

# UNSD-DFID PROJECT ON SDG MONITORING

## MODULE 6

### Voluntary National Reviews



# Module structure

- Introduction to VNRs and HLPF
- Role of data and statistics
- Lessons from existing VNRs relevant for data and statistics
- HLPF 2019 and “Leaving no one behind”



## Introduction to VNRs



# What are the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)?

- The VNRs are a **central element of the follow-up and review** mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda
- Presented at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) for sustainable Development
  - The **HLPF is the central platform for reviewing and following up on the 2030 Agenda** and SDGs, at the global level
- **Country-led** process that
  - **track progress on goals**
  - be open and participatory for stakeholders
  - focus on people with a focus on people furthest behind
  - take a long-term perspective
  - be rigorous and **evidence based**

**Role of robust data and statistics!**



# VNRs: Quick Facts

## TIMELINE FOR 2019 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS



# VNR/HLPF: Quick facts

## HLPF IN NUMBERS

# HLPF 2018



DAYS



VOLUNTARY  
NATIONAL  
REVIEWS



HEADS AND DEPUTY HEADS  
OF STATE AND  
GOVERNMENT, MINISTERS,  
VICE-MINISTERS & OTHER  
MINISTERIAL LEVEL  
OFFICIALS



SPEAKERS IN  
PANELS



MAJOR GROUP  
& OTHER  
STAKEHOLDERS  
INTERVENTIONS



REGISTERED  
PARTICIPANTS



SDGs  
UNDER  
REVIEW



MEETINGS



SIDE  
EVENTS



SPECIAL  
EVENTS



EXHIBITIONS



GENERAL  
DEBATE  
SPEAKERS



VNR  
LABS

**51 countries presenting VNRs at the HLPF in 2019**

# Data session at the HLPF

## SDG Progress Report



## Implementing the 2030 Agenda for resilient societies

*Reviewing progress in achieving the SDGs*



### The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018



*Better data for sustainable development*



Zachary Chege, Chair, UN Statistical Commission, and Chief Statistician, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics



Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, US



# VNRs: what, how, and who?

- They are voluntary in nature – each country is free to decide on the scope and format of its review.
- Guided by 6 main principles
  - i. National ownership of the VNRs which are to be voluntary and country-led.
  - ii. Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and plans.
  - iii. Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.
  - iv. Principle of leaving no one behind.
  - v. Making use of existing national frameworks to prepare the reports.
  - vi. Reflecting on cross-cutting issues, nationally but also at the regional level.
- As of 2019, 30 minutes for their individual presentations at the HLPF including Q&A, with the date of presentations being agreed by the ECOSOC Bureau with the Permanent Missions in New York and according to diplomatic rank

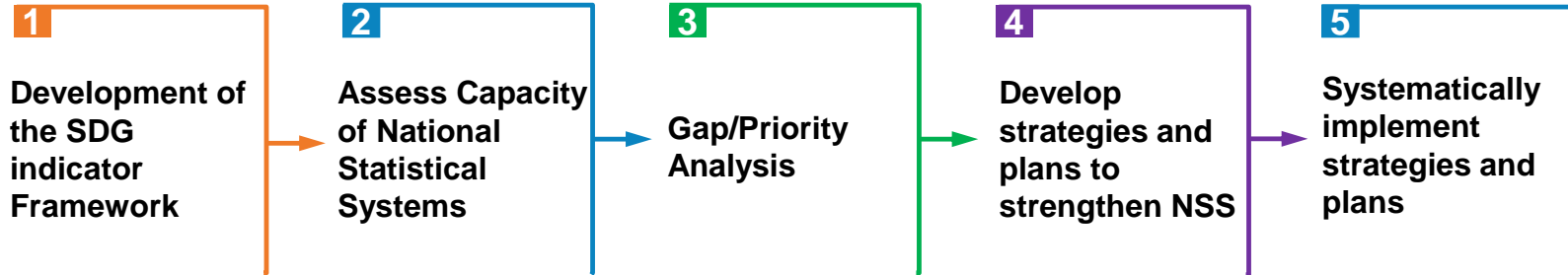




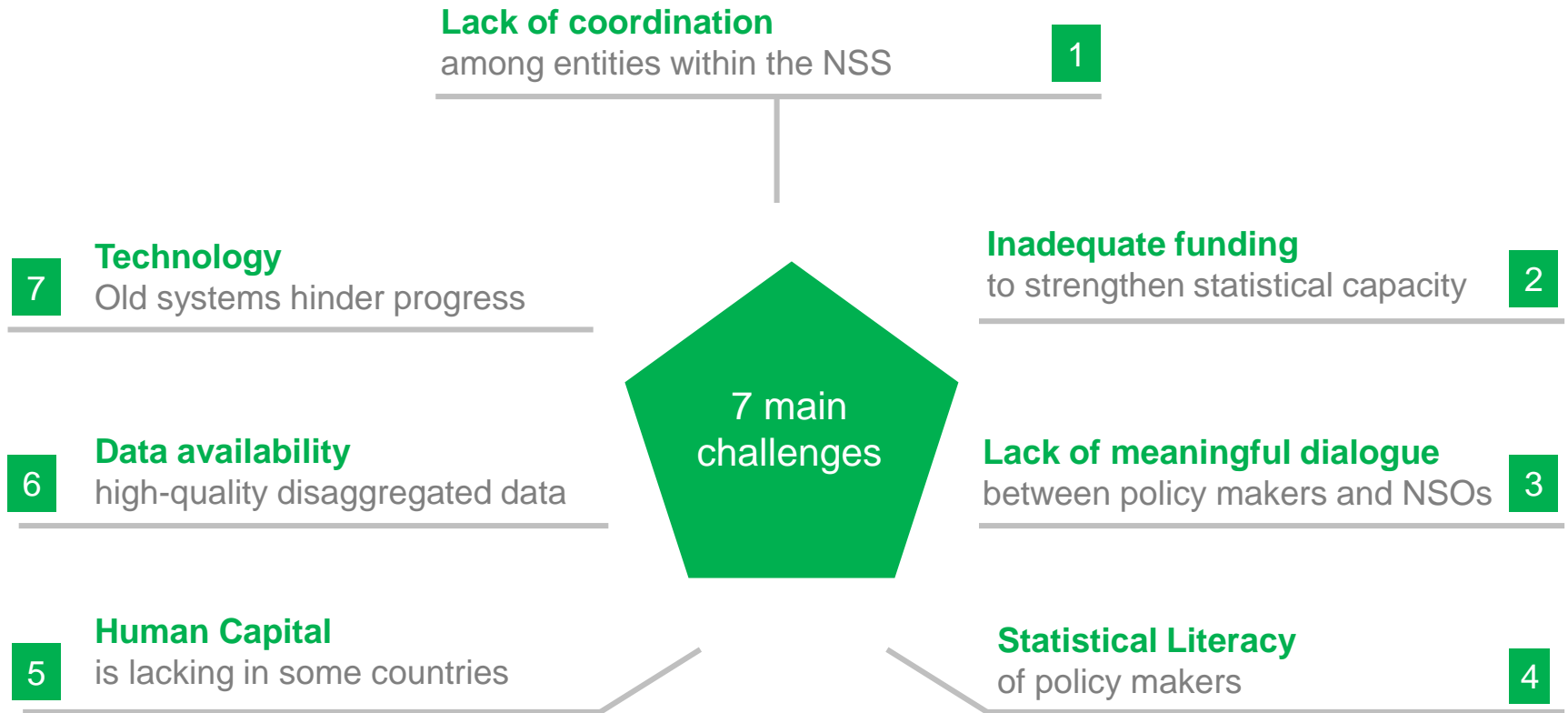
## Role of data and statistics



# Implementing national monitoring of the SDGs



# Countries have often identified data as one of the main issues in VNR preparation



# Solutions to the challenges identified

## NSO engagement with policy makers and other stakeholders

*Helps address problems of visibility*

*Helps improve trust in statistics*

*Help explain the importance of using data. When people want data, there will be funding for statistics*

## Effective communication of statistics

*NSOs communicate in strategic and targeted way.*

*Not all statistics users have same needs and skill-sets*

*Consideration for statistical literacy. Visualization/infographics can help!*

## Coordination mechanisms

*For both within and outside the statistical system*

*Aim to have NSOs within the center stage as it pertains to data*

## Focus on the core

*In a resource constrained environment, focus on production of core statistics such as good quality census and vital registration*

## Relevance

*What NSOs do should be relevant for its stakeholders, and activities should be demand driven.*

*SDGs provide an opportunity to link policy with data*





## Lessons from existing VNRs



# Establishment of national/regional targets

- **Turkey** has, since 2002, developed a national sustainable development indicator set composed of 132 indicators under 10 categories. Turkey is going to further develop its current set by taking into account the results of UN process on a global framework for common monitoring and the national priority lists of SDGs <2016>
- The **Czech Republic's** planned biannual analytical Report on the Quality of Life and its Sustainability will build on 192 indicators of the Czech Republic 2030 designed to operationalise its 97 specific goals and parallel set of indicators measuring progress on wellbeing <2017>
- **Egypt** established a sustainable development unit within the national statistics agency to review national indicators, identify gaps and facilitate the collection of data to monitor the SDGs and Egypt's sustainable development strategy. <2016>



# Making statistics available to the general public

- **The Philippines** has an online platform for access to SDG indicators, SDG Watch, building on the MDG Watch that was implemented for the MDGs (<https://psa.gov.ph/sdg>) <2016>
- **Bangladesh** Bureau of Statistics and other government and private stakeholders, designed and developed SDG Tracker ([www.sdg.gov.bd](http://www.sdg.gov.bd)). <2017>

Two major components of Bangladesh's SDG Tracker are:

- ✓ **SDG Portal** - enables policy makers, government agencies, private sector, Civil Society Organizations, International organizations, academia, researchers and the citizens to track year on year progress against each target and to create required visualizations.
- ✓ **SDG Dashboards** - facilitate individual Ministries/Divisions and Agencies to consolidate available data for each SDG and compare it visually against performance thresholds. The resulting dashboards highlight areas where a Ministry needs to make the greatest progress towards achieving the Goals by 2030.



# Data collection and management

- 2018: 22/46 countries noted the challenge of data collection, processing and dissemination.

- In **Uruguay**, the Office of Planning and Budget, through the National Directorate of Management and Evaluation is responsible for monitoring and articulating public policies on the SDGs, whereas the Uruguayan Agency of International Cooperation (AUCI) oversees matters related to cooperation, and the National Institute of Statistics (INE) is responsible for the elaboration and the survey of indicators.

<2018>

- **Morocco** has identified the need to strengthen and adapt the operational mechanisms for follow-up and review established during the MDG period, mitigating the risk of lack of coordination by the multiple institutions involved in implementation.

- In **Ethiopia**, the Central Statistics Agency (CSA) generates and disseminates to users socio-economic data pertaining to national development needs. The Ethiopian Mapping Agency (EMA) generates and disseminates geospatial data. Both CSA and EMA have been made legally accountable to the National Planning Commission (NPC), which is directly accountable to the prime minister. <2017>





# Involving stakeholders

- In **Colombia**, the High-Level Commission for Effective Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, created in February 2015, has a working group on indicators which enables multi-stakeholder participation. <2016>
- **Belarus, Ethiopia** <2017> and **Australia, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain** <2018> noted that national statistical offices could benefit from data and analysis produced by other stakeholders.
- In **Nigeria**, over 200 young people were trained on open data and collection of data on the state of infrastructure and budget administration in the country and mobilised towards improving the living conditions of people in slum areas through data collection as a tool for advocacy. <2017>



# Data disaggregation

2017: 7/43 countries, 2018: 19/46 countries highlighted inadequate disaggregation of data.

- In **Egypt**, data on persons with disabilities will be included for the first time in the national census to be implemented in 2016. <2016>
- **Azerbaijan** and **Nepal** noted that progress should be tracked at a highly disaggregated level to show disparities by age, sex, location, ethnicity, disability, income groups, and other categories. In this regard, Nepal noted its need for new surveys, or for existing surveys to be adapted to fill data gaps and gather baseline data for a number of targets. <2017>
- **Bhutan** stresses that a significant level of data disaggregation will be required to meet the ambitious principle of leaving no one behind, noting the successful conclusion of its Population and Housing Census in 2017, which serves as a source of comprehensive and reliable data. <2018>

# Usage of new data sources

- **Uganda** mentioned analysis of **social media** and **SMS messages**. <2016>
- **India** is considering using **space technology for household surveys**. <2017>
- **Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Jordan, and Qatar** reported their initial steps in tackling this challenge **using ICT by building web-based central applications** to facilitate data collection, analysis, progress tracking, and reporting. <2017>
- **Digital Earth Australia (DEA)**, led by Geoscience Australia, translates decades of **satellite data** into information and insights about Australia's land and oceans and can help measure and drive progress towards the SDGs. <2018>

# Mobilizing resources and investment in statistics

- **Madagascar** receives support from the UN for their statistics development strategy.
- **Mexico** calls for more efforts from UNDP and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to address interregional inequalities, including definition of regional indicators. <2016>
- **Belize's** plan to transform the existing Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) to a National Statistical System involves relevant institutional reforms and capacity building partially supported through partnerships between the government and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations System. <2017>
- The implementation of the Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics in **Qatar**, which was announced on 30 April 2017, was carried out in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division and regional and Arab organisations. <2017>
- The **Bahamas** is strengthening its national statistical capacity and developing a national statistical system, with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank to further strengthen the production of high quality data and monitoring capacity. <2018>





## **HLPF 2019 and Leaving no one behind**





# Leaving no one behind

- Progress is not equally shared.
- Due to age, socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity and geography, vulnerable groups tend to be excluded from access to good education, health care, electricity, safe water and other critical services
- Member States have pledged to leave no one behind
- The theme of the 2019 HLPF is “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.”



Photo: © The World Bank/Simone D. McCourtie



# Counting the uncounted

Exclusion by design leads to absence of relevant disaggregation:

- Incomplete coverage (hard to reach populations, ethnic groups)
- Household surveys will not include institutional populations
- School based surveys will be confined to children attending school
- Administrative data may cover only those enjoying services
- Data sources need to “work together” to build the story

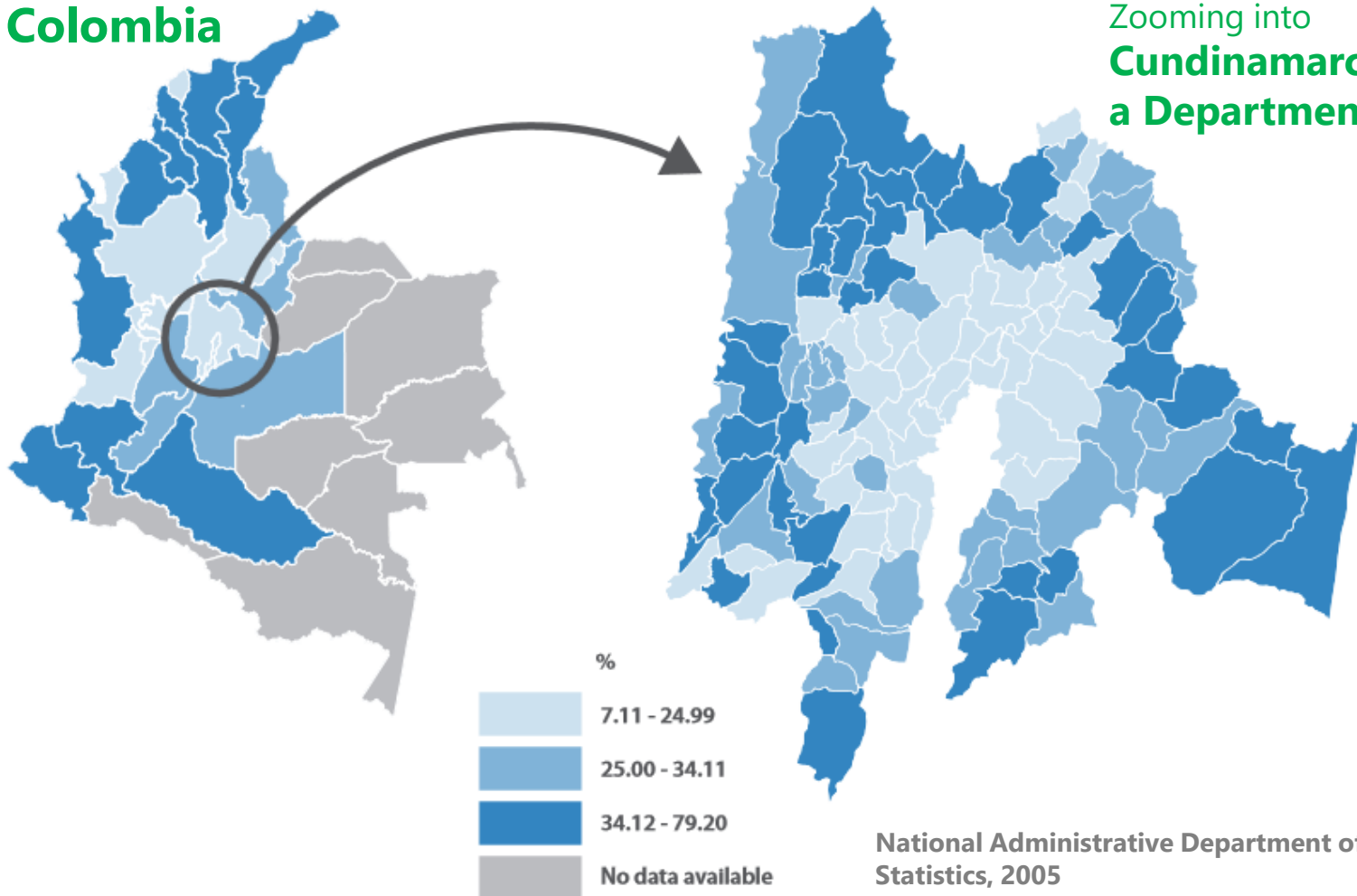


# Example: Data disaggregation

*Share of households per « Basic Unmet Needs » index, Colombia*

Colombia

Zooming into  
Cundinamarca  
a Department





**Thank you for your attention!**