SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UNSD-DFID PROJECT ON SDG MONITORING

MODULE 2

Introduction to metadata
Module structure

- What is metadata?
- Why is metadata important?
- Some issues relevant to metadata
- Examples
What is metadata?
What is metadata?

- Quite simply, metadata are **data that defines or describes other data**.
- Metadata **helps explain and understand the data** or values being presented.

The **African Charter for Statistics**:

> “the range of information, **generally textual**, that fosters understanding of the context in which statistical data have been collected, processed and analyzed with the objective of creating statistical information …”
What is metadata

• Data labels, definitions, description of methodology, legends, source information, *footnotes* are all examples of metadata.

But why does it make a difference?
Why does metadata make a difference?

WHAT?

HOW?

WHERE?

WHEN?
Why does metadata make a difference?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>57.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oceania*</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>13.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern and South-Eastern Asia</td>
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<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Africa and Western Asia</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>World</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Oceania* refers to Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand throughout the publication.
Hierarchical way of viewing metadata

Information describing the data is more detailed as one moves down from the top of the pyramid.
**Structural metadata**

Metadata that act as identifiers and descriptors of data

At the top of the pyramid is information essential for understanding the data

Needs to explain the ‘basics’ of when, where, who and what?

In practical terms this means at the least information about: the indicator, the reference period, source, geographic scope, and the unit
**Indicator 8.5.2**

Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

(a) Unemployment rate, both sexes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>6.4</td>
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<td>6.1</td>
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<td>Northern Africa and Western Asia</td>
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<td>11.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Africa</td>
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<td>10.3</td>
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<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and Southern Asia</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern and South-Eastern Asia</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Asia</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Eastern Asia</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia and New Zealand</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe and Northern America</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern America</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlocked developing countries</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Least developed countries</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small island developing States</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ILO Database of Labour Statistics (ILOSTAT), International Labour Organisation (ILO), ILO modèle 2016.*
Conceptual reference metadata
Conceptual metadata that describes the key concepts used, and methodological elements.

In the middle are explanatory notes and descriptive text which provide a good description of the statistics.

In practical terms this means description about: definition, key concepts, standards and classifications used.
Reference metadata
Reference metadata can include information such as key concepts and definitions

**Indicator Name, Target and Goal**

**Indicator 1.1.1:** Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)

**Target 1.1:** By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day[1].

**Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere

[1] The International Poverty Line was updated to $1.90 per day in October 2015.

**Definition and Rationale**

**Definition:**

The indicator is defined as the proportion of the population living in households below the international poverty line where the average daily consumption (or income) per person is less than $1.9 a day measured at 2011 international prices adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP).

**Concepts:**

The international poverty line is a threshold used to measure extreme poverty based on consumption or income levels. A person is considered extremely poor if his or her consumption or income level falls below the minimum level necessary to meet basic needs. For this indicator, the line is set at $1.90 (2011 PPP). It replaces the $1.25 a day poverty line measured in 2005 prices since October 2015.

**Key concepts**

The purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factor is the number of units of a country's currency required to buy the same amounts of goods and services in the domestic market as one United States dollar would buy in the United States. It is based on the System of National Accounts’ concept of actual individual consumption.
Detailed reference metadata on methods and quality

Further down the hierarchy of information, we have more detailed information.

These are potentially the source of the most detailed methodological information available.

Some statistical agencies publish very detailed concepts, sources and methods for a number of their key statistics.

In practical terms this means description about: process of collecting data, calculations, quality aspects, limitations of data and other detailed information.
More detailed reference metadata

Data Sources and Collection Method

The data for this indicator is collected through household-based labour force surveys, population census, and any other nationally representative household surveys with an appropriate employment module. Such surveys are generally conducted by the ministries or bureaus of labour or national statistical offices.

Unemployment registers, under social insurance administrative systems, can also serve as instruments to collect data on unemployment levels, and used to supplement the information obtained by household surveys.

Method of Computation and Other Methodological Considerations

Computation Method:
The unemployment rate ($U$) is calculated using the following formula:

$$ U = \frac{\text{Number of unemployed persons}}{\text{Persons employed} + \text{Persons unemployed}} \times 100 $$

Comments and limitations:
The significance of the unemployment rate depends on context. It is not to be interpreted the same way universally. In the absence of unemployment insurance systems or social safety nets, persons of working age must avoid unemployment, resorting to engaging in some form of economic activity, however insignificant or inadequate. Thus, in this context, other measures should supplement the unemployment rate to comprehensively assess labour underutilization, such as the time-related underemployment rate or measures of the potential labour force. In this regard, the 2013 Resolution...
To summarize:

**Structural metadata**
- Metadata that act as identifiers and descriptors of the data

**Reference metadata**
- Metadata describing the contents and the quality of the statistical data

**Conceptual metadata**
- Describes the concepts used and their practical implementation, allowing users to understand what the statistics are measuring and, thus, their fitness for use

**Methodological metadata**
- Describes methods used for the generation of the data (e.g. sampling, collection methods, editing processes)

**Quality metadata**
- Describes the different quality dimensions of the resulting statistics (e.g. timeliness, accuracy)
## International metadata standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX)</strong></td>
<td>The Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) initiative sets technical standards and content-oriented guidelines to facilitate the exchange of statistical data and metadata. SDMX is maintained by a group of seven sponsors: the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the European Central Bank (ECB), Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations and the World Bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Documentation Initiative (DDI)</strong></td>
<td>The DDI is a standard for technical documentation describing social science data. The current version (3.1) supports description of the full life cycle of a dataset or data collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metadata Common Vocabulary (MCV)</strong></td>
<td>The MCV contains concepts and related definitions that are normally used by international organizations and national data producing agencies to describe statistical metadata. Terms such as census, estimate, footnote, measurement error, occupation, periodicity, quality and sample are all defined in the MCV. The MCV is a valuable resource for establishing common terminology in the presentation of MDG data and metadata.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why is metadata important?
Metadata improves usability of data

Without metadata, data is **not meaningful**

Table: Indicator title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Unit 1</th>
<th>Unit 2</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Variable label 1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>...</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...</td>
<td>1,260,671</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...</td>
<td>2,738,893</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: name
Metadata improves consistency and coherence
This is essential for interoperability and seamless data exchange

- Via common format, terminology and dissemination standards, metadata **improves consistency in presenting data**.

- Users these days typically use search engines to locate information

- The efficiency of finding what one wants is increased if statistics are presented in a common format using standardized terminology
Metadata improves comparability

• Greater economic & social integration between countries, has increased user demand for improved comparability

• Need for comparability is also felt within a same country for example, are time series comparable over time.

• Differences arise from:
  ✓ use of different definitions, concepts, units and classifications;
  ✓ varying collection and processing (transformation) practices.
  ✓ diverse reporting & presentation practices

• As policy makers and data users demand more data in the SDG-era, and as more data is shared using technologies such as data platforms, assessment of comparability is essential.
Highlights data quality issues

- **Common features** of metadata include:
  - definition of “quality” concept, and a list of dimensions that define quality.

- These dimensions normally include **relevance**, **accuracy**, **timeliness**, **interpretability**, **coherence**, etc.

- Help **understand limitations** of a specific series or data point, and inform data users of the extent of analyses that can be conducted, or the applicability of the findings of the analyses.
Increased relevance in the SDG-era

• Scope of the 2030 Agenda is expansive: covers social, environmental and economic issues across time.

• Disaggregated data: leaving no one behind

• Interest from a broad user-base, not all have ability or experience to interpret data correctly without guidance.

• Imperative to standardize and present contextual information to users
Some issues relevant to metadata
Metadata access and content

- Users of metadata are both **data producers and as well as data users**. Need to keep in mind while preparing different types metadata.

- One of the most cost-effective solutions is to **disseminate metadata on the web**.

- **Practices vary considerably** by country:
  - Amount of detail provided on websites;
  - Availability in national language;
  - Frequency of updating & cost;
  - Its proximity to the statistics it describes.

- Significant differences between countries in **statistical methodological elements** described in metadata for the same statistical domain.
Metadata structure

- Key thing to consider is how to organize and structure the metadata to allow users to go as deeply as necessary, without being buried in enormous amounts of text.

- Understanding that metadata is not a compilation guidance. It describes data, but it is not supposed to replace technical manuals and guidance materials.

- A guiding principle for publishing data is that tables, charts and maps should contain sufficient metadata so that they can “stand alone”. Focus on publishing it in various forms.
International recommendations for metadata

- Ensure metadata dissemination via a range of different media, especially the web.

- Metadata structured to meet the needs of a range of users with different requirements and/or statistical expertise.

- A layered presentation of metadata is recommended, progress from summary to more detail. Each layer with clear and precise text.

- Active linkage of metadata to the statistical tables and graphs they describe and vice versa, tailored to each statistical domain.

- Rigorous use of terminology found in international and national glossaries & guidelines.
International recommendations for metadata

• Need for senior management to ensure appropriate practices and principles.

• Provide appropriate cross references or links to these sources to make existing standard terms and definitions more readily available.

• Avoid ambiguity like using the same label or title for different definitions.

• Disseminate metadata free of charge on the Internet, as a high public good component (even if statistics have price regime).

• Availability of metadata in the national language, and an international, such as English.

• Provide contact details for further information on concepts, definitions and statistical methodologies.
International recommendations for metadata

• Make metadata active to the greatest extent possible. Treating metadata this way will ensure they are accurate and up-to-date.

• Reuse metadata where possible for statistical integration as well as efficiency reasons.

• Preserve history of metadata.

• Ensure process (workflow) is well documented so there is clear identification of ownership, approval status, date of operation, etc.

• Ensure that variations from standards are tightly managed/approved, documented and visible.
Examples of metadata
Metadata for global SDG data
https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Target 3.1: By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.
Indicator 3.1.1: Maternal mortality ratio

Institutional information

Organization(s):
World Health Organization (WHO)

Concepts and definitions

Definition:
The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a given time period per 100,000 live births during the same time period. It depicts the risk of maternal death relative to the number of live births and essentially captures the risk of death in a single pregnancy or a single live birth.

Maternal deaths: The annual number of female deaths from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management (excluding accidental or incidental causes) during pregnancy and childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, expressed per 100,000 live births, for a specified time period.

Rationale:
All maternal mortality indicators derived from the 2015 estimation round include a point-estimate and an 80% uncertainty interval (UI). For those indicators where only point-estimates are reported in the text or tables, UIs can be obtained from supplementary material online (http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/). Both point-estimates and 80% UIs should be taken into account when assessing estimates.
E-handbook on SDG indicators

Indicator Name, Target and Goal

**Indicator 9.1.2:** Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport

**Target 9.1:** Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transnational transport networks, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access to safe, cost-effective,尔"}

**Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Definition and Rationale

**Definition:**
This indicator is defined as the sum of the passenger and freight volumes reported for road, rail and air transport and people and metric tonnes of cargo respectively. These are reported as separate series for each mode and freight volume.

**Concepts:**
The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) through its Statistics Division have established standard definitions to collect and report traffic (passenger and freight volumes) data related to air transport. The
United States SDG metadata

U.S. Metadata

This table provides metadata for the actual indicator available from U.S. statistics closest to the corresponding global SDG indicator. Please note that even when the global SDG indicator is fully available from U.S. statistics, this table should be consulted for information on national methodology and other U.S.-specific metadata information.

### Indicator 5.4.1 - Proportion of time spent on unpaid work, by sex, age and location

**Hours per day spent on household activities by US women ages 15 and over**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hours per day spent on household activities by US women ages 15 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1.9</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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</table>

**Method of computation for global SDG indicator**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graph Title</th>
<th>Hours per day spent on household activities by US women ages 15 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of actual indicator available</td>
<td>Time spent per day on household activities (includes travel), Caring for and helping household members (includes travel), Caring for and helping nonhousehold members (includes travel), and Purchasing goods and services (includes travel) by sex and age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of actual indicator available</td>
<td>Average hours per day: The average number of hours spent in a 24-hour period doing a specified activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of actual indicator available</td>
<td>Data are from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS), which is nationally representative of the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population age 15 and over. Individuals are selected from households that have completed the 8th month of the Current Population Survey. Each selected individual is interviewed one time, by telephone, about how they spent their time one day. Individuals have been interviewed for the ATUS on nearly every day since the survey began in 2003. For information about ATUS methods, see the BLS Handbook of Methods: <a href="https://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/atus/home.htm">https://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/atus/home.htm</a>. Data are estimates of average hours per day (see formula in section 7.4 of the ATUS User's Guide: <a href="https://www.bls.gov/atus/atususersguide.pdf">https://www.bls.gov/atus/atususersguide.pdf</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of actual indicator available</td>
<td>Age categories: ages 15 and over, 15-24 years, 25-34 years, 25-54 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, and 65 years and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodicity</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td>2003-present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of measure</td>
<td>Average hours per day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mexico SDG metadata

2. Hambre cero

Meta 2.1.2. Proporción de la población con inseguridad alimentaria

Definición
La inseguridad alimentaria moderada o severa son los grados de inseguridad alimentaria que reflejan la existencia de limitaciones en la cantidad de alimentos en el hogar y experencias de hambre en la alimentación de los integrantes de los hogares. La clasificación de la situación de seguridad o inseguridad alimentaria se efectúa con base en la Escala Mexicana de Seguridad Alimentaria (EMSA).

Algoritmo

\[ PTA = \frac{POA}{PTA} \]

Donde:
- POA: Porcentaje de hogares con inseguridad alimentaria moderada o severa en el año.
- PTA: Población con encuesta por acceso a la alimentación (toma de la población con grados de inseguridad alimentaria moderada o severa en el año).
- PT0: Población total en el año.

Desglose narrativo del cálculo del indicador
Se determina a partir de una distribución entre los hogares con población menor de dos docenas años y los hogares en población menor de dos docenas años. Para el total de hogares donde no habían menores de dos docenas años de edad se identificaron aquellos en las que algún adulto, por falta de dinero o recursos, al menos, no tenía una alimentación completa. Dejó de desayunar, comer o cenar, comió menos de lo que debería comer. Se quedaron sin comida; sufrió hambre, pero no comió ni no hizo voto una comida o dejó de comer durante todo el día. En el caso del total de hogares donde habían menores de dos docenas años de edad se identificaron aquellos en los que por falta de dinero o recursos, tanto las personas mayores como los menores de dos docenas años tuvieron una alimentación variada, cuando menos de lo necesario, de los alimentos los cantidades servidas en la comida, aunque hubiera, pero no comieran, a los menores una comida o dejaron de comer durante todo el día.

Unidad de medida
Porcentaje

Cobertura geográfica
Nacional, entidades federativas y municipios.

Referencia temporal
2010 - 2014

Oportunidad
1 año

Periodicidad del indicador
Nacional y entidad federativa: Bimensual. Municipio: Guanareval

Fuentes generadoras de información estadística utilizados para el cálculo del indicador

Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social (CONEVAL). Metodología para la medición multidimensional de la pobreza en México

Fecha de actualización del indicador
11 de abril de 2017
Philippines SDG Watch

The Philippine SDGs

Metadata

Click on the icon to download metadata of each goal

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**Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

**Target 1.a:** Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.

**1.a.2** Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator Classification</th>
<th>Global SDG Indicator</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition**

**Global Definition**

Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

**National Definition**

Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

**Method of Computation**

**Global**

Total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection) divided by total spending/expenditure

**Matching (only for the Global SDG Indicator)**

- Exact Matching
- Good Matching
- Partial Match
- D-match
- E-match

**Level of Disaggregation (Please specify whether Yes-available, No-not available, NA-Not applicable)**

- National: Yes
- Regional: Yes
- Provincial: No
- By Sex: No

**Other Disaggregations, please specify**

**Frequency of Release**

- Monthly: No
- Quarterly: No

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Thank you for your attention!