SDG institutionality in Latin America

Advances at the first year of the 2030 Agenda
Key Findings

There are five SDGs implementing structures (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras) that do not have specific functions related to international participation/representation, such as engagement in the HLPF, regional forums, among other scenarios. Those five countries have volunteered to present their national reviews for HLPF 2017.

Although most of the SDGs structures have the duty of promoting the Multi-Stakeholder Approach, just one of them (Costa Rica) has included a directly and without intermediaries participation of a broader range of sectors in its work. It seems like Latin America and the Caribbean is creating whole-of-government more than whole-of-society approaches.

Among the countries that have established SDGs structures, only one of them (Costa Rica) includes the parliament, even when in four countries with SDGs structures (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Dominican Republic), the Parliament analyses and approves the National Development Plan / Strategy.

According to their founding documents, there is a low intention from the SDGs structures to share their decisions, debates or their day-to-day work with broader constituencies. Therefore, raising awareness about the 2030 Agenda’s implementation among citizens seems not to be a priority for Latin American governments and is a key challenge for the other development actors.

Regarding financing the 2030 Agenda implementation, most of the SDGs structures do not have among their functions to recommend or manage a strategy to get the financial resources to implement the Goals. This is alarming, taking into account the middle-income status that most Latin American countries have.

According to the review of the functions of the SDGs structures, articulation between these bodies and the National Statistical Offices in terms of adapting global indicators to national realities tends to be weak. Therefore, this adaptation may not be as holistic as it needs to be.
This work presents the results of a research carried out by CEPEI to analyze the structures created by Latin American countries to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national level.

Based on interviews to government officials and key representatives of non-governmental sector, held under the Chatham House Rules, and the analysis of public documents related to the creation and functioning of governmental bodies responsible for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs implementation, we have considered the situation of the following ten variables, as follows:

- Participation of non-state actors into the SDGs structures (civil society, parliament, academia, private sector and United Nations),
- Their level of involvement in the building of the SDG Strategy,
- Their role in policy coherence,
- Their participation in governmental articulation,
- their influence in international scenarios,
- Their influence in SDG monitoring,
- Their duty of promoting the Multi-Stakeholder partnerships,
- Their leverage to manage or recommend strategies for financing the SDGS implementation,
- Their impact in the national budget allocation, and
- Their duty of disseminating the decisions and debates given into their working sessions.

We decided to include only in this research the Latin American countries that have created or defined specifically, and following a normative process, on-going institutional frameworks for SDGs implementation. As a result the experience of countries that are now carrying-out those processes has not been considered: El Salvador was excluded even when a proposal to create a Sustainable Development National Council was sent by the President to the Parliament. This is also the case for the Social Dialogue for Sustainable Development process now in place in Uruguay, while being an interesting and innovative experience.

The findings of the research will be graphically presented to facilitate its use not only for policy and decision-makers, but for any interested in this issue.

We hope that this study and its conclusions become a contribution for a better implementation of the commitments made by governments in the new global development agenda in the Latin American region.

This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.
It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom (…) 
All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan

(2030 Agenda, Preambule)
SDGs Structures in Latin America: An Overview

Functions of the SDG Structures in Latin America

- Management the SDG national Strategy
- Governmental Articulation
- Policy Coherence
- International Participation
- Influence in SDG monitoring
- Promotion of the multi-stakeholder participation and partnerships
- Influence in SDG funding strategies
- Influence in National Budget Allocation
- Dissemination of decisions and debates

* Paraguay has not established clear, specific functions for its own SDG institutional body yet.

Participation of non-government actors and parliaments in the SDG structures in Latin America

- Civil Society Participation
- Parliament Participation
- Academia Participation
- Private Sector Participation
- United Nations Agencies Participation
After taking a look at the big picture, it is time to see how each one of the 11 SDGs structures identified in Latin America are dealing with the key topics around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Please find below some radial graphics in which we reflect a profile per country. The score scale proposed in the research goes as follows: 5 when the SDG structure does have competency on the topic, 0 when the SDG structure does not have competency in the issue. Regarding the multi-stakeholder participation in these structures, each one represents a sector included.

Each profile is also accompanied by key information about development of each country.

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**Argentina**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Creation</th>
<th>Placed in</th>
<th>Office of the President</th>
<th>Key Fact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales (CNCPS).</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Office of the President</td>
<td>Ministry of Communications</td>
<td>Argentina will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Members                                                                 |                                                                 |                                                                 |                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Domestic Affairs, Infraestructure and Housing                | Ministry of Labour and Social Security                           | Ministry of Communications |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship                                | Ministry of Social Development                                    | Ministry of Revenues and Taxes                                      |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Defense                                                     | Ministry of Health                                                 | Ministry of Finance                                                 |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Production                                                   | Ministry of Education and Sports                                    | Advisory National Commission for Disabled People’s Integration     |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Agro-industry                                               | Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation                     | Women National Council                                              |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Tourism                                                     | Ministry of Culture                                                | National Social and Fiscal Identification System                   |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Transport                                                   | Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development                | National Center of Grassroots organizations                         |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Justice and Human Rights                                    | Ministry of Modernization                                           | "Early Years" program                                              |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Ministry of Security                                                    | Ministry of Energy and Mining                                      |                                                                             |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                         |
Brazil will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF.

**Structure**
- National Commission for the SDGs

**Creation**
- 2016

**Framed In**
- Government Secretary, Presidency of Brazil

**Key Fact**
- Brazil will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF

**Members**
- Government Secretary, Presidency
- Ministers’ Cabinet
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Social and Agrarian Development
- Ministry of Planning, Development and Management
- Ministry of Environment
- Representatives of states and city governments
- Eight representatives of Civil Society
The National Scenarios

**Chile**

- **National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**
  - **Structure**
    - Ministry of Foreign Relations (Presides the Council)
    - Ministry of Finance, Development and Tourism
    - Ministry of Social Development (Technical Secretary)
    - Ministry of Environment
    - National Institute of Statistics (as advisor)
  - **Creation** 2016
  - **Framed in** Presidency of Chile

- **Key Fact**
  - The Council has created three commissions according to the Sustainable Development pillars: economic commission, social commission, environmental commission
  - Chile will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF
**Colombia**

The National Scenarios

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**Inter-agency High-Level Commission for the Implementation of the SDGs**

- **Creation**: 2015
- **Framed in**: Presidency of Colombia

**Structure**

- Ministry of Foreign Relations
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
- Office of the President
- National Planning Department (which is the president and technical secretary of the commission)
- National Statistics Department
- Social Prosperity Department
- Presidential Agency for International Cooperation

**Members**

- **Key Fact**: The Commission has five internal working groups: international affairs, relations with subnational regions, communications, data and finance

- Colombia was one of the three Latin American countries that presented its National Voluntary Review in 2016 HLPF
Costa Rica

The three branches of power and key development actors have signed the National Deal for the SDGs, a political but non-binding document.

**Key Fact**

Costa Rica will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF.

**Structure**

**National High-Level Council for SDGs**

- **Creation**
  - 2016

- **Members**
  - Office of the President
  - Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (which is the technical secretary)
  - Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship
  - National Institute of Statistics and Census
  - Department of Protection of Citizens’ Rights
  - Private Sector
  - United Nations Agencies

**Technical Council Advisors**

- **Framed in**
  - Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy

- **Members**
  - Gather all ministries
  - Judicial Power
  - Parliament
  - Civil Society
  - Academia
  - Department of Protection of Citizens’ Rights
  - Private Sector
  - United Nations Agencies

**Presidency of Costa Rica**

- **Framed in**
  - Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy

- **Members**
  - Office of the President
  - Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (which is the technical secretary)
  - Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship
  - National Institute of Statistics and Census
  - Department of Protection of Citizens’ Rights
  - Private Sector
  - United Nations Agencies
Guatemala

**National Council for Urban and Rural Development**

- Office of the President (Coordinator)
- A mayor that represent the Municipalities Corporations of each one of the regions (*)
- Ministry of Public Finance
- Presidency’s Secretary of Planning (Technical Secretary)
- Presidency’s Secretary of Executive Coordination
- Coordinators of the Regional Councils for Urban and Rural Development
- "Four representatives of the Maya indigenous people, one of Xinca indigenous people, uno of Garifuna indigenous people (*)
- A representative of cooperatives (*)
- A representative of service and manufacture SMEs (*)

**Creation** 2002

**Key Fact**

Guatemala will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF

- Two representatives of peasants organizations (*)
- A representative of farming, trade, finance and industry associations (*)
- A representative of trade unions (*)
- A representative of a Guatemalacan development NGOs (*)
- Two representatives of women organizations (*)
- A representative of the Presidencial Secretary for Women (*)
- A representative of San Carlos University
- A representative of the private universities in Guatemala
- (*)= Elected among the representatives present in the Regional Councils of Urban and Rural Development
Honduras was chosen by the United Nations as one of the five countries in the world to do an alignment exercise between the SDGs and the national goals.

Honduras will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF.

Mexico was one of the three Latin American countries that presented its National Voluntary Review in 2016 HLPF.

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Governmental Articulation
Policy Coherence
International Participation
Influence in SDG monitoring
Promotion of the multi-stakeholder participation and partnerships
Influence in SDG funding strategies
Influence in National Budget Allocation
Dissemination of decisions and debates
Management the SDG national Strategy
Non-state actors participation

Structure

Members

Sectorial Cabinets

Creation 2014

Presidency of Honduras

There are seven sectorial cabinets that works closely with the Presidential Secretary of State: National Government Coordination, Governability and Desentralization, Productive Infrastructure, Development and Social Inclusion, Economic Regulation and Management, Economic Development, Security and Defense.
Mexico was one of the three Latin American countries that presented its National Voluntary Review in 2016 HLPF

Structure
Technical Committee for the SDGs
Creation 2015
Framed in Presidency of Mexico
Key Fact

Members
- Advisors of the Chief of Office’s Coordination, Office of the Presidency (presides the Committee)
- National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Technical Secretary)
- National Population Council
- Secretary of Health
- Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources
- Federal Institute of Communications
- Secretary of Public Education
- Secretary of Social Development
- Secretary of Labour and Social Protection
- Secretary of Foreign Relations
- National Women Institute
- Secretary of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development

- Under Secretary of Taxes
- Secretary of Agriculture, Cattle, Rural Development, Fishing and Food
- Secretary of Communications and Transport
- Secretary of Domestic Affairs
- Secretary of Finance
- Secretary of Energy
- Mexican Agency of International Cooperation for Development
- United Nations Development Programme (permanent invitee)
- Mexican Institute of Youth
Panama will present its National Voluntary Review to the 2017 HLPF.
**Paraguay**

*We have not scored this structure due to the fact that there are not clear, specific functions for the Inter-Agency Commission.

<table>
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<td>• Ministry of Finance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Technical Planning Secretary for Economic and Social Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social Cabinet, Office of the President</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• United Nations Development Programme, through a technical secretariat that supports the work of the Commission</td>
<td></td>
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Dominican Republic

The National Scenarios

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development, United Nations in Dominican Republic and the Dominican Association of Universities’ Deans and the Dominican Association of Universities signed a MoU in 2016 to promote initiatives from the Academia aligned to the 2030 Agenda.

Structure

- National Council for Sustainable Development
- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development (Coordinator)
- Ministry of the Presidency
- Ministry of Foreign Relations
- Ministry of Revenues and Taxes
- Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Industry and Trade

Key Fact

The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development, United Nations in Dominican Republic and the Dominican Association of Universities’ Deans and the Dominican Association of Universities signed a MoU in 2016 to promote initiatives from the Academia aligned to the 2030 Agenda.

Creation: 2016

Framed In

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development

Members

- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development (Coordinator)
- Ministry of Energy and Mining
- Presidential Coordination Cabinet for Social Policies
- National Statistical Office
- National Council for Climate Change and Clean Development Mechanism
- Two representatives of Civil Society and one representative of business sector
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Industry and Trade
Venezuela

The National Scenarios

Dissemination of decisions and debates
Management the SDG national Strategy
Influence in National Budget Allocation
Influence in SDG funding strategies
Promotion of the multi-stakeholder participation and partnerships
Non-state actors participation
Influence in SDG monitoring
International Participation
Policy Coherence
Governmental Articulation

Key Fact
Venezuela was one of the three Latin American countries that presented its National Voluntary Review in 2016 HLPF

Structure
Vice Presidents Council
Inter-Agency Coordination Group
Human Rights National Council

Framed in
Presidency of Venezuela

Members
- Executive Vice President (Coordinator)
- Vice President of Economy
- Vice President for Planning
- Vice President for Social Development
- Vice President for Political Sovereignty, Security and Peace
- Vice President of Territorial Socialist Development

- Ministry of Foreign Relations (coordinator)
- All the Deputy Ministers and International Relations Directors of the Central Government

- Executive Vice President
- Minister of Domestic Affairs, Justice and Peace
- Minister of Penitentiary Service
- Minister of Defense
- Minister of Communities and Social Movements
- Minister of Foreign Relations
- Defender of Citizens
- General Attorney
- President of the Supreme Court of Justice
- General Public Defender
- Civil Society: General Coordinator, Network for Support of Justice and Peace, Representative of Fundalatin (Latin American Foundation for Human Rights and Social Development)

Creation
2015
National institutional schemes have been put in place in most Latin American countries. A high number between them have chosen to put them under the direct dependency of the President -Office, consequently gaining political weight.

All the experiences show a common path: governments are tending to create cross-cutting approaches gathering different governmental structures in a shared policy-dialogue space. However, even when Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Dominican Republic parliaments have the duty to analyzes and approve the National Development plans or strategies, only Costa Rica has included representatives of the legislative power in its institutional design to play an advisory role.

Furthermore, the extent of the non-state actors possible involvement differ from case to case and, again, only Costa Rica has included a directly and without intermediaries participation of a broader range of sectors in its work. This point exposes a clear discrepancy between the commitments made by the governments in the 2030 Agenda and the national SDGs implementation set up structures.

In the cases of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras, the institutions that have to lead the SDGs implementation at national level do not have specific functions related to international participation. Nevertheless those five countries have volunteered to present their national reviews for HLPF 2017.

In the same path, most of the SDG structures do lack among their functions to recommend or create a strategy to obtain the financial resources to implement the goals. Given the middle-income status that most Latin American countries have it is disquieting issue that should be considered in the near future.

Another reason of concern is related to the unsteady level of articulation between these bodies and the National Statistical Offices. This could lead to a weak adaptation of the SDGs follow-up indicators globally adopted to national realities. As a result, the adaptations may not be as holistic as they could be.

Last but not least, the institutional designs of all countries have in common that they do not provide mandatory and explicit ways to share their decisions or day-to-day work with broader constituencies. This absence could affect the necessary social awareness about the 2030 Agenda’s implementation among citizens, a task that appears to be left in the hand of non-governmental actors such as civil society organizations, journalists or foundations.

As a framework of action to overcome the identified challenges, we suggest to consider a “5-Cs” based strategy:
Move policy into action by fulfilling the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda

Policy coherence is key. Identifying connections between sectoral policies, national development plans, national political agendas and other international commitments is not just mapping how many SDG targets are related, but to clearly assign actions to entities and follow them up.

Most of the SDG structures promote the multi-sectoral work or PPPs. It is time that these bodies start to create spaces/scenarios/platforms to make this real.

Use reliable data to take decisions, bearing in mind that any action in one field have impacts on many others.

Cohere

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Use reliable data to take decisions, bearing in mind that any action in one field have impacts on many others.

Convene

the key development actors:

Map the key actors and initiatives that are being developed in alignment with the SDGs.

Establish a multi-stakeholder platform that fits the national context and priorities, such as an advisory council, committees or strategy hubs, among others.

Assume a cost-benefit approach and consider possible synergies when convening these actors: most of the countries have already established participation channels at national and subnational level in most of the SDG areas.

Contribute

to the review cycle

SDG structures must participate actively in the regional and international scenarios for follow-up and review (HLPF, regional forums), under a holistic and inclusive approach.

SDG structures must also follow-up the commitments and next steps expressed in their voluntary reviews, working based on evidence and data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated according to any characteristic that could be relevant in each national context.

Communicate

to broader constituencies

The 2030 Agenda is people-centered. Therefore, its implementation should involve the whole-of-society. Raising awareness about the contribution that each one can make to achieve sustainable development should be a priority.

SDGs structures must be open and responsive to accountability claims and processes from the development actors, including constituencies. This will let to empower citizens’ collaboration as key to implement and monitor the Goals.

Consolidate

The Holistic Approach

The SDG structures should have the duty to recommend or manage the strategy for SDG monitoring and innovative financial resources, bringing together national ministries, entities in charge of statistics, finance and international cooperation, with the aim to foster a holistic approach on the design of the SDGs national implementation and follow-up strategies.

Governments could increase their own information by promoting a reciprocal data sharing, partnering with non-governmental actors, such as private sector, to increase the data in quantity and quality.

5Cs
In the last paragraph of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development governments reaffirmed their "unwavering commitment to achieving this Agenda and utilizing it to the full to transform our world for the better by 2030". In Latin America the institutional first step has been taken, but we still need to improve the results to make that warm words turn into reality.