



Cornerstone UN SDG Series: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Investing to Align with SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions highlights the role of governments and institutions in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. To achieve the SDGs, governments and private institutions must be held accountable. Corruption, crime, bribery, and any number of unacceptable behaviors that are rampant in countries around the world must be addressed and ultimately eradicated. Moreover, violence against marginalized groups – whether on the basis of religion, geography, class, race, ethnicity or other factors – must be stopped. The realization of peace and justice and access to such things as housing, education, healthcare, food and nutrition requires strong institutions and governments that are held accountable for putting the needs of their people above the interests of their leaders.

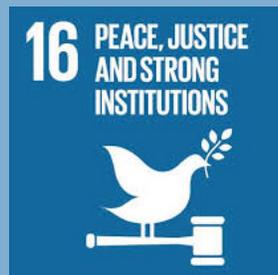
Progress toward SDG 16 underpins all of the other SDGs. Peace, justice and strong institutions can facilitate better use of human capital and financial resources, which can result in attracting more investment capital and spurring economic growth in a country or a community. The synergies between SDG 16 and other goals are highlighted below.



Access to Fair Treatment and Equal Opportunity

The World Bank Group considers corruption a major challenge to ending extreme poverty by 2030 and boosting shared prosperity for the poorest people in developing countries. Corruption, a major barrier to fair treatment, has a huge impact on the poor and vulnerable, increasing costs and reducing access to services, including health, education and justice. Corruption impedes investment, with consequent effects on social and economic stability, growth and jobs. Elimination of corruption and unfair practices will lead to more efficient use of human and financial resources, resulting in more investment capital and ultimately better economic growth.¹

Much of the world's costliest forms of corruption could not happen without institutions in wealthy nations: the private sector firms that give large bribes, the financial institutions that accept corrupt proceeds, and the lawyers and accountants who facilitate corrupt transactions.² To ensure fair treatment and equal opportunity, corporations must commit to and be held accountable to fair and just practices and have good corporate governance practices in place. Moreover, civil society institutions must be supported and allowed to thrive so that they can advocate for the rights of marginalized people and hold governments accountable. Finally, government institutions – including elected officials and bureaucrats – must abide by the laws of their nations, and enact new laws if their laws are fundamentally unjust, if we are to realize a true vision of world with equal opportunity and fair treatment for all.³



What are the UN SDGs?

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals set by the UN General Assembly in 2015. The SDGs are a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. The SDGs are part of Resolution 70/1 of the UNGA titled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” now referred to as the “2030 Agenda”.

What are the UN SDGs designed to do?

The SDGs are designed to address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, sustainability, and peace and justice. They represent a call to action for governments, civil society, international organizations, and the private sector to align their activities with the social, environmental and economic changes needed to ensure the continued viability of our planet and the dignity of societies and individuals.



Investing to achieve
peace, justice, and
strong institutions



Access to Adequate Housing and Living Conditions

Inadequate housing affects millions of people in urban areas as well as rural areas. A chronic lack of adequate housing is one of the major challenges of urbanization as people migrate from rural areas to cities. Densely populated urban areas that experience crowding, run-down housing, poverty and social disorganization experience greater violence and instability. Reducing the rate of violence against women, people with disabilities, and poor people, and ridding the world of the scourge of human trafficking, will require a fundamental redesign of how communities are organized, the conditions in which they live, and ultimately, their access to resources. This kind of transformation in how people live will require legitimate and effective governments and investment that focus on the well-being of people and communities.⁴

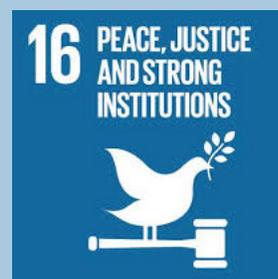


About the Cornerstone SDG Series

By providing a brief overview of each of the UN SDGs, Cornerstone Capital Group seeks to help investors understand how incorporating SDG alignment into their investment decisions can contribute to progress. Because the SDGs were not created specifically with investors in mind, Cornerstone effectively “translates” them into investment opportunities by focusing on the concept of access: the ability of individuals and societies to achieve desired social, economic and environmental outcomes. We believe that investing in products, services and systems that increase access is key to driving progress toward the SDGs.

At Cornerstone, we believe that investments can achieve competitive financial performance and positive societal impact – performance that sacrifices nothing, except indifference.

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(1) The World Bank, Combating Corruption, 2018; (2) Ibid; (3) United Nations and the Rule of Law: Equality and Non-discrimination; (4) Habitat for Humanity, Adequate housing included in the Sustainable Development Goals, 2015.