

# DanChurchAid and the Sustainable Development Goals



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**The Sustainable Development Goals present a new avenue for global cooperation** and provide a strong global framework for holding governments accountable to their global commitments on a range of interlinked issues. Civil society and the private sector play an important role in this process; notably in clarifying how the SDGs can be implemented and measured as well as holding various actors accountable. Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the global goals, and all governments have equal responsibility for their realisation. Instead of the asymmetrical relationship often seen in the interactions between developed and developing countries, the SDGs present a framework for true cooperation around the delivery of *global public goods* and respect for human rights.

**DanChurchAid works to empower the world's poorest people** in their struggle for a life in dignity. Our work is based on a Christian view of humanity with respect for every individual's human rights and equal worth. DanChurchAid is rooted in the Danish National Evangelical Lutheran Church, but is active wherever we find the need is highest, regardless of religion, gender, political beliefs, race, national or ethnic origins, disabilities or sexual orientation.

**Our values and aims remain unchanged.** DCA will continue its response to challenges to sustainable development and humanitarian action based on three international goals: Save lives, Build resilient communities and Fight extreme inequality. In order to achieve these goals our work is organised into four focus areas: Active citizenship, Right to Food, Humanitarian Action and Safer Communities.

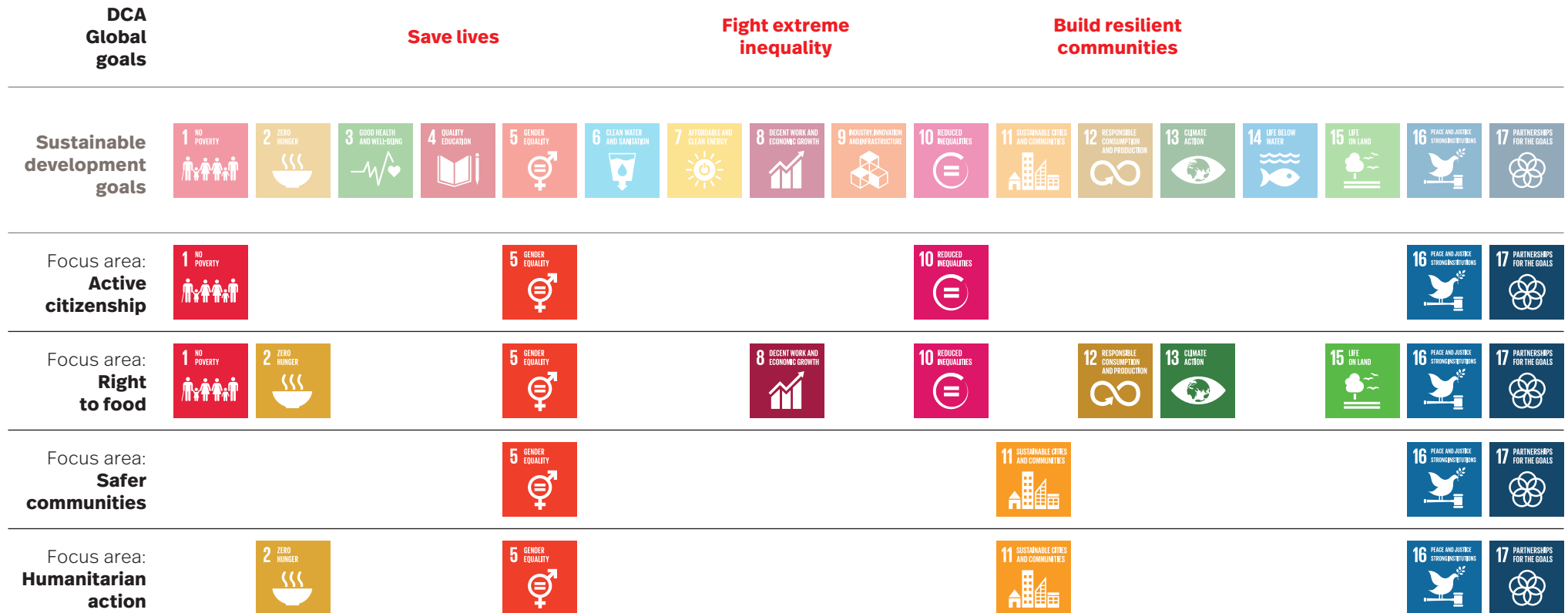
**DCA will contribute to the implementation of the SDGs** based on the realisation that each context is different. The way each country programme emphasises the goals and works depends on the national context. It is thus not realistic to outline a universal presentation of how DCA's goals interlink with the 17 SDGs, targets and 169 indicators. Moreover, the SDG's are interconnected and as is clear from the illustration below, each focus area entails working with several SDGs simultaneously.

**Our rights-based and gender equality approach reinforces the realisation of the SDGs.** DCA remains committed to respecting human rights standards and principles throughout DCA's work and partnerships. SDG number 5 *Gender Equality* and SDG number 16 *Peace and Justice – Strong Institutions* therefore cuts across all of DCA's work and partnerships. This focus is essential to realise the SDG commitment to “leave no one behind”. We support local strategies for building knowledge and action on human rights and holding governments and other actors to account to their duties and responsibilities. There is a need to ensure commitments to equal rights for women and men, commitments to finance gender equality work, and to pay more attention to faith based organizations on gender equality since they play a critical role in maintaining or transforming norms and practices.

To further strengthen the fulfilment of the SDGs, DCA has decided to take up the challenge of **working in strategic partnerships with the private sector** in achieving the goals. DCA will strive to see that the principle of SDG number 17 *Partnerships for the Goals* is addressed throughout DCA's work and partnerships. This entails entering into innovative partnerships, adopting new technology and financing development differently.

It is thus plausible that more than one focus area delivers on the same SDG. However, clarifying which SDGs each focus area relates to enables us to communicate clearly **how the work of DCA contributes to the achievement of the SDGs.**

In the following we will first make clear how each programme interlinks with the SDGs and subsequently sketch how DCA works in partnerships with civil society and the private sector to contribute to the implementation of the SDGs for sustainable development.



## Active Citizenship

Over half of the world's population live in countries where their possibilities, individually or collectively, to influence their own development, the nature of their government and the provision of state services are severely restricted. Women's participation in decision-making, although progressing, remains low: 22% of all national parliamentarians are female. Gender-based violence continues at alarmingly high rates: 35% of women worldwide have experienced some form of sexual or physical violence in their lifetime. At the same time, civil society actors, who challenge these inequalities and injustices, face increasing restrictions to organise and express themselves safely. The SDGs recognise the importance of inclusive decision-making and accountable institutions for sustainable development and the protection of fundamental freedoms.

DCA's overall **policy goal** under Active Citizenship is that impoverished and discriminated women and men and representative civil society organisations enjoy their right to participate.

DCA works for the following **changes** in relation to this overall goal:

- Institutions and norms are challenged and reformed so that poor men and women can organise, express themselves, access information, are protected from all forms of discrimination and violence, and can hold governments to account
- Poor women and men and representative civil society organisations are empowered to fight against all forms of discrimination and positively influence local and national decision-making structures and processes
- Abused women and men and civil society actors at risk or persecuted have increased access to justice and other forms of protection

### DCA Active citizenship intervention areas



- We support community-based budget monitoring and tracking to ensure that those living in extreme poverty have increased access to government resources and programmes
- We support advocacy at the national level for more equitable distribution of public services and resources



- Through partnerships, we support women's increased influence in local and national decision-making structures
- We aim to prevent violence against women, early marriages and other harmful practices and challenge gender stereotypes
- We support advocacy for gender equal electoral laws and processes



- We support advocacy against all forms of discrimination through changes in or better implementation of laws, policies and implementation practices
- We work with partners, including faith-based leaders, to support inclusive societal norms, values and traditions and to challenge harmful and discriminatory ones



- We work for the poor's increased access to justice through gender sensitive formal and informal justice mechanisms
- We advocate for accountable public services that are accessible for all
- We support strategies aimed at challenging corrupt norms and practices
- We facilitate mobilization and advocacy for right to information laws and the use of these laws in partners' advocacy and monitoring work
- We support partner advocacy for the protection of citizens' rights to organize, express themselves and peacefully assemble



- We support advocacy for an enabling environment for independent civil society so that they can also effectively participate in multi-stakeholder partnerships
- We support partners who use ICT technology to monitor human rights violations in real time
- We support the local strategies of partners and communities, facilitating capacity building according to their needs

## Right to food

Currently, almost one billion people are denied their right to food and go to bed hungry. Insufficient food results in poor physical and mental performance, deteriorating health, insufficient energy to participate in democratic processes and deprives people of human dignity. With more equitable access to resources and knowledge, women and men can produce more than enough to feed everyone on the planet – provided that we carefully integrate adaptation to climate change. The importance of food is reflected in several of the SDGs and corresponds well with DCA's work on the Right to Food. The intervention areas are complex and overlapping; however, the linkages are illustrated in the table below.

DCA's overall **policy goal** under Right to Food is that vulnerable and marginalised women and men in rural communities enjoy their right to food. DCA works for the following **changes** in relation to this overall goal:

- Rights Holders in rural communities can access knowledge, services and inputs necessary to secure livelihoods, and can access social protection schemes in situations where governments do not fulfil their obligations. At household, community and national levels, equitable access to food is achieved by addressing social and cultural barriers.
- Rights holders are empowered to fight for their rights and understand how to counter the dynamics of exclusion. They can use this knowledge to become engaged in and influence decision making processes and budget allocations to gain control of productive resources (including land, water, livestock, inputs and knowledge) to secure income generation for sustainable and resilient livelihoods.
- Governments take on their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food by creating an inclusive framework, establishing adequate institutions and monitoring mechanisms. In times of disaster, governments should ensure timely assistance.
- Governments and other duty bearers, in both developed and developing countries, adopt bold policies, agreements and take concrete action to combat and adapt to climate change.

### DCA Right to food intervention areas




- We work with the poorest in rural areas to get access to financial entitlements by organising Village Savings and Loans Associations, small-scale production and creating entry points into value chains for an improved and stable income. We strengthen social capabilities by organising communities around awareness of their right to development



- We work with farmers and other small-scale producers to enhance their human capabilities to intensify production and promote achievement of their entitlements to natural resources and inputs. We strengthen their political capabilities to participate in decision-making at policy level for long-term changes in resource allocation and sustainable ways to fight hunger.



- We work to promote equal access to natural resources, agricultural inputs and decision-making in agriculture in order to tap the potential women hold to increase production and to use it for improved nutrition, health and income generation at household level. The ensuing economic empowerment of women contributes to gender equality in other areas too. 

## DCA Right to food intervention areas - continued



- We work to promote farmers' access to markets by enhancing income generation opportunities, local saving and loan systems, and promote pro-poor business models for inclusive growth.



- We support rural farmers and pastoralists who often represent the poorest segments of society in terms of economic powers and political influence. Lifting them out of poverty significantly reduces inequality. We also work to restrict access to land and other productive resources by foreign and national rich investors when this is detrimental to the local farmers and pastoralists, preventing rising inequality.



- We are combatting food waste and promoting responsible consumption in Denmark through our "food waste supermarket" Wefood



- We promote local agricultural adaptation techniques that strengthen resilient livelihoods and incorporate Disaster Risk Reduction measures.
- We emphasise climate change as an overall global advocacy theme for DCA, including adaptation, climate finance and "loss and damage" at Danish, EU and International levels.



- We promote agro-ecology to strengthen and link key areas of resilient livelihood systems; access, availability and adequacy of food, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.



- We work to make rural people aware of their right to food linked up to international and national documents and including them in processes where they gain access to resources, decision-making on resource use and justice systems.



- We work to strengthen partnerships between civil society organisations, the research community working on food related issues, the private sector and international initiatives (such as the FAO VGGT implementation process) to highlight common objectives and work towards fair and just access to resources and influence; production systems and value chains.

## Safer Communities

Over 1.5 billion people are affected by instability, violence, and armed conflict. When institutions fail to provide security, when violence breaks out and rule of law is weak or absent, what is left is the community and its people. It is here that our work to save lives and build resilience must take place. And it is here, too, that the route to peaceful and inclusive societies has to start. At local level. So our policy for Safer Communities centres on strengthening local initiatives that promote security and contribute to conflict resolution. We complement work with state institutions – the police, for example – that start at national level. We do that through local, ‘bottom-up’, community-owned and led activities and approaches to security, safety, and conflict resolution. Safer communities work begins with protection during conflict. It is also an essential element of recovery from it, and it contributes to broader peacebuilding efforts.

DCA’s **policy goal** under Safer Communities is to protect lives and livelihoods threatened by conflict or its longer-term effects. We want to see these **changes**:

- Lives saved and free movement secured, because threats posed by armed violence and explosive remnants of war are removed.
- Resilient communities built, because communities’ efforts to mitigate and overcome conflict-related needs and threats to livelihood have succeeded, and because sustainable capacity is in place to continue the work as long as it is needed.
- Inequality successfully fought, because of powerful advocacy for the rights of conflict-affected communities with duty bearers, and at international level through disarmament treaties and work to strengthen the norms surrounding the Law of Armed Conflict.

### DCA Safer communities intervention areas



- We work to ensure commitment to equal rights for women and men, and to challenge cultural norms that run counter to these commitments. We recognise, promote and support in particular the role of women in peacebuilding, and will employ women in high-visibility leadership and skilled roles when working with local communities.



- We clear life-threatening detritus of war and provide communities and displaced with life-saving knowledge of the risks associated with explosive remains. In doing so, we pave the way to safe reconstruction after conflict.



- We conduct advocacy and information to communities and, indirectly, armed groups, on the central tenets of International Humanitarian Law.



- We build local partners’ understanding and capacity to carry out armed violence reduction work, community safety planning, clearance of explosive hazards and risk education.

## Humanitarian action

The world is facing unprecedented challenges in human history. Climate change is affecting the frequency, intensity and patterns of natural hazards that develop into disasters and erode people's livelihood systems in both the short and long term. The growth and changing age composition of the world's population and the accelerating urbanisation increases pressure on natural resources. This pushes impoverished people into unsustainable livelihood practices in many developing countries and contributes to the increase in disasters in both numbers and scale. On the background of diminishing respect for humanitarian principles and Humanitarian Law, a growing number of major violent conflicts contributes to the current humanitarian challenges. Global forced displacement reached a record-high number with 60 million people displaced in 2015.

DCA Humanitarian action relates to a variety of the SDGs as there is a natural linkage between emergency preparedness and response, disaster risk reduction and development, and DCA and our partners have a comparative advantage as partners are locally based and most often work with both emergency response and longer-term development.

DCA's overall **policy goal** under Humanitarian Action is that marginalised and vulnerable women and men, boys and girls have increased resilience to anticipate, withstand and recover from disaster and conflict; and that they, when disaster strikes, enjoy equal assistance and protection of their life and dignity.

DCA works for the following **changes** in relation to this overall goal:

- Disaster and conflict affected women and men, boys and girls have equal access to assistance and protection, building on local capacities and protecting livelihoods.
- Vulnerable and marginalised groups in communities exposed to conflict and natural hazards engage and influence decision-making processes that affect their exposure to risks, the response provided during disasters and the opportunities for sustainable recovery.
- Governments, institutions and humanitarian and development organisations systematically address the risks from natural hazards, climate change and conflict in an inclusive manner. Governments take on their responsibility for providing timely assistance according to international standards ensuring protection of those affected.
- DCA and our partner organisations are transparent, accountable and have enhanced capacity for disaster response, protection of rights, and mitigation of risks from natural hazards and conflict.

### DCA Humanitarian action intervention areas



- We work to ensure sustainable access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food, increase agricultural outputs and secure opportunities for value addition by host communities and refugees.
- We work to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate change and disasters.



- We work to ensure commitments to equal rights and access to protection and assistance for women and men, boys and girls.



- We work actively to reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected by disasters by protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.
- We work to strengthen communities' resilience towards disasters and their capacity to mitigate climate-related natural hazards.



- In our advocacy and our humanitarian practices, we work to strengthen the accountability, capacity and participation of developing countries and NGO's based in developing countries with regard to emergency preparedness and ability to respond to disasters and humanitarian crises.



- We work with local partners, authorities and communities who are most often the first responders to disaster to strengthen their response capacity and support them when crisis strikes.
- We support the local strategies of partners and communities, facilitating capacity building according to their priorities and needs



## HOW DCA WORKS IN PARTNERSHIPS WITH **CIVIL SOCIETY** AND THE **PRIVATE SECTOR** ON THE SDG AGENDA

### **Working in civil society partnerships**

The SDGs provide an important framework for DCA to strengthen its participation with local partners around this common development agenda. The SDGs represent an advocacy opportunity for DCA to make targeted interventions to hold governments, the EU and the private sector accountable to tackling root causes to poverty and global inequalities in our global advocacy. The SDGs also provide a new opportunity for advocating for coherent policy frameworks at all levels.

DCA's civil society partnerships can contribute to the SDG goals in the following ways:

#### **Partner-led advocacy at national level**

DCA's civil society partnerships can have an important role in facilitating and representing the diverse interests of the population, particularly the most vulnerable, in the implementation of the SDGs.

Minority groups, women, Dalits, indigenous peoples, migrants need to be heard, so that no one is left behind in the SDG National Action Plans. Civil society partnerships can facilitate this.

Civil society partnerships can also contribute to the monitoring of National Action Plans and the degree to which the government meets its obligations. With the increasing role of the private sector in the implementation of the SDGs, civil society partnerships also have a key role in monitoring whether businesses respect human rights when operating within their communities.

However, in order for civil society actors to do this, there must be space for them to organise, assemble and express themselves. The international community has recognised CSOs as development actors in their own right in the Accra Agenda for Action 2008 and Busan Partnership for Effective Development 2011. Although DCA notes with regret that an indicator measuring the enabling environment for civil society is not explicitly included in the SDG framework, it sees it as embedded under Goal 17, particularly through the indicator on Multi-Stakeholder Development Effectiveness Frameworks (SDG 17.16.1). DCA will therefore continue via its faith-based networks to advocate for the effective monitoring of the enabling environment for civil society within, among others, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

#### **Programmes and projects**

In addition to their advocacy role, DCA's civil society partnerships contribute to the SDGs via their direct support and capacity-building of marginalised women and men. As indicated in the previous sections around DCA thematic areas, there is a strong link between the work supported under our programmes and a range of SDG goals and indicators.

#### **In our global advocacy**

As part of our global advocacy strategies, DCA will contribute to monitor the implementation of the SDGs through selected interventions at the Danish, EU and international levels. DCA will advocate for using the SDGs as a global framework for policy coherence in Denmark's foreign and development policies. As described in DCA's global advocacy strategy on land rights and responsible business (2016-2018), DCA will monitor the Danish government's implementation of the SDGs in relation to Denmark's national action plan on global policies, but not in relation to domestic policies. The Danish CSO networks, Global Focus and The g2-Group, have the primary role of monitoring Denmark's implementation of the SDGs.

In relation to mainly Danish companies and investors, DCA will push for the private sector's positive contribution to the realisation of the SDGs and prevention of negative impacts on all the SDGs, not just selected ones. The global advocacy strategy on land rights and responsible business focuses on DCA's role to push for both "doing good" in line with the SDGs, and "doing no harm" in line with the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights.

At the EU level, DCA is represented in the ACT EU focal point group on the SDGs, which monitors the EU's implementation of the Agenda 2030. DCA will contribute to share information among members and share inputs on relevant ACT EU positions, but will not be very actively involved.

## Working in partnerships with the private sector to achieve the SDGs

The SDGs are an important, strategic opportunity for civil society and businesses to collaborate on developing sustainable business opportunities that enable the realization of the SDGs. It is widely recognized that the private sector will play a key role in achieving the SDGs, for example by mobilizing long-term private finance and generating innovative technologies. The principles of shared responsibilities between governments and the private sector to reduce inequality and preserve natural resources are core to the SDGs, just like civil society has a key role in advocating for inclusive opportunities for all.

### How can private sector partnerships leverage DCA goals and the SDGs?

DCA considers the SDGs a historic opportunity to promote sustainable business solutions that benefit the world's poorest. Engaging with the private sector is one of the means to achieve our global goals. Addressing the main global development challenges requires cooperation of governments, businesses and civil society at local, national and international level. DCA therefore believes in a multi-stakeholder cooperation to solve the SDG challenges, because the main challenges do not respect the boundaries of sectors and require a high degree of coordination.

DCA's business-to-business strategy has the following objectives:

- Enhance access to technology, investment and know-how for some of the poorest people in the countries, we work.
- Creating awareness and actions by businesses in support of inclusive and sustainable business models, which seek to eradicate poverty and prevent negative human rights impacts when operating in developing countries.

As civil society actors with expertise on pro-poor inclusion in the world's emerging economies, DCA and partners can help bridge the gaps (both physical and knowledge) between the world's poorest and the business sector. Through multisector cooperation with governments and investors, civil society organisations can play an important role in promoting inclusive growth and impact investment models, which enable small businesses and farmers to link up to market value chains.

Following our rights-based commitment, DCA also aims to contribute to responsible business behavior that enhance positive impacts and prevent negative impacts on local communities and society. This is why DCA combines its partnership approach with global advocacy strategy on land rights and responsible business.

### Which role can DCA play in partnership with the private sector?

Not all companies are aware that their business model link to one or more of the SDG challenges, or know how to incorporate the SDGs into their business case. DCA can assist companies in targeting the SDGs and add value in a partnership by sharing our insights, knowledge, and expertise on how to turn risks into SDG opportunities.

We can help identify and prime projects triggering a process whereby a project can become suitable for investment by institutional investors such as investment funds or other private actors. We can thus play an important role as incubators and provide testing and data collection in the field, before the project is scaled up in order for larger investments to take place, while at the same time providing opportunities for sustainable growth and job creation for the benefit of the world's poorest..

For example:

**SDG2 (End hunger and achieve food security):** Together with GAIN Nordic partners, DCA seeks to develop solutions that

strengthen local value chains and involve smallholder farmers to promote food security and access to markets.

**SDG11 (Inclusive cities and human settlements):** DCA cooperates with ROCKWOOL A/S to develop innovative solutions for housing/settlement in refugee camps (Northern Kenya is first test point).

**SDG12 (Responsible consumption):** DCA runs Denmark's first supermarket, Wefood, which sells surplus food and goods at 30-50% lower than normal prices, turning overconsumption to a concrete SDG solution for business and consumers.

**SDG17 (Partnerships and means of implementation):** DCA can help gear financial investments in a pro-poor direction and promote inclusive business solutions that benefit the world's poorest through policy dialogue and multi-stakeholder partnerships with governments, companies and other actors.

DCA can work with companies by giving insights into local needs, demands and market conditions; facilitating access to local partners with expert knowledge of local conditions within specific areas; and pinpointing deficiencies in local value chains and possible solutions. DCA also has knowledge and expertise on global development challenges, including how to adhere to international standards on business and human rights.

### Policy recommendations: The role of the private sector in furthering the achievement of the SDGs

1. Seek, develop and finance business opportunities on specific SDGs, and promote business models which incorporate sustainability and human rights at their core;
2. Implement the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights (UNGPs) to prevent, address and mitigate potential negative impacts on all human rights and all SDGs;
3. Promote good governance, law and order, and anti-corruption, and contribute to society through taxation;
4. Define, measure and report transparently about business impacts on economic, environmental and social capital.