Current and future plans for SDGs user increased engagement activities in Liberia

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Presentation Outline

1. Brief History of SDGs implementation in Liberia
2. Institutional mechanisms for user engagement
3. Resource requirements for user engagement
4. Activities already conducted to engage with users
5. Challenges
6. Lessons learned from past user engagement activities
7. Planned activities around user engagement

Brief History of SDGs implementation in Liberia

- SDGs officially launched in Liberia in Jan 2016
- Government of Liberia provided significant leadership in developing SDGs
- Liberia Co-chaired then Secretary-General BAN Ki-Moon's High-Level Panel on SDGs
- But domesticating SDGs has not been a straightforward task

  - Not feasible to track all indicators (SDGs alone have 232)

  - Some indicators are clearly more applicable to Liberia than other indicators (poverty rate vs. index of coastal eutrophication)

  - Even for relevant indicators, countries start with different baselines, so they will have different targets

  - Liberia is resource- and capacity-constrained

- In 2016, the SDGs were mapped to the National Development Plan called AfT.
- The AfT died the day Liberia elected a new leadership
- In 2018, the Country developed a new framework for development called the Propoor Agenda for Development and Prosperity

Brief History of SDGs implementation in Liberia

Bottom Line:

- For the next plan, Liberia must still identify and align its national priorities (The Propoor Agenda for Prosperity and Development) given the new political transition. This process is already ongoing.

- The new framework is expected to have more than 100 indicators, more than twice the number of indicators in the AfT which expired in 2017.

- SDGs is a tool to inform how these priorities are articulated and measured as part of the national development plan

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Institutional mechanisms for user engagement

- Liberia will have in country a consultant for a National User Engagement Workshop to be sponsored by the UNSD from whence a clear user engagement and strategies will be developed integrating institutional mechanisms . This is to follow similar path of other project countries for better results

- The plan is to have all members of the NSS involved in order to provide timely and reliably data for users

- The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) will lead this activity in staunched collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

- LISGIS as NSS Coordinating Agency will supervise and monitor the channel, regular and timely flow of data and where necessary, institutes check and balances

- LISGIS in collaborations with Government Ministries and Agencies conducts surveys and censuses to measure and track Liberia's socio-economic development

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- Dissemination Platform – SDGs Goal Tracker / AfDB Portal

- Technical capacity enhancement

- Constant and reliable internet IT infrastructure to upload information

- Regular flow of data from producers

- Other financial supports (transportation at workshops, seminars, etc) to enhance the process. Statistics is almost always neglected in the national budget but always referred to as "the best tool for planning" by the very people who prepare budgets.

Activities already conducted to engage with users

- So far, Liberia, if not the very last, was one of the last countries for capacity assessment by the UNSD under this project thus lagging behind in implementation.

- MoU is yet to be signed between the Government and the UNSD

- Once this is done and funds made ready for implementation, various engagements/activities will begin in earnest for the project.

- However, in our past and current operations, we have engaged data users through the following mediums:
  - Website: www.lisgis.net
  - Dissemination upon request – usually emails
  - Newsletters – Monthly CPI Data
  - Radio Talk shows
  - Publications in hard copies through the Department of Information Dissemination and Coordination

Challenges

- Since implementation of the project has not begun, we cannot clearly point to any challenge currently experienced except for the period of the Consultant's visit to Liberia

- So far only at the MFDP and LISGIS there exists SDGs Focal Points from the short assessment conducted

- The project will have to identify focal points for reporting data to be uploaded to the selected platform

- Liberia desires to adopt the SDGs Goal Tracker for information dissemination but budgetary constraints might hamper the choice and select a different platform especially for sustainability of dissemination after the project lifespan.

- Significant interventions are needed to upgrade statistical capacities, skills and knowledge (especially for administrative data compilation)by investing in training and institutional development of the NSS and LISGIS and by developing strategies to ensure that well-trained staff are retained by these bodies.

- Lack of data for most indicators and for available ones, disaggregation problem

- Weak NSO Act

Lessons learned from past user engagement activities

❑ Under the MDGs, Liberia was at war and most of its technical infrastructures were torn apart. No strong collaborations existed between producers and users and this threatened the effective use of data in the public's sphere.

❑ User engagement was poorly carried out and data almost not available to monitor indicators

❑ Very few surveys were conducted and in fact not on a timely basis and the only means of users accessing results were by visiting institutions

❑ We do not only need to produce high quantity and quality of data, we also need to produce data on a timely basis to meet users demand and satisfaction

❑ Most of the users were NGOs meanwhile as the private sector was virtually shut down

Planned activities around user engagement

❑ Identification of users and drafting user engagement strategy

❑ Consultative meeting with data users

❑ Consultative /advocacy meeting with Parliament (Statistics Committee)

❑ Launch of platform for dissemination

❑ Platform redesign based on user feedback

THANK YOU

Shukra!   Aakoon!

Dhan'yavāda!   Merci!

Gracias!

Obrigado !   Ay mama!

Balika!   Weebale!   Kyay zuu!

Amesege'nallo'!   Asante!

Xiè xiè!

Tatenda!   Twalumba!

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