

Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into national and subnational budgeting and financial management with a focus on Cabo Verde

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Integrating planning and budgeting for SDGs

- Even before the pandemic, financing had emerged as one of the key challenges to the achievement of the Goals.
- To make progress on the Goals and avoid setbacks, countries need to integrate the Goals into their national budgets and their financial and planning frameworks.
- Integrating the Goals into national budgetary processes has advantages, including improved budget coherence, increased accountability and greater comparability of national budgets.
- To date, few countries have been able to accomplish this: as of today most countries do not know how much is spent for achievement of particular targets, do not have capacities to prioritise, etc.

A lot has been already delivered on the topic...

- Integrated national financing frameworks are country-owned planning and delivery tools that provide a framework for financing sustainable development at the national level and take into account a range of financing sources to support national sustainable development strategies and plans.
- Some 16 countries have been pioneering the design and implementation of such frameworks and around 60 countries are now working with United Nations country teams, the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations system agencies to take the frameworks forward.

A lot has been already delivered on the topic...

- At its seventeenth session, in 2018, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration considered medium-term budgeting frameworks and the merits of linking performance budgets to outcomes related to the Goals.
- At its nineteenth session, in 2020, within the framework of discussions on budgeting for the Goals, the Committee stressed that the achievement of the Goals depended on whether they were embedded in budgets and whether those budgets were executed effectively.

However, budgeting for the Goals is currently still in its infancy...

- While several countries have announced in their voluntary national reviews their intention to incorporate the Goals into budgetary processes, few have specified how to make it operational.

Reorganizing programme performance budgeting systems as a possible start

- In the view of the Committee, the simplest and potentially the fastest way for most countries to advance budgeting for the Goals may be to reorganize programme performance budgeting systems, wherever such systems are used. In countries that do not practice programme performance budgeting, the task may be a matter of establishing a new budgeting system linked to the implementation of the Goals.

Reorganizing programme performance budgeting systems as a possible start

- The Committee formulated the opinion at its nineteenth session that implementing the Goals by incorporating them into national budgeting systems should not be a complicated task from a technical perspective.
- The contacts with few selected Ministries of Finance realised for this report confirmed such opinion.

Reorganizing programme performance budgeting systems as possible start

- In response to the question as to whether their country needed and wanted such a system and whether it would be considered a priority, Ministries stressed that the main limiting factor in the implementation of budgeting for the Goals was political will.
- They also emphasized the fact that it might not be feasible to copy and paste all of the Goals and all related targets into national systems for medium-term budgeting and strategic planning.

Conclusions

- The authors are of the view that the core factors for the implementation of budgeting for the Goals are political will, leadership, effective governance structures and a willingness to keep working at it.
- The responses from almost all Ministries of Finance contacted by the authors indicate that the basic ingredients already exist in many countries.
- If budgeting for the Goals is supported and promoted internationally, most countries should be able to quickly redesign their existing programme budgeting systems to reflect the Goals.