

## **Adapting UN Sustainable Development Goals to Somali Situation: Using Puntland Somalia as a Case Study**

**Abdisalam M Issa-Salwe**

East Africa University

Email address: abdisalamm@puntinstitute.org

### **Abstract**

UN Sustainable Development Goals to Somali Situation is an opportunity for the future of Somalia. The majority of the issues stated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals are relevant and adaptable to the Somali situation as they can help to tackle ending poverty and to ensure prosperity. The UN agenda is a landmark which is to provide a shared global effort to achieve sustainable development by 2030 world-wide.

In 2015, 193 governments came together to agree on an action plan to deal with how to save the planet earth. The participants signed to the adopted 17 goals, with 169 associated targets on 25 September 2015, which would solve significant issues which impact on the world.<sup>1</sup> The agenda is a commitment and a landmark which is to provide a shared global

---

<sup>1</sup> The numbers of indicators are 241. However, nine indicators repeat under two or three different targets. Therefore, the actual total number of individual indicators is 230.

effort of achieving sustainable development by 2030 world-wide, and ensuring that no one is left behind. (UN, 2015) This paper fosters the idea of adopting the UN Sustainable Development Goals to Somalia by using Puntland<sup>2</sup> as a case study. In the first part of this work looks at how the goals could fit Puntland and the second part forwards how ICT can be used to deliver, control and link the various parts of the goals, targets and their indicators.

**Keywords:** ICT, Millennium Sustainability Goals, Puntland, Somalia, UN Sustainable Development Goals, UN Agenda, UN National Assembly.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2015, 193 governments come together at the UN National Assembly to agree an action plan to deal with how to save the planet earth. The participants signed to the adopted 17 goals, with 169 associated targets on 25 September 2015 that would solve some of the major issues related to poverty, to protecting the planet, to guarantee prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. The basis of the agreements or the Agenda was to reach a commitment and a landmark which was to provide a shared global effort which was to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 world-wide, and ensuring that no one is left behind. (UN, 2015)

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are based and build upon the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – launched in 2000 – to make the world ready to fight against poverty, and set education, health, hunger and the environment the main agreed agenda. The MDGs was set to translate principles and aspirations into a set of

---

<sup>2</sup> Puntland is one of the regional states of the Somali Federal Republic. It is situated in the north-eastern part of Somalia

time-bound by a shared principle, and mobilised the world to a global partnership that ushered in a new era of development cooperation. (UN, 2015,)

The SDGs encompass the unfinished MDGs by covering new ground, which underlines 169 targets. Each of these 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals has some peculiar targets that required to be solved by 2030. For the goals to be solved, every nation is required to do its part. (UN, 2015)

## **2. THE UN 2030 AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

The UN Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an unprecedented step forward. The agenda requires the global community to build a desirable future in an increasingly interconnected world. (Costanza et al, 2016)

The seventeen SDGs and their hundred sixty nine targets represent a global approach to contribute how to achieve these goals or how to interconnect actions which will include their parts in helping with the overall human and ecosystem well-being.(Costanza et al, 2016.)

The goals are sequences of related actions. The end justifies the means. Therefore, the strengthening of the means to implement and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (SDG17) will promote peace and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all (SDG16).

Furthermore, quoted by Costanza et al (2016) "... progress on food security under SDG2, macroeconomic policies under SDG8, the reduction of inequality under SDG10, and resilience against climate change under SDG13 are all required to achieve SDG1 of ending poverty, which then contributes to the achievement of SDG 3 on health and well-being".

What is more "...an increase in agricultural land use to end hunger (SDG2) may cause biodiversity loss (SDG15), overuse and pollution of water resources (SDG6), and adverse effects on marine resources (SDG14)" (Costanza et al, 2016).

To make the targets and indicators workable, it is necessary to develop a framework which links the various underlying goals. As a result, the outcome should define metric models which would feed dynamic economic systems which would create a way to quantify and qualify the outcomes.

### **2.1 Z APPLYING SYSTEMS THINKING APPROACH TO THE SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT**

As sustainability development is involved with different elements and components there should be an approach which connects and links these various parts. There is also required a mature understanding of sustainability approach which can assist adopting a multidisciplinary systemic model able of creating "... the interconnectivity of economic, political, social and ecological issues across temporal and spatial dimensions." (Costanza et al 2016). One critical solution is to apply systems thinking approach. Systems' thinking is useful in dealing with complex problem situations such as sustainable development. (Costanza et al, 2016)

The systems approach is an approach which is based on the view that the component parts of a system are viewed in a holistic manner as it attempts to understand the system by testing the interactions between the various elements that are made the whole of the system. Systems approach guides the sustainability development tasks by helping to explore the interrelationships of the various components and defining the boundaries of the system.

### **3. UN'S MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed on by world leaders at a UN summit in 2000 and set targets shown the table below:

<b>Table 1: UN Millennium Development Goals.</b>
MDG1: To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
MDG2: To achieve universal primary education;
MDG3: To promote gender equality and empower women;
MDG4: To reduce child mortality;
MDG5: To improve maternal health;
MDG6: To combat HIV/aids, malaria, and other diseases;
MDG7: To ensure environmental sustainability;
MDG8: To develop a global partnership for development.
Adopted from United Nations, UN Millennium Development Goals. <a href="https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/">https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/</a>



**4. THE CASE OF THE SOMALI SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Despite the UNDP approach to make Somalia as those countries to apply the Sustainable Development Goals, to date could not be found how far did the plan went. Nevertheless, the Somali Federal Government has shown some commitment to the plan, In September 2013, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the European Union (EU) met in Brussels to approve a new deal known as “New Deal Compact”. The agreement was to set a new policy direction which emphasised political, security and development pathways for Somalia with a pledge of € 1.8 billion. The assistance was meant first to align of international assistance to Somalia’s own national peace building

and state building priorities, then to enshrine the principles of mutual accountability for the delivery and the commitments made between Somalia and its development partner's state building priorities." (Hearn et al, 2014)

The cases about pledging commitment to fragile states have taught the world that the best way to help countries, such as Somalia, is to ensure local involvement, which may result in the creation of an environment conducive to local confidence building, which in turn undercut efforts to build reliable and effective institutions.

According to Somali Institute for Development and Research Analysis, one lesson that it has been learned from the implementation of the UN's Millennium Development Goals was that it was a top-down approach rather than a bottom approach. It was supposed to be given more emphasis on the local needs by applying a bottom approach. (SIDRA, 2016) In another word, this approach was to apply a systems approach where the various parts are linked.


UNDP has selected Somalia as one of the countries to be helped with SDGs as Somalia is a crisis prone county which needs special attention. Looking from this perspective, an approach question for Somalia is to help identify the constraints on localization with the perspective of keeping the aspirations and lives based on an integrated perspective on global, national and local agenda. (UCLG, 2019)

## **5. FOCUS ON SOMALI SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

To move to the practical parts in dealing with the Somali case in the application of the Sustainable Development Goals, we have selected some specific parts which would require to be applied in the first stage or period. These parts are in the highlighted table listed below.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with high relevance to ICT in Somalia in the first stage and the near future. These are SDGs: 2, 4, 6, 7, 14 and 15. Despite the selection

of six SDGs are too many, it seems that we cannot skip what makes an extreme remedy for the Somali case


<b>Table 2: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 17 Steps to a Better World</b>
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
SDG14: Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
Note: There are 169 targets and related indicators that underpin the 17 SDGs until 2030.
Adopted from United Nations, The Sustainable Development Goals, <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=z1300">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu= z1300</a>

The international cooperation for the use and promotion of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) has been trying to use ICT for economic and social development. The concept of “Information Society” makes imperative that no country can develop without involving and focusing on regional and global development perspectives. (Hameed, 2011) It is well known that ICT plays a very vital role in advancing economic growth and reducing poverty. According to Jemery (2004) “A survey of firms carried out in 56 developing countries finds that organization that use ICT are more productive and profitable than those that do not”.



Strengthening the use of ICT within all sectors as a long term approach is essential for the overall development of a country. This approach can help the attainment of development by sharing the knowledge and collaborating with the various shareholders in the development processes. It requires real efforts and cooperation to sustain the pace of narrowing the Digital Divide. For example, the following areas are where there can result some tangible result (Hameed, 2011):



- Education,
- Research and Development,
- Efficient production and business processes,
- Delivery of public services,



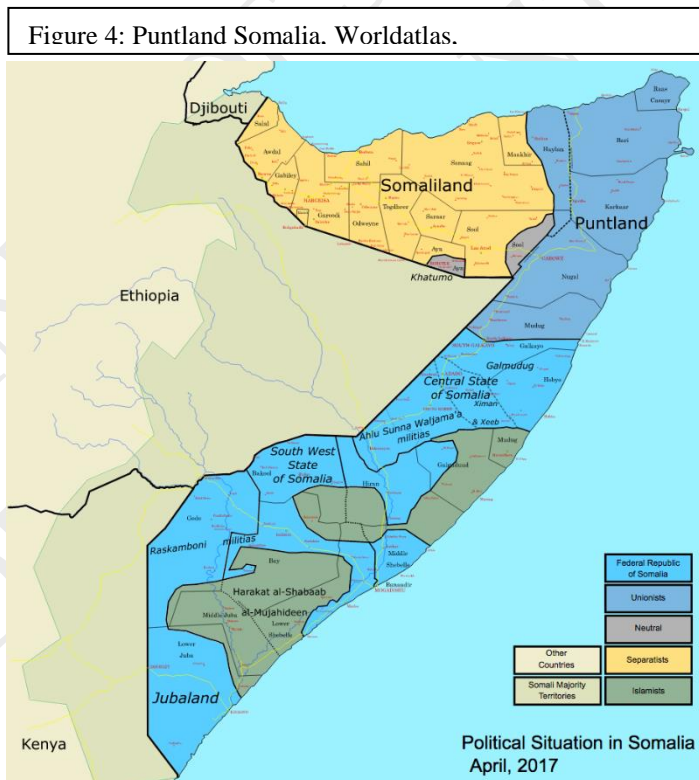
The above areas can help eliminate poverty by creating economic opportunities and, at the same time creating, creating sustainability and adaptation, which is the key for success in the knowledge economy. (Hameed, 2011)

The highlighted sections are the Sustainable development goals with high relevance to ICT in Somalia. The SDGs are: 2, 4, 6, 7, 14 and 15.

1	SDG2:End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
2	SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
3	SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
4	SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
5	SDG14: Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
6	SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

## 6. ICT ENABLES SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ICT is often interpreted as the use of technology which is meant to deliver solutions to social problems and needs and it can set to help the growth, progress social development. ICT integrated communication channels such as phones, computers, Internet, therefore, it offers a major benefit to society as it is instrumental in helping organizations access information, allowing individuals to communicate with each other, and scale development through discovering information which leverages resources. Digital technologies have spread across much of the globe by making the world as a global village. Although, their use and application in solving social and environmental problems has lagged, and they remain far less well understood, its use covers a combination of the following activities: manufacturing, commerce/ banking, health, education and employment. (Huawei, 2017)



## 6.1 An Integrative Framework Between ICT and Sustainable Development

In the past, ICT has been viewed as purely as a tool for economic growth, rather than in the context of broader human and sustainable development. However, ICT can provide a broad range of benefits to society as a wide range of research has shown its various benefits. It has been proven that ICT is conducive in helping organizations access information, granting individuals to communicate with each other.

According to Huawei (2017) research, the world leaders can attain their sustainability objectives by promoting digital advances which concentrate on sustainable development resource-constrained world. (Hawaii, 2017). To further the benefit of technological usage, there must be increased the accessibility, connectivity and efficiencies for individuals, communities and economies. (Hawaii, 2017)

Huawei (2017) provides more option to boost the benefit of combined policies and services of ICT, which can “accelerate and scale sustainable development through these three enablers quoted in Huawei (2017):

- a. **Access to information and services:** Through ICT infrastructure and the use of technologies can improve access to information and services for individuals globally, rural and urban alike.
- b. **Connectivity between individuals and organizations:** Increased connectivity between individuals, organizations, and networks can increase productivity and innovation across multiple sectors and communities by providing the real-time communications needed for rapid scaling of critical services.
- c. **Efficiency from improved productivity and resource efficiency:** ICT can unlock and leverage productivity gains from increased access to information and communication between individuals as well as provide the infrastructure for collecting and analysing large sets of data.

Another groundwork developed by Sun and Harindranath (2004) presents three main views and conceptualizations about ICT: (i) The usage, (ii) The view and (iii) Its development impacts (Harindranat et al., 2007). The following are the details of the ICT concepts quoted in Harindranat et al. (2007):

1. **ICT Usage:** ICT usage as a commodity, as supporting development activities, as a driver of the economy, and directed at specific development activities.
2. **ICT View:** ICT viewed as ICT computational view tool view and proxy tools.
3. **ICT Impact:** With regard to the impact of ICT on society as enabler

### **6.1.1 The Importance of the Monitoring and Evaluation System**

By definition, monitoring can be defined as the ongoing process by which project managers obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving the set goals and objectives. On the other hand, evaluation is an accurate assessment of the ongoing activities to establish the extent to which they attain objectives and contributing to decision making. (UNDP, 2009)

Monitoring and evaluation require a focus on development result and should reflect the guiding principles of capacity development and human development. (UNDP, 2009) Therefore, there must be a basic understanding of the purposes, processes and standards for monitoring and evaluation with clear targets and indicators.

There must be a clearly defined design for getting an effective monitoring and evaluation process towards the intended results. Monitoring lays the groundwork for evaluation and their contributions to learning and accountability. This policy strengthens the effectiveness and management of the results.

Good monitoring and evaluation enhance the contribution of the project by establishing clear links between the different parts of the project. (UNDP, 2009) They also help the organization extract relevant information from the activities that can be applied as the

basis for programmatic improving future planning. Without a systematic monitoring and evaluation system, it would be difficult to judge if the project is going in the right direction. Similarly, without a functional evaluation, monitoring is not sufficient for evaluation.

### **6.1.2 The Shortcomings of the Usage of ICT**

Despite that ICT has some essential features which can help sustainable development; its promising benefits are not fully applied in the world as one of the reasons is because ICT channels are not available globally. (ITU, 2017) Levels of access and quality vary in different populations. There has also been a lack of focus around leveraging ICT for large-scale sustainable development in the past,

Quoted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU, 2017), the United Nations' specialized agency for ICT, 3.9 billion people remain excluded from the Internet, despite ongoing drops in the price of ICT services. Internet users are also more concentrated in developed countries, where 81% of the population are users, compared to just 40% in developing countries and 15% in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). For example, 84% of households are connected to the Internet in Europe, compared to only 15.4% in Africa. (ITU, 2017)

\Internet bandwidth is not distributed equally globally, and a lack of bandwidth remains an obstacle to improved Internet connectivity – and its associated benefits –in many developing countries and LDCs. (ITU, 2017R) This gap points to an economic divide wherever half the world does not have access to the digital economy, or quality access to the vast information and services available.

## CONCLUSION

UN Sustainable Development Goals to Somali Situation is an essential contingency for the future of Somalia using Puntland as a case study. Somalia desperately needs the selected goals and targets in the first stage to tackle poverty and ensure prosperity.

The UN agenda is a landmark which provides a shared global effort which is intended to achieve sustainable development by 2030 world-wide.

This paper has focused on the idea of adopting the UN Sustainable Development Goals to Somalia, using Puntland a case study. The first part of the paper focused on how the goals could fit to be applied to Puntland while the second part forwards how ICT can be adopted in delivering the various parts of the goals.

In the last decade, ICT has shaped a compelling social change. The primary responsibility for achieving the SDGs are known to be the governments with the support of business as the government should encourage and facilitate the business people to invest in social development.

The paper has also looked into how technologies, such as ICT, can be used to monitor and evaluate goals and indicators and by helping attain sustainability objectives. This can be done by supporting digital solutions on sustainable development resource-constrained world.

In the case of how ICT could promote sustainable development project include accessing information through ICT infrastructure, and facilitating connectivity between the various parts of the sustainability. This interconnection leads in improving productivity and resource efficiency.

Another critical role of ICT is its role in helping with the monitoring and evaluation processes. Effective monitoring and evaluation may enhance the contribution of the sustainability projects and set up links between the different parts of the projects. The

paper argues that, without a systematic monitoring and an evaluation system, it would be difficult to judge if the sustainability project can be controlled and made fruitful.

## References

- Hameed. Tahir (2011): ICT as an enabler of Socio-Economic Development. Available: <https://www.itu.int/osg/spu/digitalbridges/materials/hameed-paper.pdf>. Accessed 11/04/2019
- Huawei (2017): ICT Sustainable Development Goals Benchmark. Available: <http://www-file.huawei.com/-/media/CORPORATE/PDF/Sustainability/2017-ICT-sustainable-development-goals-benchmark-final-en.pdf> Accessed: 05/03/2019
- Harindranath G. and Sein Maung K. (2007): Revisiting the Role of ICT In Development, School of Management, University of London, Available: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228432598\\_Revisiting\\_the\\_role\\_of\\_ICT\\_in\\_development](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228432598_Revisiting_the_role_of_ICT_in_development)'. Accessed: 04/03/2019
- Hearn, Sarah and Zimmerman, Thomas (2014): A New Deal for Somalia? : The Somali Compact and its Implications for Peacebuilding. Available: [https://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/new\\_deal\\_for\\_somalia\\_implications\\_for\\_peac\\_building.pdf](https://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/new_deal_for_somalia_implications_for_peac_building.pdf). Accessed: 12/05/2019
- Jeremy Grace, Charles Kenny and Christine Qiang (2004): Information and Communication Technologies and Broad-Based Development: A Partial Review of the Evidence. Washington, DC: World Bank Working Paper No. 12. January 2004.
- Sein, M. K. and Ahmad, I. (2001). A framework to study the impact of information and communication technologies on developing countries: The case of cellular phones in Bangladesh. In Proceedings of the BITWorld International Conference. Cairo, Egypt, 4-6 June.

- Costanza Costanza, Lew Daly, Lorenzo Fioramonti, Enrico Giovannini, Ida Kubiszewski, Lars Fogh Mortensen, Kate E. Pickett, Kristin Vala Ragnarsdottir, Roberto de Vogli, and Richard Wilkinson. (2016): The UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Dynamics of Well-being. Available: [http://www.idakub.com/academics/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2016\\_Costanza\\_SDGs-Solutions.pdf](http://www.idakub.com/academics/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2016_Costanza_SDGs-Solutions.pdf). Accessed: 14/04/2019.
- S M Kundishora (2010): The Role of Information and Communication Technology ICT) in Enhancing Local Economic Development and Poverty Reduction. Zimbabwe Academic and Research Network. Available: [https://siteresources.worldbank.org/CMUDLP/Resources/Role\\_ICT\\_paper.pdf](https://siteresources.worldbank.org/CMUDLP/Resources/Role_ICT_paper.pdf). Accessed: 02/02/2019.
- SIDRA (2016): Sustainable Development Goals for Somalia: Policy Imperatives of Localization UN (2015): Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Policy Brief 3. Available: [https://sidrainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SIDRA\\_Policy\\_Brief\\_SDGs4Somalia.pdf](https://sidrainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SIDRA_Policy_Brief_SDGs4Somalia.pdf). Accessed: 14/04/2019
- UCLG (2019): Towards the Localization of the SDGs. EU. Available: [https://www.metropolis.org/sites/default/files/resources/HLPF2019\\_Towards-localization-SDGs.pdf](https://www.metropolis.org/sites/default/files/resources/HLPF2019_Towards-localization-SDGs.pdf). Accessed: 19/03/2019.
- UN (2015): Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>. Accessed: 12/02/2019.
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS): 17 Steps to a Better World. Available: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>. Accessed: 08/01/2019.
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS): 17 Steps to a Better World. Available: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>. Accessed: 09/02/2019



Williams Amanda, Philipp Felix, Kennedy Steve and Whiteman Gail (2016): Systems Thinking: A Review of Sustainability Management Research.

[https://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/id/eprint/84581/1/1\\_s2.0\\_S0959652617302068\\_main.pdf](https://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/id/eprint/84581/1/1_s2.0_S0959652617302068_main.pdf)

Accessed: 11/02/2019

UNDP (2009): Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results. United Nations Development Programme. Available:

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTPOVERTY/Resources/ME\\_ToolsMethodsNov2.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTPOVERTY/Resources/ME_ToolsMethodsNov2.pdf). 13/03/2019

JOURNAL OF SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES