



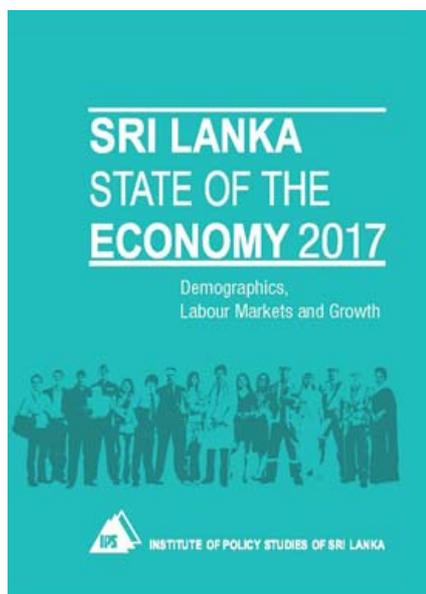
6 OCT 2017

POLICYINSIGHTS

INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES OF SRI LANKA

EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: WHAT IS AHEAD FOR SRI LANKA?

From the IPS flagship publication 'Sri Lanka: State of the Economy 2017 Report'



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) present an overarching and comprehensive framework that aims to provide a shared narrative of sustainable development by empowering the people, protecting the environment, fostering partnerships, and ultimately achieving global peace and prosperity. It is a transformative agenda which urges the world towards a more resilient and sustainable path, affirming that poverty is the greatest global challenge which must be overcome in order to realize sustainable development. SDGs can be broadly categorized into the three interlinked dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.

As a signatory to the 2030 Agenda, it is important for Sri Lanka to embark on this path with a clear understanding of

the current situation, existing capabilities, and the national readiness to meet these ambitious goals.

Implementing SDGs in Sri Lanka

At the heart of the SDG agenda is poverty eradication through revitalized global solidarity guided by clear and measurable objectives leading to sustainable development. SDGs are extremely relevant to Sri Lanka, particularly since the government has declared 2017 as the 'Year of Poverty Alleviation'. All 17 SDGs and the majority of their targets are relevant to Sri Lanka. However, successful implementation requires integrating them into the country's national policy framework and the national budget.

The government has taken a number of initiatives during the past year to implement the SDG framework in Sri Lanka. An expert committee has been appointed by the President to articulate

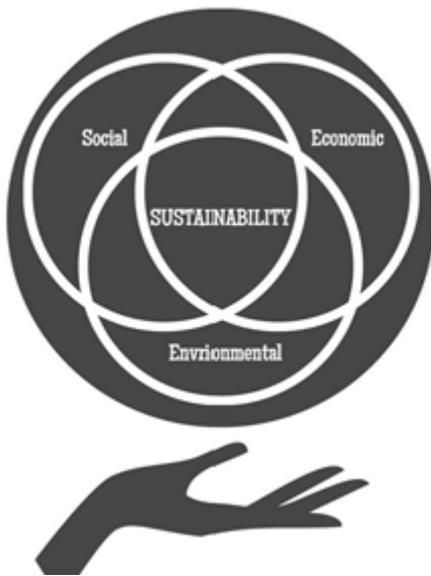
the vision for Sri Lanka with respect to the SDGs. The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife (MSDW) has been identified at present as the focal point for the SDGs responsible for monitoring and coordination and supervision of the implementation of SDGs in Sri Lanka. A Parliamentary Sub-committee on Sustainable Development has been appointed to implement the SDG framework in Sri Lanka. In July 2017, DCS launched a publication and a website to disseminate information on the status of SDG indicators in Sri Lanka. The Department of National Planning is also currently compiling a report, analyzing the current situation in the country with regard to each goal and target and the progress thereof that can be realistically achieved in Sri Lanka during the lifespan of the SDGs.

In addition, a Bill of Sustainable Development has been presented to the Parliament in early 2017. This Bill provides for the development and implementation of a national policy and strategy on sustainable development, and the establishment of a Sustainable Development Council charged with the duty of formulating the national sustainable development strategy. However, this Bill has currently been held up due to various political reasons.

Challenges and Way Forward

Although multiple government institutions and committees have been identified and are entrusted with different tasks related to SDG





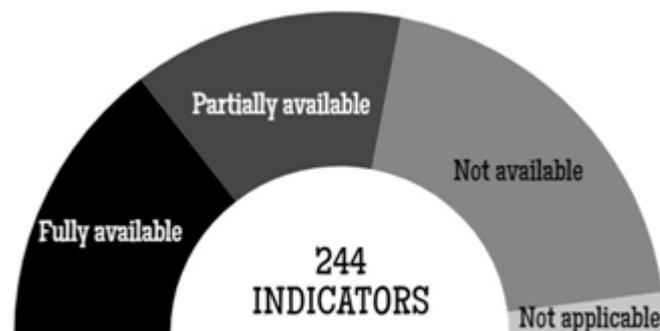
implementation, the coordination and linkages among these institutions/committees and their roles and responsibilities still remain weak. Strengthening them and defining clearly their roles and responsibilities in the implementation process is essential to avoid duplication of tasks and for the efficient use of resources.

For the successful achievement of any goal, the quality of the evaluation and monitoring mechanism as well as the quality of data is vital. The 2030 Agenda presents 244 indicators to measure the achievement of the 17 goals and their 169 targets. However, the data necessary for a considerable number of indicators are not currently available. In this case, it would be necessary to get assistance from international organizations in terms of technical support, in order to build the relevant data gathering capacities. In addition, it may be beneficial to consider the utilization of Big Data for the

measurement of the SDGs where possible.

Further, given the limited budgetary capacity of the government, it is important to explore other possible sources of financing, such as ODA, remittances, climate finance, new financial instruments, and PPPs. In fact, Sri Lanka intends to promote PPPs as a main source of financing sustainable development. In order to

agenda. As the SDG framework calls for the participation of all stakeholders, public awareness must also be improved. Furthermore, the capacities of the relevant ministries need to be improved in terms of monitoring and coordination. Improving the capacity of the focal point and strengthening its linkages with all other government bodies is also crucial.



facilitate PPPs, Sri Lanka has undertaken several policy measures including the establishment of a PPP Unit at the Ministry of Finance, with the aim of attracting private investment for public infrastructure projects.

Raising awareness on SDGs among relevant stakeholders and building capacity of relevant government institutions are necessary for successful implementation of the SDGs in Sri Lanka. The current level of awareness among government authorities appear to be rather low and this needs to be rectified especially considering the fact that almost two years have passed since Sri Lanka became a signatory to this global

This Policy Insight is based on the comprehensive chapter on "Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals in Sri Lanka" in the 'Sri Lanka: State of the Economy 2017 Report' - the flagship publication of the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS). The complete report can be purchased from the publications section of the IPS, located at 100/20, Independence Avenue, Colombo 7. For more information, contact the Publications Unit on 0112143107/0112143100.



100/20, Independence Avenue, Colombo 7,
Sri Lanka
T: +94 11 2143100 / 2665068,
F: +94 11 2665065
www.ips.lk