The SDGs in the UK:

Progress (and Priorities), Process, Participation

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(i) Progress and Priorities- Assessing the goals in the UK

A note on method: applicability vs. relevance

- You can talk about the *targets*, the *indicators*, and their combination

- SDGs widely *applicable*: that is, it makes sense to ask about them in the UK domestic context: approx. 170 of the UN's indicators are applicable to the UK like this

- But *relevance* uneven

- *Two kinds of case for relevance*:

(1) Combination of clear target ambition plus available data on relevant SDG indicator (same metric, or "near-neighbour")

- Enhanced by injunction to "leave no one behind" – attention to inequality and focus on most disadvantaged

-Becomes accountability resource (if not "comply", then "explain")

(2) Unclear SDG target and/or indicator, but addresses a current question

- Can prompt deliberation

Overall, plenty of UK relevance

The relevant targets are wide-ranging - beyond environment and international development:

- Poverty (by national definition) – multidimensional, including food insecurity
- Obesity and undernourishment
- Health and mental health
- Violence against women and girls
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Waste
- Housing
- Sustainable agriculture
- Water stress

There are more difficult areas – clearly relevant issues, but imprecise or unhelpful targets and/or indicators

- Valuing unpaid care; inclusive growth and equality; alcohol and substance abuse; transition to sustainable industry

- Not easy to generate priorities from this, even though that's what everyone wants…

(ii)Process - UK level

Policy:

•Before the election: overarching DFID plan/review of UK implementation at home and abroad

•Incorporation of SDGs (and indicators) into "refreshed" single departmental plans

Data:

•ONS will gather data on all UN global indicators

•consultation (understood to be on priorities, disaggregation) launches July (?)

Review:

•Parliamentary scrutiny – Environmental Audit Committee; Women and Equalities Committee; International Development Committee

•Plans for joined up, regular UK review?

- n.b. Devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland, have their own approaches

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Global:

- UN "capstone body" – annual HLPF - rolling programme of national reviews (Republic of Ireland to report in 2018?)

- UN body on indicators (with timetable for action, review)

- new UN forums on science, technology and innovation; partnerships

- Invigorated business engagement - UN Global Compact

Regional:

- EU level architecture under construction

- UN-ECE's "regional forum for sustainable development" (annual, feeds into HLPF), also work-in-progress

Participation:

- A theme within the Goals and Targets
- In goal 16 and beyond: a "means of implementation"

- A commitment of the SDG review framework at all levels:
  - Guiding principles on "participatory, inclusive, transparent" review

- A commitment of the SDG structures:
- HLPF has participatory modalities for civil society; focus on "leave no one behind" means commitment to hearing from disadvantaged

- A commitment in UK structures, too?

"consultation", open, publicly available data with ONS; "engagement, outreach" with parliamentary committees; a watchword of devolved structures in Scotland, Wales

- Overall, the SDGs promote participation and open government – they value it, encourage it, provide new forums for it.

- But they also *need* it: the SDGs don't automatically generate policies without deliberation and debate – public awareness (at what level?) powerful.

- DFID report:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agenda-2030-delivering-the-global-goals

- My assessment:

https://www.ukssd.co.uk/blog/dfids-approach-to-the-sdgs

- Parliamentary report – EAC: https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmenvaud/596/596.pdf

- Women and Equalities:

https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/885/885.pdf

- Summary of the Newcastle SDG project:

http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/environmental-audit-committee/sustainable-development-goals-in-the-uk/written/38378.pdf