level Merilee Grindle's study of institutional change – *Jobs for the boys* – points to the role that expectations and social pressure can play, scandals serve a purpose in eroding impunity within patronage based systems with knock on effect for the organisations and structures involved.

Economic growth and the rise of a demanding middle class

Another key factor that has the potential to drive governance reform is economic growth and the rise of a demanding middle class growth. As [Nancy Birdsall](#) has said: *'the theory, in short, is that a key benefit of the middle class is a greater likelihood of good politics and good government (what is often called in the development community "good governance") – a benefit that is not inevitable but if the middle class is large enough compared to the poorer and the rich, is more probable than otherwise.'*

However there is a need for caution, a growing middle class does not inherently equate to a progressive social constituency pressing for the attributes of SDG16. [Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens](#) suggest that complex relationships of power also affect the role of social groups. Caution is also needed in relation to lags between institutional development and social change, which can propel countries into a further downward spiral. A [2015 paper](#) suggested that catastrophic episodes of un-development, state collapse amid violence and conflict, can partly be viewed as episodes of disequilibrium in development. Middle class growth is a powerful element in changing trajectories of institutional development, but without growth of both capacity and inclusion can also precipitate these episodes of crisis. As a result when trying to nudge political engagement for progress on SDG16 the combined ethos of the goal – capacity and inclusion are equally important, including in encouraging broad based coalitions for change.

SECTION THREE – FOUR ESSENTIAL SHIFTS FOR CHANGING TRAJECTORIES

If wide ranging domestic and international stakeholders, (such as civil society, multilateral organisations, other providers of development finance and social actors), are to have an impact, then arguably they will need to make the most of opportunities to positively build on these factors. For some (particularly formal development organisations) this probably means changing ways of working.

SDG 16 is one of those rare instances where the adage 'no more business as usual' cannot be a cliché – if development co-operation providers, in particular, carry on as they are then they will fail. Instead SDG 16 calls for leaps of change. I would argue that these leaps encompass four big shifts; though not magic bullets they offer the prospect for more effective engagement with the factors mentioned above and are within the scope of

stakeholders. They are things that can be done, and potentially provide a means to amplify the impact of coalitions and advocates for SDG16.

1. Act Politically – Where politics are the problem not the engine of reform how can and should stakeholders engage? How can dominant political actors be persuaded that managing power works best through institutions that are not only effective, but also accountable and inclusive?

In theory development has become a far more politically informed sector since Adrian Leftwich challenged past approaches in 2001. In practice however being politically informed is not the same as engaging actively with political barriers and opportunities. Today development co-operation providers do increasingly undertake political economy analysis in order to better understand the countries and sectors in which they work. However, despite investing in analysis, providers rarely use this to implement a political strategy for influencing change. Research by Pablo Yanguas and others highlight how political analysis is often ‘weeded out’ from many decision taking processes within development co-operation administrations and call for a reversal that puts the political relationship at the heart of the strategy.

Increasingly this gap between political analysis and a more political approach is becoming untenable. As aid accounts for a declining proportion of development finance the influence of its providers (including many NGOs) is also likely to decline. Stakeholders by choice or necessity must therefore learn the art of influence as they seek to shape policy debates from less privileged positions, using advocacy rather than conditional approaches. This shift requires donors to link their political analysis to the active use of political engagement to secure change. This includes a willingness to see formal development organisations as only part of a wider collection of stakeholders, most importantly including social constituencies seeking change and reform from communities and civil society. It is broad-based national coalitions for SDG16 that may have the greatest effect on politics.

Many of these ideas have become associated with the [Thinking and Working Politically Community of Practice](#), chaired by Graham Teskey, previously of the United Kingdom’s Department of International Development (DFID), the World Bank and Australia’s Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade. The TWP approach is informed by the work of David Booth and Sue Unsworth on [politically smart development](#) and argues for iterative engagement with the political environment, trying to influence and navigate the context – not just understand it. The TWP logic holds true for national strategies and country plans as much as for individual projects and sectors. Securing the kind of political priorities that will be needed to achieve Goal 16 will require iterative engagement, through development diplomacy, national lobbying and programmes that provide political nudges that all add up to a new kind of ‘influence’ based institutional programme.

2. Innovate Radically – When political space for institutional development does open up then external support has the scope to become a multiplier and accelerator of change. This is true for NGOs and domestic civil society, but is also an issue that providers of development finance must consider. A [2014 OECD](#) overview of development assistance for governance reported that 15% of all aid spending by the OECD Development Assistance Committee members was focused on governance in 2012. Maximising the benefit of these substantial resources is an important challenge and will require innovation.

Innovation in development assistance for institutional change inevitably requires a review of traditional technical assistance focused models. It also, however, requires exploration of new instruments and programming approaches. Most noticeably the example of incentive based change needs greater attention. Perhaps the strongest incentive has been 'accession,' but there are others. The type of performance based budgeting work undertaken in local government (pioneered by UNCDF) also underlines the role that incentives can play. These more results focused approaches point to the potential for donors to place control over institutional reform resources in the hands of states themselves, while creating the incentives for change.

One option is to link resourcing for institutional reform to payments for performance and results – looking to others to support any technical or physical inputs. This approach of enhancing external support through new forms of instrument has seen the Centre for Global Development promote the idea of [development impact bonds](#). The OECD is also currently reviewing the potential of results based approaches in governance, looking at existing lessons from support for local government.

Allowing partners to pick their sources of reform advice (ending the tyranny of the northern technical expert) also resonates with the growing evidence around peer-peer (south-south) approaches that call for northern providers of assistance to really 'support' rather than prescribe. Peer learning has been explored recently by [Matt Andrews and Nick Manning](#) and may enable new approaches to reform to be more readily accessed and absorbed as countries are able to learn from each other's experiences.

Innovation in more traditional programming approaches is also required. The [problem driven and iterative approaches](#) promoted by Matt Andrews and Lant Pritchett encourage a flexibility that might enable the changes of scale or focus that could exploit new opportunities. Equally principles of co-ordination remain core to any effective development support – governance programmes pulling in different directions are not helpful. The challenge of SDG 16 calls for these iterative and coherent approaches to go beyond just donor or NGO groups, increasingly, for example, an NGO accountability and voice programme should link to the transparency and openness work promoted in a donor supported programme on public financial management.

3. Measure Effectively – Measuring institutional progress is a long-standing problem. The World Bank paper outlining the need for [ISPMS](#) called for measures that captured change within structures, not just of outputs (with arguable causality). The problem is to accurately capture the changes of behaviour, ethos, process and efficiency that represent real institutional capacity development. As a result development has a myriad of governance related [indicators](#) of variable quality and emphasis.

Many of these indicators rely heavily on perception based approaches – often the easiest form of information to gather, but one that brings its own set of problems. Perception surveys normally pick up on outward-facing issues rather than overall effectiveness, for example petty corruption rather than its grand sibling (See Anderson and Heywood 2009). This can skew understandings of dynamics and focus attention on the interface of a problem, rather than its structural roots. Like perception studies other approaches, including experience surveys and administrative measures have their strengths but also weakness. Administrative measures for example are at risk of being gamed, or face problems of causality and quality verification.

These challenges are writ large in the indicators chosen for SDG 16, (see Annex A below) which on the whole are weak - some to the extent of not yet existing. For example, for the crucial target 16.6 there is a choice of the easily gamed measure of budget out-turns, or the perception study of satisfaction with the last encounter with the state. The former is an unfortunate yardstick of effectiveness, divorced from quality of capacity and delivery, or from accountability and transparency. The latter as a perception measure is dependent on the individuals interpretation of what services are public or not (is my semi-privatised refuse service the state? is a state-funded but locally run school a state service?). It equally depends on objectivity, if a dangerous driver is arrested they may have experienced an efficient public service – but may not want to give credit for that efficiency.

The weakness of the indicators (some of which are worse than those for target 16.6), suggests that stakeholders will need to guard against actors only managing what they measure. Focusing action and support on the areas of the indicators would not necessarily speak to the far stronger aspirations of the goals and targets; hence this paper has downplayed their role. Instead the focus should be on pressing for better and more effective measures to triangulate the official indicators. Tom Wheeler of the NGO Saferworld has suggested: *'Another option is rather than looking for a single measure, encourage a whole data ecosystem with a plurality of providers who challenge one another, meaning that there are competing narratives of progress rather than just one.'*

This approach can ground-truth the narrative of the goals with real progress – if budget-outturns point to progress, but a stronger measure says not, then pressure for real change and real outcomes for citizens can be sustained. The challenge is that those triangulating measures will need to reflect the strongest of the many indicators currently around, while looking seriously at new approaches that overcome the issues of causality to show the quality with which institutions convert their inputs into services for citizens.

4. Collaborate differently - SDG16 cannot be delivered by any single community or group. National governments will have the greatest impact, but many actors will be important in making a leap forward to achieve the goal. The question is whether those actors will enhance the impact of each other's efforts, or dissipate impact through inchoate approaches. The challenges set out above call for an emphasis on political influence and advocacy, where more voices can help. Equally, innovation in external support suggests greater attention to mutually leveraging the impact of either programmes, or new instruments, and an ability to measure that will require diverse access to information. Put simply the logic of maximising the variables means ending the hubris of development sectors and groups in order to recognise that new alliances are needed.

Part of this alliance building will need to revolve around strengthening momentum for the SDGs as a whole and SDG 16 in particular. Individual constituencies will need to make a leap of faith that SDG16 can become a movement with real momentum – and throw their weight into making that happen. In their first years it was not assured that the MDGs would gain traction as a catalyst for effort, taking hold gradually over time. Given the scale of challenge SDG16 could conceivably be written off, if an investment of commitment is not forthcoming from stakeholders. Nurturing this through a big tent conversation, and encouraging a 'movement' for SDG 16, is arguably an important role for UN bodies.

Elsewhere alliances may prove to be like shifting sands, ventures which come together for a time around specific issues, or constituencies. Increasingly alliances will need to mobilise different types of voice in common calls, a particularly acute need for development actors

recognising the role of aid within a changing context of wider development finance. Alliances and collaboration will therefore be central to any contribution towards progress, David Steven has suggested that: ‘to achieve SDG 16 in this timeframe we need to be in a high speed train, but actually we are in a donkey cart, and so the task is to change our carts into a train.’⁴ Perhaps the starting point for that process are steps to build these far wider and more fluid collaborative initiatives among stakeholders, working as partners to reach out to governments and political actors. Even if the high speed train does not deliver the whole goal it remains the case that getting as close to the destination as possible will make a difference to the constituencies that matter most – the communities globally who have voiced their call for institutions that work, and work inclusively and accountably.

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ANNEX A

SDG 16 Proposed Indicators as outlined in Annex IV of the Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, 19 February 2016 (UN Economic and Social Council document: E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1).

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	
16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere	<p>16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by age group and sex</p> <p>16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population (disaggregated by age group, sex and cause)</p> <p>16.1.3 Proportion of the population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months</p> <p>16.1.4 Proportion of people that feel safe walking alone around the area they live</p>
16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children	<p>16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1-17 who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month</p> <p>16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation</p> <p>16.2.3 Percentage of young women and men aged 18-24 who experienced sexual violence by age 18</p>
16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all	<p>16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms</p> <p>16.3.2 Unsensetenced detainees as a percentage of overall prison population</p>
16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime	<p>16.4.1 Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars)</p> <p>16.4.2 Proportion of seized small arms and light weapons that are recorded and traced, in accordance with international standards and legal instruments</p>
16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	<p>16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by these public officials, during the previous 12 months,</p> <p>16.5.2 Proportion of businesses who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by these public officials, during the previous 12 months</p>

<p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p>	<p>16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar) 16.6.2 Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services</p>
<p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p>	<p>16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group</p>
<p>16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance</p>	<p>16.8.1 Percentage of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations</p>
<p>16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration</p>	<p>16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age</p>
<p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p>	<p>16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months 16.10.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information</p>
<p>16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime</p>	<p>16.a.1 Existence of independent National Human Rights Institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles</p>
<p>16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development</p>	<p>16.b.1 Proportion of the population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law</p>