

## **PROPOSED NATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND TARGETS FOR SDGS**

An important step for operationalizing SDG's is to evolve national prioritized goals and determine their relative priority. The Planning Commission after extensive deliberations and cooperation from provincial and local governments has evolved a national framework for SDGs. The rigorous process started with negotiations at the divisional level in all four provinces where districts in that particular division participated. A Local Government Summit held in Islamabad on March 09, 2017 and participated by many elected heads of district councils also provided a fruitful insight into localization of SDGs. The baseline for 17 goals, 169 targets and 230 indicators was prepared and prioritized; and attempts were made to define what can yield better results in minimum possible time.

2. The basic objectives of this framework are: -

- a growing economy which meets basic needs of all,
- a human resource development policy that can sustain the growth momentum,
- infusion of knowledge and technology into business processes, ensuring water, food and energy security to the citizens,
- a peaceful and secure environment where people can nurture their optimum potential to contribute to national development
- a society free from all kinds of discrimination so that those who are marginalized can be provided with a minimum level of social protection and healthcare.
- a conservation policy that leaves a better resource base of land, water and forests for the next generation.

3. In this framework, existence of strong interlinkages between various socio-economic policies are duly acknowledged. In the SDGs Framework all areas, the access, infrastructure, functionality, quality and attitudes are included as they are likely to affect all outcomes.

4. On the face of it, this framework may appear ambitious since the current pace of social transformation is very slow and basic ingredients of social capital are deteriorating at a fast pace. The community infrastructure and institutions are eroding and the massive challenge of climate change alone needs substantial community mobilization efforts. The interlinkages among social sector demand a holistic view of the social sector. For example, the dumping of industrial and human sewage into fresh water channels is leading to substantial deterioration of quality of water which puts additional burden on demand for healthcare, worsens nutritional outcomes, impacts cognitive abilities which distort educational outcomes and erodes agricultural productivity. Lack of education hampers awareness about healthy life and bad health impacts education outcomes.

5. But the proposed national framework for SDGs is a minimum imperative for sustained development. For Pakistan some SDG goals and targets are more important than others. In this context, a prioritization

exercise has been undertaken to transform international development goals into national goals and targets. The prioritization of national SD goals and targets was a complex and multi-layered task that required review of existing policies, exploring the theoretical underpinning of each policy, analyzing empirical findings of different policies and statistics presenting current state of socio-economic development.

6. A comparative criteria model was developed to rank the criterion according to its numeric score. The model applied 7 core comparative criteria that were selected on the basis of data gap analysis, current state of target/indicator, its significance in the national development context and adherence to sustainability question. The seven prioritization criteria are:

- width (how many people are affected);
- depth (how badly they are affected);
- multiplier (how many other targets it contributes to);
- level of urgency (status of target/indicator is poor);
- low resource requirement (is there value for money);
- less structural change (institutional change required can be managed) and
- relevance for all provinces (easily achieved in each province).

7. For each SDG target, a numeric value from 0 to 10 was assigned to each criterion that subsequently aggregated to get total weighted score. These targets were ranked as high, medium-high, medium-low and low by considering total weighted score of each target.

8. The weighted targets with high, medium-high, medium-low and low rank were then mapped for the 17 SDGs. Goals with highest number of 'high weighted score targets' are grouped in Category-I, goals with medium-high priority in Category-II and remaining goals in Category-III depending on total weighted score of each target. The prioritization of SDGs is presented below:

## **RELATIVE PRIORITY OF SDGS FOR PAKISTAN**

### **Category – I**

The goals in category-1 require immediate policy intervention as desirable outcomes can be achieved in the short run.

- food security through sustainable agriculture
- improved nutrition and healthy life
- equitable quality education

- improved drinking water and hygiene facilities
- affordable and clean energy and
- responsive institutions that ensure peace and security
- Access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for all

### **Category – II**

These goals requiring relatively longer timeframes and consistent policy support, include the following:

- Accelerating the rate of poverty reduction through coordinated interventions
- Empowerment of women and girls through institutional strengthening to reduce all forms of discriminations.
- Building resilient infrastructure and smart cities not only to the main urban centers but also in rural areas.

### **Category – III**

The goals in this category have long gestation periods and will require major institutional reforms to achieve desired outcomes:

- Mitigating the impact of Climate Change
- Conservation and sustainable use of marine resources

9. For many SDGs, the increasing role of provincial governments will be critical. These include food security, nutrition, quality education, improved health facilities, clean drinking water, improve access to sanitation and sustainable agriculture. The institutional and human resource capacity of the provincial governments to implement the multifaceted objectives of SDGs is varied and needs to be upgraded. The 'business-as-usual' model will not work in the implementation of SDGs given the severity and intensity of the problems at the grass-root level. Innovative solutions, use of technology, building partnership, creating synergies and engagement of larger stakeholders are some of the options available with provincial governments. The framework also reiterates importance of localization of SDGs which will provide an opportunity to local governments to ensure inclusivity and sustainability for the achievement of SDGs.

10. The data gap analysis for national and provincial indicators presents a relatively satisfactory performance on economic related indicators whereas social and environmental indicators present a very bleak picture. This is despite the fact that financial flows to the social sector has increased considerably in last few years which raises serious questions on the returns on investment and allocative efficiency in the

social sectors. If federal and provincial governments continue to invest in the social sectors without a result based framework, it could jeopardize final outcome in the social sectors.

11. Different tiers of government need to enhance efficiency of investment by adapting different approaches prevalent in the world. Current mode of investment in the social sectors would also impact the long-term growth prospects of the economy. Education sector is a classic example of high investment and low returns in Pakistan and it has spillover effect on other sectors such as family nutrition, health and hygiene, water and livelihood that is central to household well-being. That is why greater attention is needed for policy and institutional factors.

12. The proposed prioritized National SD Goals, with targets for 2030 for each goal are presented in the Annex. These are tentative targets and will be firmed up in consultation with Provincial Governments. Simultaneously an effective Monitoring system will be devised to generate annual reports for submission to the NEC.

### **Obstacles & Constraints**

13. Efforts to achieve SDGs could be hindered by number of internal and external obstacles like ever increasing population and consequent pressures on resources affecting economic growth of the country. War on terror and sociopolitical disturbances have also extracted their toll on human development. Cooperation from global community has largely been inadequate and impacts of global economic recession have also slowed down the pace of progress on SDGs.

14. While SDGs are widely regarded as the best vehicle to address poverty alleviation in Pakistan, the country has a long way to go on the path of sustainable development. A major challenge in monitoring actual performance is availability of data to monitor progress. It was noted that of the 230 indicators, reliable data was not available on at least one fourth. Data on 45 percent indicators was available in scattered form but was not being analyzed or computed.

15. Another problem at the grass root level is the absence of administrative and financial powers of the district governments, despite devolution from federal government to provincial governments. An even greater challenge is how to create awareness and knowledge about SDGs, how critical the SDG goals are to uplifting the lives of the people and how to make the process sustainable.

16. In formulating these prioritized SDGs, resources and institutional constraints have been kept in view. That is why, some of the Nationally adopted Goals and Targets are lower than the Global Goals and Targets. Even these lower goals will be realized only with strong political, policy and institutional support. The specific policy support required for each goal has been indicated in the Annex. It will also require effective collaboration with non-government sector and partnerships with community organizations and private sector to achieve these targets. An enabling environment has to be developed by all tiers of government.