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# STUDY GUIDE

## COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Advancing Social Development and Social Justice Through Coordinated, Equitable and Inclusive Policies

United Nations E/CN.5/2026/3

# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
12 December 2025

Original: English

**Commission for Social Development**
**Sixty-fourth session**
New York, 2–10 February 2026
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: advancing social development and social justice through coordinated, equitable and inclusive policies**

## Advancing social development and social justice through coordinated, equitable and inclusive policies

### Report of the Secretary-General**


*Summary*

The present report, submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2025/5, serves to examine how coordinated, equitable and inclusive public policies can advance social development and social justice and accelerate implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Building on the momentum gained from the Second World Summit for Social Development and the Doha Political Declaration, the report serves to highlight that progress towards social justice requires overcoming fragmented decision-making and aligning economic, social, environmental and digital policies around shared goals. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches are essential to translating commitments into coherent action.

The key enablers of policy coherence are identified: integrated data systems, shared accountability frameworks and coherent financing mechanisms.

Drawing on country and regional experiences, the report shows how coordinated action can be effective at reducing poverty and inequality, promoting decent work and strengthening resilience. It concludes with recommendations on embedding coordination, equity and inclusion at the heart of policymaking to deliver transformative, rights-based and people-centred sustainable development that leaves no one behind.


* E/CN.5/2026/1.
** The present document was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline for technical reasons beyond the control of the submitting office.


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**Interesting Facts** 01

The Economic and Social Council resolution 2025/5 about the future organization and methods of the work for the Commission for Social Development reaffirms the role of the Commission as the main UN forum to review the progress of the Copenhagen Declaration. It also sets the priority theme "Advancing social development and social justice through coordinated, equitable, and inclusive policies" for the 64th session of the Commission.

**Definition** 01

Social development is ensuring that people from all groups and communities are included and experience equal economic and social opportunities in their country's growth.

**Definition** 01

Social justice as defined by the UN is "an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations."

This says that social justice could be defined as a world in which societies are founded on the principles of equality, solidarity, human rights, and the recognition of human dignity.

**Interesting Facts** 01

The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development of 1995 was the first recognition of the growing necessity of prioritizing social

**Interesting Facts** 01

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a global action plan adopted by the United Nations member states in 2015. It sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets organized around five themes: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership. The agenda calls for revitalized partnerships between member states, governments, private sectors, and society to achieve its goals by 2030.

**Definition** 02

The Second World Summit for Social Development was a global event that took place in Doha, Qatar, aimed at fostering inclusive social development and achieving well-being for all. It took place under the guidance of UN resolutions A/RES/78/318 and A/RES/78/261.

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**Definition** **02**

This happens when decisions are made in isolation because of disconnected departments or individuals. This is due to the lack of coordination, which leads to conflicting priorities and overall weak strategies.

**Definition** **02**

The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches are multi-stakeholder approaches that bring all relevant stakeholders to work towards achieving a common goal.

For example, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) uses the whole-of-society approach by including all stakeholders such as migrants, diasporas, local communities, civil society, academia, and the private sector aside from the government sector to eliminate structural barriers and improve engagement.

**Definition** **04**

People-centred sustainable development is attained when an approach prioritizes the social dimension (human well-being, social justice, community participation, etc.) as the core for long-term economic and environmental progress.

# I. Introduction

1. Building on the renewed political momentum gained from the Second World Summit for Social Development, the present report serves to examine how coordinated, equitable and inclusive public policies can better advance social development and social justice and accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the relevant commitments of the Pact for the Future and its annexes. As the first report of the Secretary-General to the Commission for Social Development following the Summit, it addresses the overall approach to social development policy and practice and provides policy direction for translating the commitments made in Doha into action. In the Doha Political Declaration, Heads of State and Government recommitted to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, acknowledging that they remain "relevant and valid" and committed to advancing solutions to translate the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into concrete actions to achieve social development for all. The Doha Political Declaration contained a call for bold, people-centred and integrated policies and approaches aimed at overcoming silos, delivering social justice and supporting just transitions to resilient economies. In the Declaration, Heads of State and Government also reaffirmed that the Commission for Social Development had the primary responsibility for the follow-up to the Summit and review of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action.

2. Persistent poverty, inequality, exclusion and lack of decent work cannot be attributed to shortcomings in social policy alone; other drivers include fragmented decision-making and implementation across multiple fiscal and social policy domains. A social lens must be applied across all areas of policymaking, not just within ministries responsible for social affairs.

3. Despite growing recognition of the importance of whole-of-government approaches, institutional silos, rigid mandates and limited incentives continue to hinder collaboration. The present report serves to explore how coordination can be challenging and identify enablers that can foster joined-up action, such as integrated data systems, shared accountability frameworks and coherent financing mechanisms.

4. Equity and inclusion are the guiding values and ultimate objectives of social development, defining the fairness of outcomes and the legitimacy of processes. Coordination is the means through which these values can be realized in practice.

# II. Why coordinated, equitable and inclusive policies are essential for advancing social development

5. Well-coordinated policies deliberately align objectives, instruments and levels of government to identify and manage trade-offs and maximize synergies. Coordination must begin early, at the policy design stage, and be sustained during implementation and financing, because initiatives that are not aligned, even well-intentioned ones, entail the risk of resulting in policies that pull in different directions and undermine each other – for example, employment reforms undertaken without parallel investment in social protection and skills, or digital strategies in which affordability and access are overlooked. Coordination entails costs in terms of time, capacity and resources, but those costs are outweighed by the benefits: reduced fragmentation and duplication, efficiency gains and more equitable outcomes across multiple policy areas. Coordination is increasingly vital because the inequalities of today are driven not only by domestic policy failures but also by global systems of



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**Definition** **01**

Public policies are a system of laws, regulations, and guidelines that are created by the government to address societal issues and guide societal actions.

**Definition** **01**

The Pact for the Future, adopted at the UN's Summit of the Future in 2024, is an intergovernmentally negotiated document that covers five chapters regarding sustainable development and financing, international peace and security, technology and digital cooperation, youth and future generations, and reforming global governance.
This pact serves as a reform roadmap for the multilateral system. It updates how the UN and its member states cooperate on major global challenges for current times.

**Definition** **01**

The Doha Political Declaration, signed in November of 2025, is a shared commitment by governments all around the world to advance equality, eliminate poverty, and protect human rights. It supports the idea that social development is a key aspect in achieving peace, stability, and sustainable growth.

**Definition** **01**

Silo means "an isolated grouping, department, etc., that functions apart from others, especially in a way seen as hindering communication and cooperation"

**Something to Think About** **02**

Fragmentation not only fuels inflation and miscommunication, but it also negatively impacts economic growth, more particularly for emerging and developing markets.

The World Economic Forum estimates that fragmentation of state policies could cost the Global Economy up to $0.6 trillion to $5.7 trillion, which is up to 5% of the global GDP.

If fragmentation could cause such a huge impact on these countries and their own economic stability, what other policies could be reformed to mitigate fragmentation? Are there already existing policies that can be built upon?

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**Definition** **03**

Joined-up action is a cross-boundary collaboration between different groups, sectors, or departments toward a common goal. This can play a central role in overcoming fragmentation.

**Definition** **03**

Integrated Data Systems (IDS) are secure software platforms and legal-governance frameworks used by different agencies to combine information in a single and complete view. This simplifies the policy-making, research, and management processes.

**Did You Know That...** **03**

Coherent financing mechanisms align separate funding streams, policies and institutions to reduce duplication and maximize efficiency to achieve global goals and sustainable development

Developing countries today face many challenges when it comes to acquiring aid, paying off debt, and improving investment. Noting this, it becomes even more important to implement cohesive and integrated frameworks. These countries could greatly benefit from mechanisms such as the ones mentioned to mitigate fragmentation.

trade, finance and knowledge that often favour the wealthiest, amplifying disparities both within and between countries.

6. Equitable policies ensure that the benefits and burdens of development are shared fairly, while inclusive policies promote participation, which makes policymaking more legitimate and effective. Equity and inclusion are not merely policy preferences; they are central to a rights-based approach. Effective coordination aligns policies and institutions with these principles, ensuring that no one is left behind, a commitment that is reaffirmed in the Doha Political Declaration. Together, equity and inclusion are core values of social development that are realized through coordinated action. The increasing concentration of income and wealth shows that inequality is a policy choice that, when left unaddressed, erodes trust and fuels perceptions of unfairness and fragmentation.

7. The principle of leaving no one behind recognizes that individuals may experience overlapping disadvantages, which underscores the limits of isolated interventions. Policies that overlook how gender, disability, age, ethnicity or migration status intersect risk deepening inequality, whereas coordinated frameworks can address overlapping barriers and respond more effectively to different situations. Addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination requires integrated and inclusive policy responses across social, health, labour, education and other sectors. For example, women with disabilities face barriers in accessing both work and social protection; a holistic and coordinated approach that includes skilling, employment opportunities and accessible services can help to break the cycle of exclusion.

8. Coordinated, equitable and inclusive policies remain essential to sustaining social development gains and strengthening public institutions because they ensure that progress in one area is reinforced by coherent actions across sectors. Evidence shows that eradicating poverty and achieving decent work for all require coherent action across fiscal,[1] labour, education, social protection, housing, health and environmental policies.[2] Beyond redistributive measures, policies aimed at shaping fairer outcomes from the outset, such as access to quality education and healthcare systems, inclusive labour-market institutions, equitable industrial strategies and fair market regulation can reduce the extent to which social transfers are required to compensate for unequal outcomes and address structural drivers of inequality. In its work, the International Labour Organization (ILO) demonstrates that recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work through accessible childcare services, social protection and family-friendly work practices expands employment opportunities and fosters inclusive growth. Complementary measures, such as parental leave, education for girls and time-saving infrastructure, further strengthen the economic empowerment of women.[3]

9. Responding to demographic transitions, in particular population ageing, also requires coordinated strategies aimed at harnessing existing potential.[4] In Japan, silver human resource centres,[5] where older workers are matched with local needs under flexible arrangements, are an example of how coherent labour market and

[1] See www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2025-10/Policy_Brief_1_Final_Macroeconomic_policies.pdf.
[2] See https://desapublications.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2025-04/250422%20BLS25022%20UDS%20UN%20World%20Social%20Report%20WEB.pdf.
[3] ILO, "Statistical brief: the impact of care responsibilities on women's labour force participation", October 2024.
[4] Ronald Lee, "Economic consequences of population ageing in the Asia-Pacific region and the role of intergenerational support", *Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Journal*, vol. 32, No. 1 (April 2025).
[5] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Working Better with Age: Japan*, Ageing and Employment Policies (Paris, 2018).





**Interesting Facts** **06**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) refer to 17 goals UN member states committed to achieving by 2030. These objectives cover topics such as poverty, hunger, education, good health care, gender equality, climate change, and peace

"Leave No One Behind" is a part of the transformative vision of the SDGs. Additionally, it is one of the guiding principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

**Did You Know That...** **09**

Silver Human Resource Centres (SHRCs) have been active in Japan since the 1970s. These centres provide community-based, short-term job opportunities for older and retired workers. This gives a structured way to support both the economy and population as it helps the elderly ease out of the workforce.

lifelong learning policies can support active ageing and social resilience. Such an approach also helps to reduce economic insecurity and bolster social cohesion.

10. Similarly, integrated policy responses are required for environmental and climate transitions. A just transition entails aligning social protection, labour market and industrial policies with low-carbon and resilience goals, while also mitigating climate impacts on vulnerable groups, as well as active labour market measures that enable reskilling for green jobs. Slow-onset environmental degradation heightens vulnerability and health inequities, particularly where access to health, education and decent work is limited. Integrating environmental risks into the design of social protection, health, labour and education policies is therefore essential to safeguarding social development gains and preventing disadvantage. The inclusion of social protection in the nationally determined contribution of Cambodia demonstrates how policy coherence enhances resilience.

11. Migration, displacement and recurrent disasters further underscore the importance of integrated policymaking. Aligning migration, labour and urban policies ensures that mobility contributes to, rather than undermines, social cohesion. *The Republic of Fiji National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (2018–2030)* is an example of how multisectoral frameworks – covering climate adaptation, poverty reduction, disaster risk management and social protection – can be used to protect development gains and build resilience. In a context where inequality erodes trust and fuels social tensions, integrated approaches that strengthen social cohesion are critical to preventing exclusion, marginalization and instability.

## III. Challenges to effective policy coordination for equitable and inclusive policies

12. Advancing coherence and alignment across policy domains remains a challenge for many Member States. Institutional, fiscal and political barriers, compounded by limited data, continue to hinder the implementation of integrated approaches. Coordination mechanisms in planning ministries, interministerial committees or sector-specific platforms often lack authority or resources, and coherence is undermined further by conflicting fiscal or regulatory provisions. As a result, coordination can falter during budgeting, implementation and monitoring, leading to duplication of efforts and inefficiency.

13. Institutional fragmentation remains a major impediment. Ministries often operate within narrow mandates and have few incentives to collaborate. Social ministries may lead poverty reduction efforts but wield little influence over macroeconomic or fiscal decisions, while economic ministries often treat social goals as peripheral, which undermines coherent action.

14. Limited capacity and weak governance compound fragmentation, constraining the ability of governments to design and implement coordinated policies.[6] Weak budgeting practices further reinforce silos; rigid sector-based allocations and earmarked donor funds restrict cross-sector planning. Without dedicated resources for coordination units or intersectoral programmes, it is difficult to secure sustained

[6] Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Development Traps in Latin America and the Caribbean: Vital Transformations and How to Manage Them* (Santiago, 2024).



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### Interesting Facts 10

Climate change, biodiversity loss, and the shifting natural landscape are deeply intertwined with today's economic, social, and cultural contexts. This requires us to create overarching policies that can address the technical complexities and diverse perspectives that come with this. Approaching policy-making through the science-policy interface (SPI), for example, can be a way of creating overarching policies. Combining policy-making with the appropriate information paves the way for transformative change.

### Something to Think About 10

One example of integrating environmental concerns into policy response is Cambodia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) as submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) this July 2025.

Cambodia's NDC comprises a total of 163 mitigation and adaptation measures set in place to help protect people, the environment and economic activity from the impacts of climate change. Through the country's integrated approach, it is able to use a multifaceted solution towards the many challenges it faces. By including key sectors in agriculture, industry, energy, waste, etc., along with the support of partners across the UN, Cambodia has produced a program that aligns with existing national frameworks and long-term development plans.

With this in mind, how can other countries or institutions create their own integrated policies in a way that does not impede but instead advance existing programs? Which sectors would these actors need to.

### Definition 11

The Republic of Fiji National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy is a national framework designed to shift Fiji from a reactive disaster response model to a proactive development plan. It integrates risk analysis models into varying sectors within education, health, infrastructure, climate policy, etc.

financing for coordination, which leads to duplication of efforts and higher administrative costs.[7]

15. Interministerial mechanisms often exist but lack the authority, resources and political backing to reconcile competing priorities. Owing to capacity constraints in terms of staff, expertise and information-sharing, coordination continues to be largely procedural instead of transformative.

16. The absence of integrated, interoperable data systems hampers evidence-based policymaking and alignment across ministries. The needs of the population, in particular marginalized groups, are obscured by fragmented and non-comparable data, in particular the lack of data disaggregated by sex, age, disability or migration status.

17. Without cross-cutting indicators to assess collective impact, incentives for collaboration remain weak. In many countries, government monitoring and reporting systems still prioritize sector outputs that are linked to annual performance cycles or ministry-specific plans instead of integrated outcomes. This misalignment reinforces silos, even when long-term development plans are in place.

18. Entrenched bureaucratic norms and organizational cultures impede coordination, as practices aimed at protecting institutional turf, prioritizing internal accountability and discouraging risk-sharing perpetuate siloed decision-making and limit systemic solutions.

19. Institutional shortcomings are reinforced by political dynamics that limit sustained coordination. Short-term electoral incentives, partisan competition and bureaucratic rivalries discourage the long-term collaboration required for transformative progress in education, social protection and resilience. Vested interests and entrenched economic power can also shape policy priorities and the allocation of resources, thereby constraining equitable reforms. As a result, Governments may favour visible initiatives over systemic reforms, and ministries competing for budget resources often view coordination as a constraint because it requires shared authority and resources.

20. Disaster risk reduction illustrates these dynamics. In many countries, fragmented mandates, short-term political cycles and financing constraints still limit the integration of disaster risk reduction into national development planning, while weak capacity and data gaps undermine policy coherence. In contrast, countries that invest in disaster-loss databases and resilience-oriented fiscal systems demonstrate how coordinated, risk-informed approaches can strengthen social policies and the public finances against future shocks.

21. Evidence from common country analyses conducted by United Nations country teams indicates that, in many countries, coordination between national institutions tends to be at its strongest during policy formulation but is weaker during budget execution and monitoring. Many countries maintain standalone social protection registries or parallel poverty-targeting systems, resulting in duplication of efforts, higher costs and uneven coverage. These findings indicate that coordination frameworks do not automatically translate into policy coherence in practice. Government-led reforms, including pooled financing, interoperable social registries and integrated monitoring frameworks, help to address such challenges and improve sustained policy coherence.

[7] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "Budgeting for the Sustainable Development Goals: aligning domestic budgets with the SDGs", 2020.



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**Definition** 16

Interoperable data is found in different systems and can be exchanged, integrated and used in a coordinated fashion. It enables seamless data sharing, improved collaboration and data-driven decision-making.

**Definition** 16

Disaggregated data is data broken down into detailed sub-categories, such as gender, age, disability, and ethnicity. This allows for deeper analysis, which helps specialists discover inequalities. This is also a foundation for inclusive policy-making.

**Definition** 17

Cross-cutting indicators are tools used to measure information such as themes, impacts, or priorities spanning from multiple sectors rather than one single isolated category.

**Definition** 18

Risk-sharing is a strategy where two or more parties distribute potential financial losses or uncertainties to reduce their impact or risk.

# IV. From barriers to solutions: pathways to effective policy coordination for social development

22. Achieving coherent policymaking depends on translating shared objectives into aligned action and ensuring that collaboration delivers substantive results, not merely procedural ones.

23. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches have long been recognized as essential for advancing coherent and inclusive policymaking, and the importance of such approaches was reaffirmed in the Doha Political Declaration. A whole-of-government approach promotes coherence across ministries, agencies and levels of government by mobilizing resources and reconciling competing objectives. Recent voluntary national reviews, including one prepared by Finland, serve to highlight how these approaches improve policy effectiveness through cross-ministerial coordination.[8]

24. The discourse on national planning has shifted in response to the Sustainable Development Goals, encouraging more integrated and coherent approaches. The recognition of economic, social and environmental interdependence in the 2030 Agenda has prompted governments to move beyond sector-based planning and pursue more joined-up strategies. Evidence from voluntary national reviews and other United Nations assessments indicates that there have been incremental improvements in coordination, stakeholder engagement and monitoring, but systemic fragmentation persists. Accelerating progress towards the 2030 targets will require deeper transformation to strengthen policy coherence, financing and institutional capacity in line with the ambition of the Goals.

25. A whole-of-society approach widens the perspective of policymaking by incorporating civil society, the private sector, social partners, academia and communities. It reflects the understanding that sustainable progress relies on shared responsibility and collective action. Engaging diverse perspectives strengthens accountability, builds trust and fosters innovation in policy design, implementation and monitoring.

26. Together, the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches offer pathways to translate the principles of coordination and integration into practice. Implementation of these approaches depends on systemic enablers that institutionalize collaboration and ensure that social development commitments lead to equity and inclusion.

## A. Strong political leadership and clear institutional mandates

27. Making social development a national priority requires leadership from the centre of Government and clearly defined mandates.[9] High-level political direction enables ministries to convene, reconcile competing priorities and channel resources towards long-term, coherent social investment.

28. Mandates serve to translate that leadership into action by making social development a shared responsibility across government. When social development priorities are endorsed at a high level, finance, planning, trade and infrastructure

[8] Finland, *Progress towards Shared Wellbeing of People and Planet: Voluntary National Review 2025 Finland, Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Helsinki, 2025).

[9] *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024* (United Nations publication, 2024).



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ministries are held accountable for social outcomes.[10] Assigning specific targets, such as poverty reduction or job creation, to line ministries strengthens accountability and embeds equity considerations across policies.

29. Country experiences demonstrate how mandates and leadership are mutually reinforcing. In South Africa, the Cabinet "social cluster" system unites key ministries around the shared goal of reducing poverty and inequality. In Morocco, a universal social protection reform launched in 2021 is guided by a ministerial committee chaired by the Head of Government, aligning fiscal, regulatory and operational action across key ministries.

30. Leadership without mandates risks remaining symbolic, while mandates without leadership risk inertia. Together, they provide the authority, legitimacy and accountability needed to turn aspiration into practice, forming the political and institutional foundation on which equitable and inclusive social development rests.

## B. Legal and regulatory foundations to support coordination

31. Anchoring commitments in binding legal and regulatory frameworks ensures that coordination, equity and inclusion are not dependent upon shifting political will or short electoral cycles. Codifying institutional arrangements into law ensures that they will be durable and not temporary. In many countries, interministerial committees on poverty reduction or social protection are established by law or executive decree, ensuring continuity through political transitions. Legal and regulatory instruments can also stipulate that equity and gender impact assessments are required for new policies, ensuring that distributional effects are examined systematically before adoption.

32. Embedding coordination across all levels of government strengthens coherence between national and local action. For example, the Constitution of Mexico stipulates that federal programmes must conform to national development plans and provides for coordination mechanisms with federative entities in their preparation and implementation. In some countries, pre-established emergency response protocols, known as surge protocols, are codified into law to enable rapid interministerial action during crises and ensure predictable funding to support for vulnerable groups during pandemics, disasters caused by natural hazards and climate change, or economic shocks.

33. Legal instruments can also be used to strengthen inclusion and accountability. Under international labour standards, including ILO recommendation No. 202 (2012) on social protection floors, policy coherence and institutional coordination are legal obligations, which reflects recognition that fragmented systems cannot guarantee universal access. Regulatory tools, such as access-to-information laws, mandatory consultation mechanisms and structured impact assessments, further embed accountability by requiring governments to disclose information, consult affected groups and assess distributional effects.

34. Together, legal and regulatory frameworks safeguard continuity, institutionalize coordination across sectors and levels of government, embed social development as a durable public obligation and ensure that equity and inclusion are systematically assessed.

[10] UNDP, *Institutional and Coordination Mechanisms: Guidance Note on Facilitating Integration and Coherence for SDG Implementation* (New York, 2017).



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**Interesting Facts** 29

Recognizing the need for enhanced coordination, South Africa implemented a cluster system of governance, with the goal of inclusive growth, job creation, and poverty reduction.

This falls in line with the UN's direction towards integrated policies for sustainable development, as the cluster system improves coordination and communication across the country's governance.

**Something to Think About** 31

Due to the political landscape of some Member States , especially developing countries, shifting political will and electoral cycles can greatly affect the implementation of frameworks. As political ideals shift and elected officials change, several projects and frameworks are discontinued and misaligned.

In light of this, how can legal and regulatory frameworks be developed in ways that ensure these projects remain operative and efficient?

**Definition** 32

Surge protocols are emergency plans used by hospitals and healthcare establishments to manage a sudden increase in patients.

**Did You Know That...** 33

The ILO recommendation on social protection floors reaffirms social security as a human right and guides countries to establish national "floors" as a step towards comprehensive social security systems.

**Definition** 33

Social protection floors are basic, nationally defined guarantees that ensure everyone in need has access to essential healthcare and basic income security throughout their life span.

## C. Integrated planning and policy cycles that embed social priorities

35. Embedding social objectives into national planning is essential to overcoming fragmented policy cycles and short-term political horizons. In many countries, evidence shows that ministries tend to operate in silos in the absence of a shared strategic framework. Integrated planning serves to embed social development objectives into national strategies, helping to sustain long-term goals across sectors and electoral cycles and reducing the risk of fragmentation.[11]

36. Making policy coherence a priority from the design stage onward enables Governments to integrate fiscal, social and environmental objectives into planning rather than retrofitting them later. National development strategies that prioritize social development require the alignment of programmes and investments across the finance, labour, health, education and housing ministries. Medium-term expenditure frameworks link social priorities to multi-year budgets, safeguarding resources and preventing fiscal choices from undermining social goals.

37. Country experiences demonstrate how integrated planning enables the alignment of national and local policies with social priorities. In Colombia, the national care system and the national care policy, coordinated across 15 ministries with United Nations support, serve to consolidate care as a right, expand services and recognize caregivers' roles.[12] Regionally, the European Care Strategy for caregivers and care receivers is aimed at improving access to quality care and work-life balance, illustrating how regional frameworks can be used to embed care priorities across national policy cycles.[13]

38. Integrated planning can also drive inclusive and sustainable outcomes that tackle structural inequalities. In Brazil, policy experience during the period 2003–2015 illustrates how participatory governance, including women's committees and subnational, place-based coordination platforms, were used to support the integration of gender considerations across rural development policies, including land reform, access to credit and technical assistance. The empowerment of women and inclusive rural transformation were promoted through joint land titling, gender quotas, procurement from women farmers and complementary social protection and agroecological initiatives.

39. Local initiatives highlight the transformative potential of integrated planning. School feeding programmes that entail both local procurement and decent-work standards deliver multiple outcomes: improvements in nutrition; improvements in attendance and learning, in particular among girls; decent jobs with contracts and social protection, often benefiting women; and stronger rural livelihoods through purchases from smallholder farmers. Examples from Brazil, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire and Jordan show how coordinated design multiplies impact.[14]

[11] Aránzazu Guillán Montero, "The integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals as a lever for trust, institutional resilience and innovation", United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Policy Brief, No. 164, September 2024; and OECD, *Driving Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development: Accelerating Progress on the SDGs* (Paris, 2023).

[12] See https://lac.unwomen.org/en/stories/noticia/2025/06/tejiendo-comunidades-que-cuidan-mujeres-territorios-y-politicas-publicas-en-colombia.

[13] See https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/european-care-strategy-caregivers-and-care-receivers-2022-09-07_en.

[14] Silke Staab and others, *Harnessing Social Protection for Gender Equality, Resilience and Transformation: World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* (New York, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2024).



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**Definition** **37**

The European Care Strategy is a policy framework aimed at ensuring quality, affordable, and accessible care while supporting caregivers, especially women.

**Interesting Facts** **38**

Although the world has made significant progress, gender inequality still persists as an international issue. Notably, the lack of attention towards women's opportunities, especially women in underrepresented groups, such as rural areas, constitute an ongoing issue. Are there any other vulnerable groups, such as rural women, that has been overlooked due to structural inequalities? How can these groups be supported and utilized for better outcomes for integrated planning? What knowledge can we gain by creating a more inclusive environment for these groups?

## D. Aligning financing with social development

40. Financing is the bridge between commitment and impact. Achieving the goals of the Copenhagen Declaration, the Programme of Action and the Doha Political Declaration requires adequate resources and financial systems aligned with social priorities. Underinvestment in social protection, education, health, housing and employment is often as much of a reflection of political choices as of fiscal constraints. Aligning financing with social objectives therefore requires both political and fiscal reforms and a rebalancing of national priorities.

41. Fiscal policy is a strategic lever for transforming social outcomes by mobilizing and allocating resources in line with social priorities. Fair, effective and progressive taxation enables meaningful investment in infrastructure, education, healthcare and social protection, sectors that strengthen capabilities, boost productivity and expand fiscal space over time by supporting inclusive growth and contributing to fiscal and debt sustainability. The ability of Governments to direct resources towards integrated goals is often limited, however, by fiscal compartmentalization, where allocations for different ministries are kept strictly separate. To address this challenge, Governments are increasingly adopting pooled funds, programme-based budgeting frameworks and cross-sectoral financing frameworks in which allocations are grouped around shared goals and predictable funding is safeguarded for long-term investments. For example, Mexico uses cross-cutting budget lines to protect allocations for gender equality and social inclusion, while Rwanda uses programme-based budgeting to link resources to the pillars of its national strategy for transformation.[15]

42. Integrated national financing frameworks, introduced in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and reaffirmed in the Sevilla Commitment, help countries to align all sources of finance, whether domestic or external, and expenditure policy behind national development strategies, thereby reducing fragmentation and promoting longer-term investment. For example, under the sector budget support provided as part of the European Union programme on social inclusion in Albania for the period 2020–2025, funding is aligned across the employment, social protection and education sectors to enable integrated reforms and institutional coordination.[16] Transparency, participation and accountability are essential complements: gender-responsive budgeting, public expenditure reviews and social audits strengthen accountability and ensure that resources are used to advance social outcomes.

43. Linking financing with capacity development and resilience multiplies impact and safeguards gains (see box 1). One example of how coordinated financial policies can be used to promote inclusive growth is the national programme for productive-oriented microcredit in Brazil, in which access to credit is combined with technical assistance, training and mentorship for low-income entrepreneurs.[17] Risk-informed financing and adaptive social protection are also essential. Integrating disaster risk reduction into public finance through anticipatory financing, disaster-responsive cash transfers and safety nets that are linked to early warning systems enables timely and equitable support for those most at risk.[18] In Mozambique, early warning systems linked to national social protection programmes have enabled rapid cash transfers during cyclones.

[15] See https://blog-pfm.imf.org/en/pfmblog/2021/04/rwanda-a-home-grown-performance-based-budgeting-approach.
[16] See www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/sector-budget-support-eu-social-inclusion-0_en.
[17] See https://policybasket.endhungerandpoverty.org/index.php/Brazil%3A_National_Program_for_Productive-Oriented_Microcredit_%28PNMPO%29.
[18] See www.preventionweb.net/news/expanding-shock-responsive-and-adaptive-social-protection-programs-build-resilience-within.





**Definition** **41**

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Fiscal policy is the "use of government spending and taxation to influence the economy". It is generally used by governments to promote growth within their economies and reduce poverty. This is done through a combination of influence on a state's money supply through its interest rates, bank reserves, and more tools used to influence the policy. Additionally, this comes hand-in-hand with the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country.

**Definition** **41**

Cross-cutting budget lines are financial allocations that fund objectives spanning multiple sectors and departments.

**Definition** **42**

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, provides a strong foundation for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It provides a new global framework for financing sustainable development by aligning financing flows with economic, social, and environmental policies.

**Definition** **42**

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44. While domestic financing reforms are a critical lever for social development, reducing inequality at scale also requires complementary policy measures that shape distributional outcomes both nationally and internationally. At the national level, inequality can be reduced by redistributing income through progressive taxation, reducing regressive taxes, investing in public services, strengthening social protection and reining in excessive corporate power through minimum wages, market regulation and environmental safeguards. At the international level, reducing disparities requires fairer trade rules, stronger control for illicit financial flows, equitable access to technology, reforms to international financial institutions, expanded special drawing rights during crises and a sovereign debt architecture aligned with sustainable development. Coordinated action in such areas as stabilizing food access, building reserves, curbing speculation, boosting local production and expanding digital access further advances equity.

45. By tackling chronic underinvestment, overcoming fiscal compartmentalization and embedding social priorities into financing frameworks, Governments can work towards matching the promises made in Copenhagen and Doha with the resources and fiscal systems needed to deliver them.

Box 1
**Coordinated financial reform in the microfinance sector in Cambodia**

The experience of Cambodia demonstrates how coordinated financial reform, facilitated by the United Nations, can align diverse actors behind inclusive and accountable solutions.

The microfinance sector in Cambodia has expanded rapidly, extending credit to rural and low-income communities. However, its growth outpaced borrowers' repayment capacity, leading to widespread overindebtedness. Many households, including those in agricultural and Indigenous communities with seasonal incomes, resorted to multiple high-interest loans simply to cover basic needs. Aggressive lending and limited oversight created a systemic debt trap, deepening financial distress and eroding trust between borrowers and institutions. The lack of coordinated action and accountability undermined reform efforts and endangered vulnerable groups.

Recognizing the need for systemic change, in 2023, the Resident Coordinator Office and the central bank, the National Bank of Cambodia, launched a multi-stakeholder dialogue, replacing fragmented debate with a neutral, solution-driven process. Over the course of six consultation sessions, representatives from more than 120 institutions, including government agencies, regulators, investors, non-governmental organizations and industry, met to design actionable reforms. An independent facilitator ensured neutrality, while the resident coordinator and central bank officials co-chaired executive dialogues to formalize and monitor progress. Government bodies were positioned as co-leads, fostering national ownership and policy integration. This coordinated approach embedded transparency, joint accountability and continuous monitoring, leveraging limited resources for broad systemic impact.

Within months, the consultations produced 22 priority actions, several of which have already been implemented. Ongoing reforms include new government guidance to protect vulnerable borrowers, industry commitments to cease using Indigenous land as collateral and the establishment of a financial consumer centre. Nearly 100,000 loans have





**Definition** **45**

Fiscal compartmentalization refers to the separation of funds, budgets, or expenditures into fragments. This could refer to the way that governments and/or companies rigidly divide funds depending on their respective local units or subsectors.

**Definition** **B102**

A systemic debt trap is a structural economic cycle in which a country spends money paying off old debts rather than on vital public needs, forcing it to borrow more to survive and thus repeating the cycle.

been restructured, improving consumer protection and restoring market confidence. The process has begun to shift sector dynamics and investor practices, offering lessons for coordinated financial reform and responsible lending in other contexts.

*Source*: Development Coordination Office.

## E. Data and digital foundations for policy coherence

46. Achieving the social development commitments made in Copenhagen and Doha depends on the ability of Governments to make informed decisions grounded in timely, reliable and inclusive data. Data and digital systems, together with the analytical and institutional capacities to use them, are now core governance capacities essential for understanding policy interactions, anticipating trade-offs and translating commitments into coherent, equitable and anticipatory action.

47. Integrated data systems are crucial for inclusive policymaking. Platforms should link social, economic and environmental variables, such as pollution exposure and access to green spaces, with socioeconomic and demographic indicators to reveal disparities and guide more equitable, preventive and adaptive policies. Disaggregating data by sex, age, income, disability, geography and migration status ensures that vulnerable groups are visible and that the distributional effects of policies can be measured. Accounting for the combined impacts of social and economic policies helps Governments to identify where coordination is needed. Several countries have enhanced social protection registries to capture intersecting disadvantages, including women with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples.

48. Harnessing artificial intelligence and foresight tools can strengthen policy coherence. Analytics and scenario modelling driven by artificial intelligence can be used to help to anticipate social impacts, flag vulnerabilities and test policy options. The use of artificial intelligence modelling in Singapore illustrates how Governments can apply artificial intelligence-driven analytics to support data-informed assessment of policy options in areas such as employment, cohesion and sustainability. [19] Embedding foresight functions in planning units sustains long-term commitments and improves preparedness for demographic, technological and climate-related shocks, in line with the Doha Political Declaration, which calls for strengthening national capacities and statistical systems.

49. Strengthening digital infrastructure and interoperability further enhances coordination. Shared data platforms across the health, education, labour, housing and social protection sectors help to identify gaps, reduce duplication and improve service delivery. In Chile, the social information registry is an example of how interoperability supports targeting and coordination. [20] National digital public infrastructure, such as identification cards, registries and electronic payments, also expands the reach and efficiency of service delivery (see box 2).

[19] See www.undp.org/policy-centre/singapore/blog/pairing-ai-public-sector-impact-singapore.
[20] See https://spdci.org/resource/dialogue-series-session-4-chile/.





**Something to Think About** **47**

The 2021 World Development Report by the World Bank recently introduced the concept of the Integrated National Data System (INDS). Created on the foundation of an intentional collaborative approach, it aims to maximize data development using the principles of the social contract.

The INDS is be a data governance framework, run by the government,

however, it needs the support of multiple stakeholders such as the private sector, international institutions, civil society, and more.

With this in mind, could similar data frameworks be designed in other countries? Could this be beneficial for developing countries or would there be any barriers to creating data-based frameworks for societal growth?

Box 2
**Connecting communities: coordinated digital inclusion in Chile**

Despite the country's high-income status, deep inequalities persist in Chile, especially with respect to digital connectivity in rural and isolated regions. Many smallholder farmers, women and Indigenous peoples remain excluded from the digital networks that enable participation in the economy, access to public services and civic engagement. The resulting digital divide has constrained inclusive growth, limited access to education and health services and reduced opportunities for entrepreneurship and climate-smart practices.

To close these gaps, the Resident Coordinator Office leveraged the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund to launch the Connected Communities programme, aligning Government, United Nations entities, private telecommunications service providers and international partners behind a shared vision of digital inclusion. Launched in 2024, the initiative supports the country's "Zero digital gap" and "Rural digital connectivity" plans, which are anchored in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. Partnerships with the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the European Union and Spain were mobilized to expand resources, while private companies deployed innovative connectivity models and training for entrepreneurs and service providers.

The ongoing programme is improving digital access in rural areas, strengthening agricultural value chains and promoting climate-smart practices, and diversifying rural incomes. Expanded connectivity has enhanced telehealth, distance learning and digital social protection, while empowering women and Indigenous communities through entrepreneurship and civic participation. Connectivity is now embedded in subnational planning, which serves to localize the Sustainable Development Goal targets and catalyse domestic co-investment to match the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund contribution. The Connected Communities model demonstrates how coordinated digital inclusion can advance equitable and sustainable development.

*Source*: Development Coordination Office.

## F. Accountability and social oversight for coordinated, equitable and inclusive policies

50. Accountability is the cornerstone of people-centred social development. Without robust oversight, there is a risk that social development will remain aspirational instead of being put into practice. Accountability and oversight ensure that commitments are enforceable, that resources are used effectively and that citizens can actively shape and evaluate the policies that affect their lives. Embedding a results-based evaluation culture across institutions ensures that commitments are translated into measurable and sustained change.

51. Integrated monitoring and reporting frameworks, paired with independent evaluation mechanisms, help to track outcomes over time and reinforce follow-through. Regular impact evaluations using disaggregated indicators support course correction, the scaling up of policy measures and more adaptive policymaking.



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**Did You Know That...** **B201**

Digital divide refers to the disparity or gap in accessing and utilizing information and communication technologies. In Chile, 94.5% of the population uses the internet, making it one of the highest internet users in Latin America. Despite this, many communities, especially more vulnerable rural communities, are not able to access stable digital tools and opportunities.

**Something to Think About** **B202**

The Connected Communities programme in Chile is a joint initiative by the United Nations, the Government of Chile, and the private sector with the goal of reducing the digital divide in vulnerable rural areas.

The programme combined several different areas in its journey to overcome the digital divide. By strengthening the public-private ecosystem and improving their digital technologies, they were also able to promote equality and improve social services. This programme is a great example of how utilizing digital technologies can streamline policy coherence and integration. It showcases that well-planned frameworks can generate benefits in more than just one sector.

The project aims for at least 8,500 people to receive access to broadband services, 2,000 people (small farmers, women, indigenous people, etc.) to receive the digital skills training program, 25,000 people to benefit from new telehealth services, and other objectives created within the programme.

With this in mind, what can be learned from the development of this programme? Would this be possible on an international scale and what steps would they need to take to initiate such a programme?

**Interesting Facts** **50**

Results-based approaches are more comprehensive ways to navigate complex challenges and enhance policy frameworks. They use results frameworks to assess performance.

A general results framework includes indicators such as baselines, targets, and data sources for results chains that include inputs, outputs, outcomes, etc. These frameworks are flexible and designed based on the needed functions of each project that they can be used in.

Evaluations should identify systemic bottlenecks and trade-offs, so that resources can be aligned with measurable outcomes.

52. Strengthening legislative and institutional oversight anchors commitments in law and practice. Parliaments play a central role through their legislative, budgetary and oversight functions, embedding social objectives into law, scrutinizing resource allocations and assessing outcomes. Specialized committees safeguard continuity across political cycles. Independent ombudspersons, human rights commissions and evaluation bodies further strengthen accountability. Empowering these institutions is key to sustaining oversight, including through capacity-building for evidence-based budget review, access to disaggregated data, stronger parliamentary committee systems with clear mandates and technical capacity, and structured engagement with civil society and affected communities.

53. Linking national and international accountability processes also enhances policy coherence and follow-through. Peer review mechanisms strengthen oversight and institutional performance, while international reporting processes and reports to human rights treaty bodies help to drive national action and complement domestic monitoring. Analysis by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs shows that voluntary national reviews increasingly promote whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, supported by broad consultation processes. An emerging practice is the preparation of voluntary reviews at the local or subnational level, which deepen participation and strengthen the vertical integration of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Integrated planning is used to embed cross-cutting indicators on poverty, employment and inclusion into national strategies, creating unified tracking frameworks, reducing duplication and improving coordination. Disaggregated data helps to identify and close equity gaps so that no one is left behind.

54. Embedding social accountability and participatory oversight ensures that citizens and stakeholders hold institutions to account. Civil society organizations play an essential role in this regard, including by monitoring programme reach and highlighting gaps in delivery. Tripartite engagement among governments, employers and workers' organizations gives affected groups a voice in policy design and evaluation. Tools such as social audits and citizen scorecards empower beneficiaries to assess performance, and participatory budgeting mechanisms such as the one used in Portugal allow citizens to propose and vote on social inclusion projects.

55. Stakeholder participation across the policy cycle – design, implementation and monitoring – ensures legitimacy and responsiveness to diverse needs. When participatory processes are narrowly implemented or insufficiently resourced, there is a risk that policies will become detached from lived realities, and accountability is weakened. Broad, meaningful engagement aligns action across sectors, rebuilds trust and helps to ensure that coordination reduces exclusion instead of reinforcing it.

56. Institutionalized platforms for participation, such as national councils on social development, poverty eradication or sustainable development, create structured spaces for civil society, social partners, the private sector, academia and communities to deliberate with governments on priorities and reforms. In Sierra Leone, revitalized multi-stakeholder platforms bring together civil society, local authorities and traditional leaders to support land policy implementation, advance women's land rights and promote responsible private sector engagement.[21]

57. Social dialogue helps to reconcile interests and secure broad support for reform. Tripartite engagement among governments, workers' organizations and employers builds consensus on such issues as social protection and labour regulation. When

[21] See www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC155203/.



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**Definition** **51**

A bottleneck can be defined as a problem that delays a process or stops it from continuing within a certain system.

**Definition** **52**

Ombudspersons can be defined as people who investigate, report on, and settle complaints. They are usually an individual affiliated with an organization who serves as an advocate for an employee, consumer, etc.

**Definition** **53**

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) supports intergovernmental bodies like the General Assembly (UNGA) and ECOSOC as it operates through divisions on topics such as population, statistics, financing, social development, and more.

**Definition** **53**

Vertical integration generally refers to the ownership by an institution of different stages in the production process. However, in this case, it can be seen as the coordination, consistency, and collaboration across different stages in the implementation of the SDGs.

**Something to Think About** **54**

To monitor progress of the SDGs on multiple levels, some mechanisms and tools were created to enhance accountability and data collection from the grassroots level. These are namely social audits, community scorecards, and citizen report cards as follows:

1. Social audits: Process used by communities to measure if local development projects and services reach the degree of staff and inputs required by local law.

2. Community scorecards: Mechanism used by citizens to monitor the quality of community-based public services.

3. Citizen report cards: Local-level surveys used to help gather community opinions about certain types of services.

These practices encourage collaboration through multiple sectors while also enhancing social accountability. Knowing this, are there any specific sectors or frameworks that could benefit from the inclusion of these practices?

anchored in law or executive decree, social dialogue endures beyond political cycles and fosters collective solutions amid polarization and inequality.

58. Amplifying marginalized voices is essential for equitable policymaking. Civil society and community organizations bring the perspectives of women, young people, Indigenous Peoples, displaced persons, migrants and persons with disabilities into decisions that affect them. Tools such as participatory budgeting, community consultations and digital platforms broaden access and allow diverse groups to shape priorities. In Latin America, participatory budgeting has expanded investment in health, education and basic services for low-income communities. Open data portals and real-time monitoring enhance accountability by allowing the public to track spending and outcomes, while the right of access to information and the protection of civic space deepen transparency and trust.

59. Engaging the private sector and academia expands the reach and impact of coordinated action. Businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises generate employment, support service delivery and drive green and digital transitions, while research institutions provide evidence for policy design. Structured dialogue among governments, workers, civil society and private actors helps to align investment and innovation with social development goals. Regulatory and incentive frameworks that promote corporate responsibility, sustainable practices and social-impact investment are essential to realizing the potential of private sector and academic engagement to align investment and innovation with social development goals.

60. Embedding participation within legal and regulatory frameworks strengthens accountability and inclusion. Access-to-information laws enable public scrutiny, consultation requirements invite public input on draft policies, and equity and gender impact assessments ensure that proposals reflect diverse needs. Institutionalized participation helps to advance social development as a shared societal endeavour rather than a government-only initiative.

## G. Capacity and culture

61. Mandates and financing alone cannot deliver sustained results without institutional and cultural changes to enable collaboration. Strengthening institutional capacity and fostering a culture of cooperation align incentives, skills and norms so that coordination becomes routine rather than exceptional. Shared results frameworks and joint performance indicators reinforce whole-of-government accountability.

62. Reforming incentives and norms are essential to institutionalizing coordination. Civil servants and ministries need performance and accountability systems that value collaboration and not sectoral results alone. Shared indicators, joint budget lines and recognition of cross-ministerial results encourage cooperation, while task forces with clear mandates translate this principle into practice. These reforms must be accompanied by cultural change to foster a public service ethos that values cooperation, inclusivity and learning. Leadership programmes, cross-posting of officials and recognition of joint innovations can help embed these norms.

63. Strengthening institutional capacities is essential. Training in cross-sectoral policy design, systems thinking and equity analysis equips officials to connect economic, environmental and social policies. Joint programmes linking staff across ministries foster shared approaches, while behavioural science tools can reshape incentives and encourage co-creation. [22] Enhanced technical, operational and

[22] See United Nations Behavioural Science Group, "Behavioural insights at the United Nations: achieving Agenda 2030", December 2016; and OECD, *Behavioural Insights and Public Policy: Lessons from Around the World* (Paris, 2017).



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anticipatory capacities enable public institutions to design, implement and monitor coordinated policies, anticipate future challenges and sustain inclusive, coherent responses.[23] Strengthened evaluation, peer learning and incentive structures that reward collaboration help to embed a culture of policy coherence across political cycles.

## V. United Nations system support for policy coordination and enhanced policy coherence

64. The United Nations system plays a pivotal convening and coordinating role while also providing targeted technical support for advancing inclusive social development. Through its normative and analytical functions, the United Nations system links global policy frameworks to operational guidance and supports Member States in translating international commitments into coherent national action.

65. Ongoing development system reforms have resulted in enhanced joint programming, shared analytical frameworks and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Leveraging the resident coordinator system and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks enables integrated programming, while pooled and joint funding mechanisms and inter-agency coalitions foster collaboration across mandates and align international support behind national priorities.

66. Strengthening coordination with international financial institutions, including the World Bank and regional development banks, is essential to align normative guidance with financial instruments, expand fiscal space and channel investment towards social development priorities.

67. United Nations tools and platforms are helping to translate shared objectives into coordinated action. The Integrated Policy Practitioners' Network[24] and the Sustainable Development Goals Acceleration Toolkit[25] support integrated policymaking and peer learning. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Sustainable Development Goals Push initiative identifies policy accelerators, and its Acceleration Pathways platform highlights coherent national strategies.[26] The United Nations Population Fund is also advancing data systems for evidence-based policymaking, including through the incorporation of disability data in censuses and the development of population ageing profiles.

68. The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions aligns investments in decent jobs and social protection. National road maps guide policy and financing responses to climate change, informality, demographic shifts and digitalization, with multi-stakeholder steering committees sustaining whole-of-government approaches.[27] The United Nations supported the initiative led by Brazil to establish the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty, which accelerates efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty, reduce inequalities and channel resources towards large-scale, country-led programmes for those further behind, while the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub drives global collaboration to make food systems more sustainable, inclusive and resilient, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

[23] ECLAC, *Development Traps in Latin America and the Caribbean*.
[24] See www.sparkblue.org/IPPNgroup.
[25] See https://sdgintegration.undp.org/sdg-acceleration-toolkit.
[26] See https://sdgpush.undp.org/acceleration-pathways/index.html.
[27] See www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2025-06/05_WSSD_Research_brief_RGB_ENG%20%281%29.pdf.



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**Definition** **65**

United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework is one of the most important instruments used for the UN's development activities on a national level. The Cooperation Framework is an agreement between the UN and each state's government that tracks the UN development system's contributions in the country, shapes the configuration of UN assets, and guides the UN country team programme cycle towards achieving the 2030 agenda.

**Definition** **67**

The Integrated Policy Practitioners' Network (IPPN) is a knowledge hub for the global community. It acts as a database and network to integrate policy practitioners to link existing efforts on SDG integration and encourage learning to enhance current practices and policy support.

**Interesting Facts** **68**

As a part of the UN's initiative to keep the 2030 SDG targets on track, the Global Accelerator was created to contribute to one of the major transitions needed to drive progress towards the SDGs.

The Global Accelerator mainly focuses on social protection and decent job transition for transformative change. This means that it accelerates progress of many interlinked SDGs. Indirectly, the goals of the Global Accelerator create a domino effect, thus improving the state of other SDGs developments.

Initiatives such as these unlock a multiplier effect that can accelerate multiple goals and objectives through one coordinated policy or project.

69. Structural challenges are being tackled through inter-agency collaboration. Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results initiatives for coffee and cotton supply chains, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ILO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Trade Centre, the European Commission and other partners, address child labour through coordinated action in the areas of legal reform, livelihood diversification, education access, climate resilience and due diligence. In countries such as Burkina Faso, Honduras, Mali, Pakistan, Uganda and Viet Nam, these efforts have resulted in children being withdrawn from hazardous work and reintegrated into schools and in prevention measures being embedded into broader strategies for zero hunger, poverty eradication and inclusive agrifood systems.

70. In Niger, joint programming by the World Food Programme, FAO, UNICEF, the secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and national authorities combines community risk assessments, anticipatory financing and climate-smart agriculture,[28] preventing over 80 per cent of target villages from requiring humanitarian assistance during the lean season. Multi-hazard dashboards developed with the United Nations Satellite Centre are used to guide investment and target hotspots.[29]

71. Common frameworks further strengthen coherence. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), with support from UNDP, ILO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), coordinates a joint United Nations policy framework on transforming care systems, which serves to promote care systems that enable gender equality, social justice and sustainable development.[30]

72. Regional collaboration enhances policy integration. ECLAC convenes finance and education ministers to advance financing for educational transformation.[31] The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific supports integrated approaches linking social protection and climate policies for just transitions, aligns employment and demographic policies and helped to build momentum for the 2024 Association of Southeast Asian Nations Declaration on Strengthening the Care Economy and Fostering Resilience[32] through peer learning, policy evidence and integrated reforms.

73. Institutionalized mechanisms sustain policy coherence. The Standing Working Group on Ageing[33] of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) coordinates cross-sectoral ageing policies. The ECE *Guidelines for Mainstreaming Ageing* (2021)[34] and Ageing Policies Database [35] support systematic integration into national policymaking.

[28] See www.wfp.org/countries/niger.
[29] See www.preventionweb.net/news/food-systems-enhancing-resilience-and-food-security-among-vulnerable-populations-through-risk.
[30] United Nations, "Transforming care systems: in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda", policy paper, July 2024.
[31] ECLAC and others, *Financial Sustainability, Equity, and Efficiency of Educational Investment as Enabling Requirements for Educational Transformation in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2025).
[32] See https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/1-ASEAN-Declaration-on-Strengthening-the-Care-Economy-and-Fostering-Resilience-towards-ASEAN-Community-Post-2025_.pdf.
[33] See https://unece.org/population/standing-working-group-ageing.
[34] See https://unece.org/population/ageing/mainstreaming-ageing.
[35] See https://ageing-policies.unece.org/themes/12?page=1.



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### Something to Think About 69

Though the main topic of this paragraph talks about challenges in addressing child labor, the topic spans outside labor and business. It notes the need for action in different fields such as law, economy, education, environment, and business.

This showcases how one problem can connect many related fields that all play a role in addressing and mitigating related issues. In the legal aspect, laws can be created to combat and disallow child labor, but it would only be the beginning. Businesses must be compliant with these laws by also taking additional steps to mitigate the problem within their own private sectors. Additionally, by reintegrating children into schools, education is amplified, reducing the risk of poverty by improving the earning and job potential of these children in the future.

Noting this, how can governments enhance their institutions to encourage inter-agency collaboration to handle challenges such as these?

### Did You Know That... 70

Many developing countries, especially due to the nature of their own economic and financial situations, tend to 'react' rather than 'prevent'. Between 2019 - 2023, for every $100 spent on total development aid, only $2 was spent on disaster risk reduction. More notably, research shows that every dollar spent on the reduction of disaster vulnerability could save up to $7 dollars in economic losses.

Risk reduction is one of the most beneficial investments that countries and economies could make. By implementing strategies such as community risk assessments, anticipatory financing, and climate-smart agriculture, governments and countries create opportunities for them to reduce losses and prepare their communities better for future events.

### Definition 72

The 2024 Association of Southeast Asian Nations Declaration on Strengthening the Care Economy and Fostering Resilience is a regional commitment adopted in 2024 by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to recognize the value of formal and informal care work. It also noted that unpaid care and domestic work serve as the foundational pillars of societal well-being and economic growth.

Additionally, this declaration aligns with the four core pillars of the UN ESCAP Model Framework for Action on the Care Economy.

74. Advancing social development and social justice requires policy coherence at every level, from national institutions to the multilateral system, so that international cooperation reinforces national efforts. Within the United Nations, ongoing reforms, such as UN 2.0 and the UN80 Initiative, are aimed at making the United Nations system more responsive, more resilient and better equipped to serve the people whose lives depend on it. UN 2.0 serves to build capabilities in data, digital transformation, innovation, foresight and behavioural science, while the UN80 Initiative is a system-wide reform effort aimed at identifying efficiencies in management and operations, reviewing mandate implementation, reducing fragmentation and enhancing effectiveness. Together, these reforms aim to achieve the United Nations system's common ambition of being better equipped to assist Member States in implementing integrated policies.

## VI. Conclusion and recommendations

75. **Equity and inclusion are the destination, while coordination provides the bridge to reach it. Coordination is indispensable, but not an end in itself; its value lies in whether it delivers fair outcomes, inclusive processes and sustained capacity to navigate uncertainties. This understanding reflects both the 2030 Agenda, which serves to highlight the importance of improved coordination and coherence of sustainable development policies, and the Doha Political Declaration, in which it was reaffirmed that bold social policies must be coordinated across institutions, equitable in their results and inclusive in their design.**

76. **Looking ahead, equitable and inclusive policies will be essential to building resilience to withstand shocks and adapt to ongoing transitions, with a view to improving lives, reducing inequalities and strengthening trust in institutions. Whether policies advance or undermine social progress will depend on renewed global, regional and national commitment to fairness, social justice and shared responsibility.**

77. **To translate the commitments made in Copenhagen and reaffirmed in Doha into real-world impact, Member States are encouraged to adopt coordinated approaches that advance equity and inclusion, by taking the following actions:**

(a) **Ensure sustained high-level political leadership and translate it into clear, enforceable mandates that make social development a shared responsibility – not only for social ministries but also for finance, planning, labour, economic, digital and environmental authorities – and that grant the authority to convene, align priorities and drive coordination across institutions and levels of government;**

(b) **Institutionalize coordination, equity and inclusion through legal frameworks, interministerial mechanisms and administrative processes that require consultation and equity and gender impact assessments and uphold access to information rights across the entire policy cycle, from planning and budgeting to implementation and monitoring;**

(c) **Embed social development priorities in national planning, financing and budgeting cycles from the outset, linking fiscal, social, environmental and digital objectives and aligning national and subnational action through medium-term expenditure frameworks and integrated policy implementation mechanisms, ensuring policy coherence beyond annual budget and electoral cycles;**

(d) **Align financing systems with social development priorities by strengthening domestic resource mobilization through fair and progressive**





**Definition** **72**

UN 2.0 is a part of the Secretary-General's vision to prepare the UN System for the future. It contains five essential capabilities: data, digital, innovation, behavioural science, and foresight, to strengthen the UN's approach to global challenges and effective solutions.

**Definition** **74**

As the UN turns 80 years old, the UN80 initiative is reshaping the UN System to work so all our resources can be better managed to address the needs of the people and create more impactful solutions for the planet. The initiative contains 3 workstreams:

1. Improved UN Secretariat system
2. Stronger mandate lifecycle
3. Realigned programmes and structures

taxation, adopting integrated national financing frameworks and enhancing coordination with international financial institutions to expand fiscal space for long-term social investment;

(e) Invest in interoperable data, digital and foresight capacities to link social, economic and environmental information systems, make intersecting inequalities visible, enable coordinated delivery across services and support anticipatory and evidence-based policymaking, while upholding privacy, non-discrimination and accountability safeguards;

(f) Strengthen inclusive participation, transparency and accountability by increasing the authority and capacity of parliaments, independent oversight bodies and national human rights institutions; improving access to disaggregated data; linking domestic accountability to global reporting processes; and institutionalizing social dialogue, participatory budgeting and other mechanisms that ensure the meaningful participation of women, young people, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups;

(g) Institutionalize incentives that reward collaboration and policy coherence, including shared performance frameworks, joint budget lines, cross-ministerial targets and collaborative delivery mechanisms, and strengthen public sector capabilities in systems thinking, equity analysis and intersectoral policymaking so that coordinated action becomes routine and sustained across political cycles;

(h) Institutionalize rigorous, results-based policy impact analysis and embed a culture of evaluation across all levels of government, ensuring that impact assessments inform course correction and the scaling up of policy measures. Evaluation frameworks should identify systemic bottlenecks, assess trade-offs and align resources with measurable social development outcomes, enabling more adaptive and equitable policymaking.



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