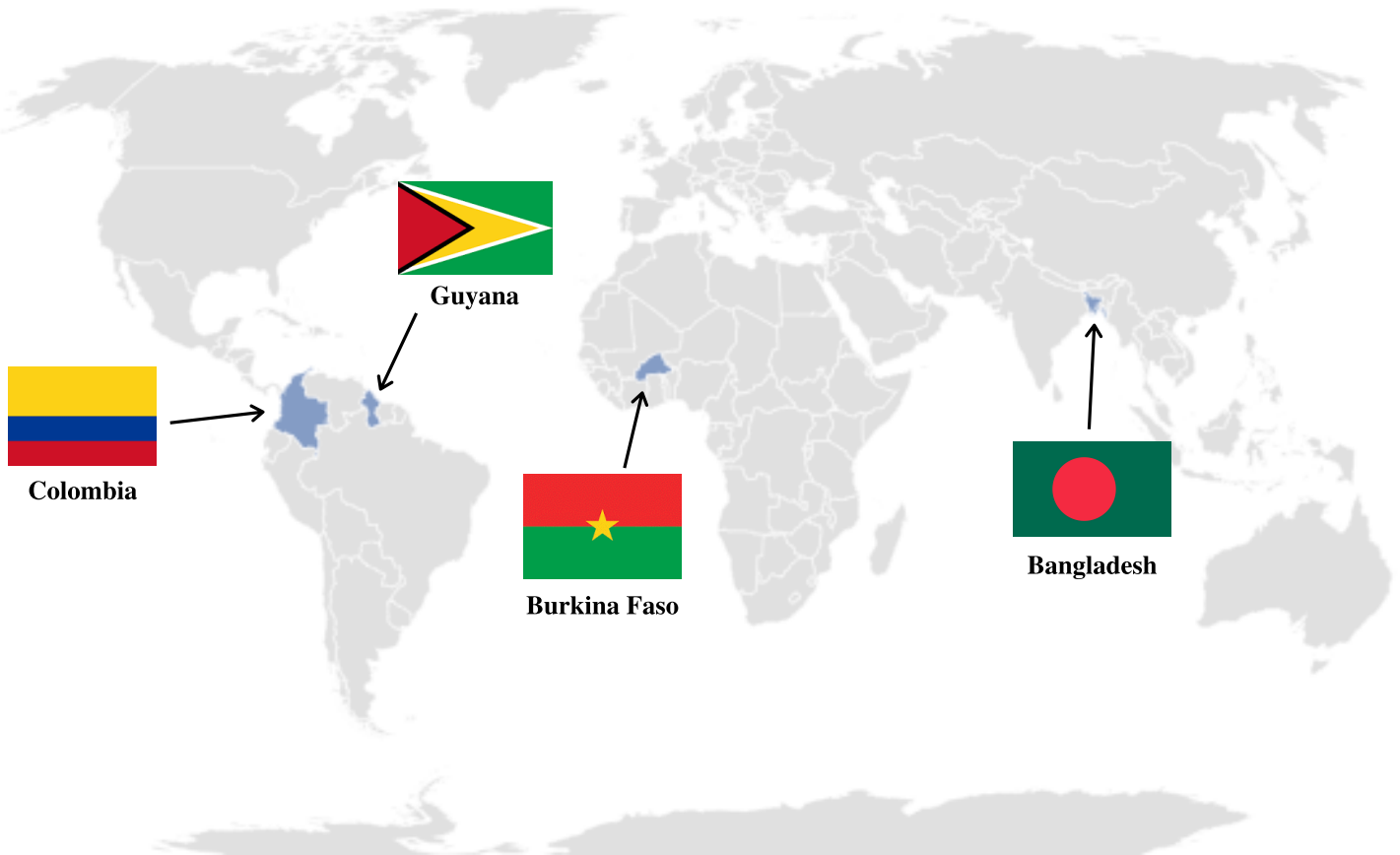


UNDA Project 1819Q

Towards coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals



Countries of UNDA project 1819Q



Introduction

The United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project 1819Q entitled "towards coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" (2018-2021) aims to strengthen the capacity of national institutions of four countries (Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia and Guyana) to coherently implement and monitor the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is leading the implementation of the project through its regional offices (Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific) and in collaboration with other UN entities, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The outcomes of the project are as follows:

- In the four countries, national policies or strategies are developed that aim to deliver on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in a coordinated and integrated manner;
- The four countries are able to regularly produce comprehensive sets of environmental statistics, data and information that integrate SDGs-related and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)-related data;
- Lessons learned and knowledge acquired by the four countries is made available to a wider set of countries through inter-regional networking and cooperation.

The project is approaching the end of its second year of implementation, and this document aims to present the results of the activities undertaken in the four countries as of November 2019.



Bangladesh's commitment to the 2030 Agenda

The Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina envisioned transforming Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021, and a developed country by 2041, and is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Bangladesh submitted its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2017 and will present its second VNR in 2020.

The Sustainable Development Report 2019, which assessed the progress on the 2030 Agenda of 162 countries, ranked Bangladesh 116th (<https://www.sdgindex.org/reports/sustainable-development-report-2019/>).

Bangladesh recognises the importance of preserving the environment and its natural resources. The UNDA project 1819Q aims to strengthen the institutions of the country to better implement and monitor the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in a coherent and integrated way.

UNDA project's achievements in Bangladesh

A consultant was recruited in 2018 through the UNDA project and worked with UNEP Regional Office to draft an SDGs integrated financing roadmap for Bangladesh, which was subsequently used to develop a joint UNEP-UNDP Poverty-Environment Action for SDGs (PEA) project entitled "Strengthening Institutional Capacity for SDGs Achievement in Bangladesh" (SC4SAB). The implementing partner of the SC4SAB project is the General Economic Division (GED), Bangladesh Planning Commission. This joint UNEP-UNDP project aims to increase the public and private capacity and resources dedicated to achieving the SDGs in Bangladesh. This multi-year project, developed through UNDA technical assistance, has subsequently been funded by UNDP (\$1.6 million) and the PEA programme (\$900,000). The UNDA intervention has therefore been instrumental in guiding significant financing in support of SDGs implementation in Bangladesh.

The consultant also drafted a sustainable finance project in Nepal in consultation with the UNEP Regional Office and UNDP Country Office. This UNDA work was used to develop a new multi-year project entitled "Accelerating Implementation of the SDGs" and has subsequently been funded by UNDP (\$800,000) and PEA (\$1.2 million). The project was launched in January 2019. It is implemented under the leadership of the National Planning Commission, including partners such as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Forests and Environment, and aims to integrate the SDGs into planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting systems at all levels of government, with a new focus to align finance and investment in poverty, environment and climate objectives. The project will also explore innovative public and private financing available for Nepal to advance the Global Goals.

In August 2019, as part of the UNDA project, a data-user-producer workshop was organized with UNDP and the Government in Bangladesh with the participation of policy-makers, planners and environmental stakeholders, statisticians and data producers. The objective was to support the country to regularly produce comprehensive sets of environmental statistics that integrate SDGs/MEAs-related data.



Burkina Faso's commitment to the 2030 Agenda

Burkina Faso has ratified and implemented several multilateral environmental agreements, established new institutions, and developed national policies, plans and programmes, including the National Council for Sustainable Development (CNDD), the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES 2016-2020) and the National Rural Sector Program (PNSR). However, Burkina Faso lacks appropriate planning, implementing capacities and tools that will enable the transformational changes envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In July 2019, Burkina Faso presented its first VNR at the HLPF.

The Sustainable Development Report 2019, which assessed the progress on the 2030 Agenda of 162 countries, ranked Burkina Faso 141st (<https://www.sdindex.org/reports/sustainable-development-report-2019/>).

UNDA project's achievements in Burkina Faso

The PNDES was already formulated and halfway implemented in 2018 when the UNDA project started. However, the country still needs institutional capacity development and empowerment effort that is essential for the implementation of both the PNDES and the 2030 Agenda, which prompted Burkina Faso's authorities to request UNEP to undertake through the project a series of strategic activities to support the PNDES and the SDGs in the country.

The implementation of the UNDA project started in Burkina Faso in May 2019 after the inception workshop, following a preparatory mission that UNEP Africa Office had in June 2018 to engage with Burkina Faso's decision-makers. During the inception meeting, it was illustrated how the project would enhance the implementation of national policies for sustainable development, mainstreaming environmental sustainability in local integrated development plans to support the PNDES and the 2030 Agenda. Back to back with the inception workshop, a meeting was organized to partially test the SDGs indicator 17.14.1 (number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development) which is currently developed by UNEP. The test revealed that Burkina Faso has already institutionalized its commitment to policy coherence for sustainable development.

As part of the project, a Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) of \$52,390 was signed (October 2019) between UNEP and Burkina Faso's Ministry of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change (MEEVCC), through the Ministry's implementing agency Permanent Secretariat of the National Council for Sustainable Development (SP-CNDD). The SSFA includes targeted activities for the achievement of the expected accomplishments of the UNDA project 1819Q in Burkina Faso.

A three-day data-user-producer workshop was organized in Burkina Faso in October 2019 to enhance the capacity of the national statistical system and improve environmental data generation/utilization in the country. The last day was dedicated to a follow-up of the inception workshop of the project held in May 2019. A presentation of the zero-draft methodology of the SDGs indicator 17.14.1 (including, this time, all the eight sub-indicators) was followed by a session enabling the participants to provide feedback on the overall framework, the sub-indicators and methodological aspects of the indicator. The methodological test was applied to the case of Burkina Faso to assess the mechanisms that enhance the coherence of national policies, strategies, projects and programs. Although some mechanisms provided in the framework partially already exist in Burkina Faso, there is still space to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development in the country. The feedback received will be integrated into a refined version of the methodology of the indicator for submission to the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG-indicators.



Colombia's commitment to the 2030 Agenda

In February 2015, before the adoption at the global level of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Colombia established the High-Level National Commission for the Preparation and Effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs (SDGs Commission). The country's National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2022 (Pacto por Colombia, pacto por la equidad) is aligned with the 2030 Agenda, with ninety-two SDGs targets integrated into the NDP and currently monitored through the National Management and Results Evaluation System (SINERGIA). Colombia has already presented two VNRs at the HLPF (2016 and 2018).

The Sustainable Development Report 2019, which assessed the progress on the 2030 Agenda of 162 countries, ranked Colombia 67th (<https://www.sdgindex.org/reports/sustainable-development-report-2019/>).

UNDA project's achievements in Colombia

As part of the UNDA project 1819Q, in August 2018, a meeting took place in Bogotá between UNEP and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). As a result, an SSFA was later signed with SEI providing joint technical assistance for the project implementation in the country.

The national project work plan was discussed and approved during the inception meeting (November 2018) with participation from the National Department of Planning (as Secretariat of the National SDGs Commission and leader of the NDP formulation), the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the National Department of Statistics and SEI. The government of Colombia expressed interest in using the project's process and results in supporting the implementation of the NDP and the Action Plan of the National SDGs Commission.

During the inception meeting, an in-depth analysis of the SEI methodology for mapping SDGs interactions was conducted, and the National Department of Planning agreed on assessing SDGs interactions at the national and sub-national levels. A few weeks later, a workshop was held in Medellín (Antioquia Province) to analyze the interactions of fifteen SDGs targets prioritized at the sub-national level. On that occasion, UNEP and the SEI-Latin America Center tested an interactive scoring interface based on a seven-point scale framework to digitalise and facilitate the process of scoring first-order-target interactions.

A full cross-impact matrix was created based on the assessment of a group of experts who scored each interaction answering the following question: "if progress is made on target X, how does this influence progress on target Y?". After the network analysis was performed with information collected, the most catalytic targets were identified, such as 2.4 (sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices) and 12.5 (reduce waste generation). Trade offs between targets were also pointed out and clusters of targets recommended to advance coherent and synergistic implementation of the SDGs. A second meeting was organized to revise the process undertaken in Antioquia and to select the targets for the following exercise at the national level.

Hundreds of people from the national government, the private sector, the academia and civil society met in Bogotá in March 2019 to conduct a network analysis of priority SDGs targets at the national level. A complete mapping of interactions among twenty targets was performed. Targets 8.4 (efficient consumption and production of resources) and 11.6 (reduce environmental impact of cities) resulted the most influential, while targets 1.5 (build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations) and 15.1 (ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems) were the most influenced. An analysis of second-order interactions was also conducted and confirmed the previous results. Clusters of targets were eventually identified. The results of these analysis were used to develop a policy note on the implications for the National Development Plan concluding that there was a coincidence in the approach with the cross-cutting Pact on Environmental Sustainability agreed within the National Development Plan. This work was presented in July 2019 in New York, in a workshop on the integrated approach for the SDGs at the margins of the HLPF. More work is needed to land the results of the analysis to specific policy recommendations. The government of Colombia is particularly interested in talking forward the sub-national analysis and explore how this tool can help local governments in the process of localizing the SDGs.



Guyana's commitment to the 2030 Agenda

The Co-operative Republic of Guyana (Guyana) recognizes the importance of the environment and has been taking the required legislative measures to avoid that its economic growth harms its natural capital. The “Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040” (GSDS), prepared with the technical assistance of UNEP and in coordination with the UNCT, is a comprehensive development policy which includes a holistic view of Guyana’s social, economic and environmental well-being in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Guyana presented its first VNR at the HLPF in July 2019.

The Sustainable Development Report 2019, which assessed the progress on the 2030 Agenda of 162 countries, ranked Guyana 114th (<https://www.sdgindex.org/reports/sustainable-development-report-2019/>).

UNDA project's achievements in Guyana

The UNDA project 1819Q represented an excellent opportunity to contribute to the inclusion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development in Guyana's national vision, by supporting its alignment with the SDGs. At the same time, the project will enhance Guyana’s capacity to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the GSDS, particularly its environmental dimension and relationship with MEAs and SDGs. The inception meeting of the project took place in Georgetown in February 2019 with participation of more than twenty institutions.

As part of the project, a study was conducted to assess Guyana's institutional framework and governance structure related to environmental policy. The objective of the study was to develop guidelines to improve coordination in reporting on SDGs and MEAs. Although there are numerous existing agencies in Guyana responsible for monitoring and reporting on the environment, the study highlights that an overarching national institutional framework for inter-agency coordination is absent. Consequently, systematic data and information sharing are missing, while a siloed approach to programme planning and policy formulation is common in the country.

An analysis of Guyana's environmental data gaps with regards to the SDGs and the three “Rio Conventions”, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was also conducted. The analysis identifies Guyana’s priority indicators and mapping information sources for the three conventions.

A data user-producer workshop (“Strengthening the environmental dimension of the SDGs: Guyana’s Green State Development Strategy: Vision 2040”) was organized in Georgetown in August 2019. Forty participants from twenty-three environmental and development agencies attended the workshop to discuss the development of a national environmental statistics road map to meet the needs of the SDGs, MEAs and GSDS. Other priorities were also identified, such as, promoting inter-agency coordination on environmental statistics, designing and implementing public education and awareness programmes, supporting the development of technical capacity for environmental statistics, and supporting the National Environmental Information Management and Monitoring System.

A workshop on testing the SDGs indicator 17.14.1 on policy coherence for sustainable development was also organized in August 2019, which provided feedback on the design of the indicator framework, the eight sub-indicators and multiple aspects of the zero-draft methodology. Gaps were identified where actions could be designed to improve policy coherence in almost all the aspects covered by the indicator: policy design, evaluation, monitoring, among others. The overall feedback on the zero-draft methodology was positive. The feedback will be integrated into a refined version of the methodology of the indicator for submission to the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG-indicators.

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