Recommendations for Assessing and Reporting on Contributions toward the Sustainable Development Goals

Final Report for the Board of Trustees of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

October 14th, 2020

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I. Project Overview
Project Overview

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (FCG) engaged Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA) to develop a method to assess and report contributions toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for each of FCG’s operational and grantmaking programs and areas of intervention. RPA took the following steps:

- Conducted discovery and background research
- Analyzed SDG segmentation of existing initiatives
- Interviewed Unit teams
- Collaborated with Units on areas of focus
- Provided reporting framework to Units
- Reviewed & edited sample reports
- Produced final report & recommendations

Resources Created for FCG

16* sets of analyses and indicator menus highlighting activities and results through an SDG lens

Edited sample reports for three projects

Database with 30+ data points that includes for selected initiatives:
- Relevant SDG
- Relevant indicator(s)
- Calculations where applicable for indicators by initiative
- Communications strategy and recommendations

*In addition to 14 Organizational Units, this includes COVID-19 grants and Board of Trustees’ Memberships and Networks
# A Multi-Pronged Reporting Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RPA’s Process:</th>
<th>RPA’s Reporting Recommendations Provide:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessing</strong> existing reporting practice of each Unit</td>
<td><strong>A recommended minimum</strong> reporting level indicating SDGs and indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examining</strong> what data was already being collected</td>
<td><strong>A more outcomes-driven approach</strong> aimed at describing progress toward achievement of SDGs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussing</strong> program goals with each Unit</td>
<td>Recommendations and tips for <strong>narrative and qualitative approaches</strong>, including highlights, storytelling, and personal interview responses to enhance outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended</strong> reporting framework (indicators included), separated into short- and long-term, to help measure impact</td>
<td><strong>Units may select from a menu of options to highlight their work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drafting</strong> recommendations and <strong>iterating</strong> with Units to achieve an agreed-upon document</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Report Format Example: Art Library and Archives

The new format includes narrative description, SDG definitions, visuals, visual data, and storytelling to highlight compelling accomplishments in 1-2 pages.

Page 1

The Rockefeller Foundation (New York, 1940), an offshoot of the Carnegie corporation of New York, was established to support the worldwide applications of medical research. The Foundation's mission is to support global partnerships that improve the health and well-being of vulnerable populations. This mission is achieved through the support of research, education, and collaboration among scientists, policymakers, and health-care providers.

Page 2

In 2005, we highlight the incorporation of creative programs into museums' cultural collections as well as new model "archives," which are extremely valuable resources to understand Portuguese contemporary artistic expression. Combining ethnographic and artistic research, this collection is an example of how museums and cultural institutions can contribute to the understanding of the country's history.

In 2010, the Rockefeller Foundation established a partnership with the Portuguese Cultural Institute to support the creation of a new museum dedicated to Portuguese contemporary art. The museum, located in the historic center of Lisbon, features a collection of over 1,000 works by Portuguese and international artists. The museum's mission is to provide a platform for the exploration and appreciation of contemporary art and culture. The museum is open to the public and is free of charge.
II. Why Align with the SDGs and Agenda 2030
Why Align with the SDGs and 2030 Agenda

- More effective program planning and assessment processes within FCG
- FCG gains increased sector leadership
- Enhanced internal and external communication
- New opportunities to share highlights and impact of FCG’s work
More Effective Program Planning and Assessment Processes

Address inconsistency of definitions and measurement *among* programs, and *between* programs and departments and the outside world (a common problem in the philanthropy sector)

Measure outcomes and longer-term impact instead of a focus on measuring inputs, outputs, and activities

Use proven targets to support positive social, environmental and economic transformation instead of arbitrary target-setting
Increased Sector Leadership

Become a leader in Portugal, within Europe, and internationally, in measuring and reporting its work through an SDG lens

Generate positive peer pressure among other foundations

Expand FCG’s visibility on this subject and global reach

Find new partners and themes supporting systemic change and impact
Enhanced Internal and External Communications

**Internal**
- Provides a common language for impact
- Expresses strategic priorities across Units
- Examines and reports on work in a more holistic way

**External**
- Connects to work of other institutions
- Attracts government partnerships, especially in PALOP countries
- Leverages memberships in various networks and organizations
New Opportunities to Share Highlights and Impact of FCG’s Work

SDG-specific events increase reach potential partnerships, and ability to share progress and learning

UN processes and government and business convenings catalyze tipping points for transformation because these sectors have far greater reach and resources

SDG lens reporting in FCG’s Annual Report will attract new readership and expand knowledge among current constituents
## Despite SDG Benefits, Many Foundations Don’t Use Them

### Benefits
- Provide a common framework for collaborative action
- Catalyze opportunities to leverage philanthropy’s more limited resources with official funding, government policy-making, and that of other foundations
- Enhance rigor in planning, monitoring, and evaluation
- Created by experts with significant and global civil society input over several years

### Barriers
- Human and financial resources needed to launch a new planning, assessment and reporting system
- Learning required among staff
- Resistance on a board of trustees or leadership level even for institutions generally supportive of (or even funding) the SDGs
III. Recommendations for Implementation
Recommendation 1: Agree Priority SDGs for the Foundation

Decide and ensure your leadership and teams are aligned on the top SDGs on which you will focus, across all Units. We recommend these 7 as they most closely align with your strategic priorities, your mission areas, and perspectives shared during our interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Mission Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion and Social Integration</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Sustainability</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Knowledge</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through</td>
<td>Charity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Illustrative *

* Based on the projects analyzed in the context of this exercise.
Recommendation 2: Agree on 15-20 Priority Targets

- Focus on no more than 20 priority targets across FCG to help drive internal alignment, common language, and to highlight interrelationships among units
- Finalize selection based on strategic priorities, current programs, and organizational mission
- Recommended targets based on analysis, findings, and research

Recommendation 3: Build Buy-in and Staff Agreement

Empowerment of this process and those leading it to drive change will help improve planning outcomes and impact. Staff will be expected to understand the SDGs better, and how SDG clusters are mutually reinforcing.
Recommendation 4: Operationalize Across Planning, M&E and Reporting Functions

1. Set goals and annual reporting timeline and guidelines
2. Finalize SDG Targets selection for each Unit
3. Agree criteria for selection of projects to be analyzed (see more details on following page)
4. Survey staff to determine additional resources needed to implement
5. Adjust the internal system so that each initiative can be coded for SDGs
6. Determine cross-Unit research methods (e.g., joint surveys)
7. Liaise between Units and Communications Team to harmonize reporting efforts
Recommendation 4 (continued): Potential Criteria for Projects and Lines of Work to be Analyzed

- **For materiality,** choose those with larger budgets
- **For funder accountability,** choose those for which you sought external partners
- **For beneficiary accountability,** choose those aiming to serve marginalized or particularly vulnerable groups
- **For coherence,** choose those that align with foundation-wide priorities
- **For learning,** choose those that are perceived as particularly successful or as failures
- **To document impact,** choose those reaching large populations or seen as transformative
- **To understand ingredients for scaling,** choose those that promise ripple effects
Recommendation 5: Institutionalize by Clarifying Expectations and Building Capacity

- Increase budget for collecting SDG data
- Focus data collection on improving impact
- Assess capacity needs for monitoring and evaluation
- Select evaluation partners familiar with the SDGs
- Provide training on new types of reporting needed
- Align on and communicate what reporting is no longer needed
Recommendation 6: Integrate the SDGs into FCG Communications

Announce commitment to SDGs publicly
- Promote meetings and roundtables with other Foundations and philanthropic networks to publicly communicate and promote SDG alignment
- Participate in interviews, podcasts, presentations, editorials to discuss reasons for change to highlight SDGs, leadership and build internal momentum

Report progress
- Include SDGs reporting into Annual Report within each Unit section to highlight the integrated nature of SDGs throughout the FCG
- Use central writer to create SDG highlights report that articulates activities related to key SDGs and priority targets across FCG, to be shared in Annual Report and on website

Incorporate SDGs references broadly
- Note key SDGs and priority SDG Targets for initiatives when discussed
- Include references on website, written materials
- Highlight SDGs in internal communication on a regular basis to encourage additional sharing and alignment
Recommendation 6: Integrate the SDGs into FCG Communications

Throughout the process, share data

• Seek out platforms such as SDGfunders.org to share information about financial contributions towards a specific SDG and the SDG Philanthropy Platform to align with other donors about events and themes
• Seek out opportunities to share the new lens at conferences and other events hosted by organizations in which FCG is a member or partner
• Participate in global conferences outside of FCG’s normal scope that may be focused on relevant SDG themes, to share FCG’s work more broadly
• Host workshops and SDG events at FCG’s headquarters and Delegations, as appropriate
Appendix
General Guidelines for Reporting on the SDGs

• The communications approach for your overall reporting should be to contextualize, amplify key initiatives and outcomes, and simplify, while ensuring an approachable, robust publication. Information “roll-ups”, repeated framing, navigation clues, cross references, sub-titles, bullets, clear hierarchy and hyperlinks (for online versions) will help with this.

• Don’t feel as though you must report on every SDG, every measure, and every program. With too much information, it is difficult for the reader to know what is important. For each unit, you should aim to report only on the most relevant SDG(s) based on:
  • The SDG upon which the business unit will have the most impact and best reflects your work
  • Consideration of your commitments and goals as articulated in Gulbenkian’s 2018 – 2022 Strategy
  • How compelling the relevant SDG is to your target audience outside your unit (leadership, the Board, the public, etc.)
  • What information or insights will provide the most learning for your colleagues and program partners or community members
  • Insights that are most topical in terms of current issues in society.
• To the extent possible, use graphics, tables and charts for reporting on the SDGs
• Given the detail currently in your annual reports, putting the SDG information in summary tables will make it more concise and easier to tie directly to the targets and reduce the potential for redundancy with the highly informative and detailed approach FCG Units typically take
• Ensure all SDG reporting follows the 4Cs:
  • Concise—focus on key priorities and the most significant information
  • Consistent—across units and done in a way that can show trends over time
  • Current—not just the past, but also show where you are heading
  • Comparable—to allow for benchmarking and evaluation by peers
• A potential chart at the beginning of a report could show a high-level overview.
  • Have the SDGs across the top of a table and the initiatives in the left column, categorized by color based on which of the three major areas they fall within (Art and Culture, Innovation and Sustainable Development; Science and Knowledge).
    • Include a check or dot for the SDG that each initiative relates to
    • In the far-right column, include a brief global statement of the goal of that initiative
  • At the bottom of the relevant SDGs, you could paraphrase the SDG targets to which Gulbenkian’s initiatives for that SDG relate. If this is too varied across the initiatives, you can address later in the report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arts and Culture</th>
<th>4 📖</th>
<th>17 🌍</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Understanding, artistic activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Musical culture and creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Legacy, engagement, education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Support</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Innovation in literature and performing arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Role of the Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Cohesion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Innovation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society and Democracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To help contextualize, each section could have a similar chart highlighting the SDGs for that section, with an added level of detail such as the specific SDG targets for that section.

- For example, at the beginning of the Innovation and Sustainable Development section, there could be a call-out box after the introduction to that section highlighting the different sub-sections along with the SDG goals each of those sub-categories speak to.

- Further, relevant initiatives within each sub-category, could have a box with a similar background color that highlights the specific initiative, goal, and target (see below in the Guidance for Individual Unit Reporting section for additional detail on what that might include).

- This approach allows one to get a big picture view, while also seeing additional detail where appropriate.
Guidance for Individual Unit Reporting

Each unit should have a consistent approach to their reporting of the SDGs – for consistency and to help report compiler or writer.

Creating a template for units will be helpful.

Units will need to rely on the recommendations from RPA regarding SDG Targets and monitoring and reporting.

Foundation-specific goals should be included, contextualized with the SDG Target.

Goals should be framed as SMART to the extent possible to help measure, monitor and communicate in a compelling manner.
SDG Reporting Questions (Template) for Units

- Initiative Name:
- Key goal for the initiative:
- If the goal is achieved, what SDG is it most closely aligned with?
- For the primary SDG, what information are you measuring / including to support your statement of where you stand on that goal? (This information will be based on a selection of the monitoring/reporting suggestions provided in the recommendations from RPA.)
- What activities were undertaken relative to that goal?
- What outputs have been generated through those activities?
- What are the outcomes; what changes have occurred in the target audience?
- What changes more broadly have occurred as a result of the outputs of the activities?
- Fill out the following table for each key initiative impacting the SDGs.
# SDG Targets and Goals Table (Template) for Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY GOAL FOR INITIATIVE</th>
<th>PRIMARY SDG ADDRESSED</th>
<th>WHERE YOU STAND ON KEY GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 2 for initiative</td>
<td>Other SDGs addressed</td>
<td>Status on goal 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 3 for initiative</td>
<td>Other SDGs addressed</td>
<td>Status on goal 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes on filling out table:

- Limit each goal to one sentence if possible
- Express goal in the context of the SDG targets relevant to that goal to the extent possible
- Status for goals can be up to three sentences
Additional Suggestions

- Assign one team or person to be responsible to “roll up” the reporting by the individual business units
- Leverage Communications team or independent writer to unify reporting
- Highlight SDGs in each section where applicable, but ensure detail is less, the higher the hierarchy of the report section
- Ensure consistent formatting in terms of graphics and background for the SDGs call outs to create a through-line
### Other Potential Graphics to Consider

#### Materiality vs. Theme vs. Related SDGs (Target Numbers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materiality</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Related SDGs (Target Numbers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Enhancement of Local Industrial Bases & Quality of life                     | Development of the Social Infrastructure  | Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (3.8)  
Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation (8.1, 9.4, 9.5, 9.9, 9.10)  
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (11.2) |
| Provision of Safe, Reliable Products and Services                           | Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (6.1) |