1.4.1

Full name of the Indicator:

Indicator 1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services.

Custodian Agencies:

UN-Habitat using WHO-UNICEF water and sanitation data

Goal and target addressed:

SDG 1 (Poverty)

Target 1.4.1: 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

What type of proposal (replacement, refinement, adjustment and addition), for replacement, refinement and adjustment, please list the original indicator and its number:

Adjustment of metadata to stop the current political contradiction with Target 6.1 aiming at universal access to safe drinking water

1. Background and rationale for the indicator proposal

The current metadata[1] of SDG indicators 1.4.1 and 11.1.1 on access to basic services should be revised in order to put an end to the current inconsistency with the intent of Agenda 2030 on access to drinking water and with Target 6.1 on universal access to safe drinking water.

Today, these metadata are inconsistent with the intent of their related Targets which call for *quality* basic services not basic services that are only *basic*[2]. This makes that their text is self-contradictory and that these indicators might forget more than 2 thirds of the people in need of adequate access to safe drinking water.

The metadata of SDG indicators 1.4.1 and 11.1.1 should be amended to track access to *safely-managed drinking water services* and no longer *access to improved water sources*

Rationale

The Agenda 2030 includes 3 Targets that are related to access to drinking water:

- SDG Target 6.1 aims at achieving "universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all"
- SDG Target 1.4 aims at ensuring that "all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have … access to basic services, …"
- SDG Target 11.1 aims at ensuring "access for all to adequate, safe and affordable … basic services …"

Access to drinking water is part of access to basic services. By consequence, these 3 targets are sharing the same objective, which is to ensure by 2030 universal access to drinking water that is safe and affordable.

SDG Target 6.1 is dedicated to access to safe drinking water. Its indicator 6.1.1 is the *Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services.* This indicator was designed by

WHO and UNICEF to supersede the MDG indicator that was found inadequate to track progress towards universal access to safe drinking water. Indeed, during the MDG period, the global

[1] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-01-04-01.docx

[2] In English, depending on the context, *basic* may have two different meanings when related to public services. In French, there is less confusion. *Basic services* are named *services de base* or, better, *services essentiels*. If they are only *basic*, they are said *basiques*.

1.4.1 (following)

indicator on drinking water was "access to improved water sources". This indicator was far from guaranteeing that the water is safe. Today, the global estimate of the number of people using contaminated water exceeds 1.9 billion when less than 600 million, i.e. more than 3 times less, have not access to improved water sources.

Thus, nowadays, the global indicator that is the more appropriate to track access to safe drinking water is access to "*safely-managed water services*" and not "*access to improved water services*". The current metadata of SDG indicators 1.4.1 (and 11.1.1) are unable to track progress towards the 3 SDG Targets 1.4, 6.1 and 11.1

The SDG indicator 1.4.1 is the *Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services.* Its current metadata define *"Basic Services*" as referring to "*public service provision systems that meet human basic needs including drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, energy, mobility, waste collection, health care, education and information technologies. Access to basic services implies that sufficient and affordable service is reliably available with adequate quality*." Thus, the parameter that measures access to drinking water should track access to water that is affordable, reliable and of adequate quality, which would be fully consistent with Target 6.1 and Indicator 6.1.1.

However, in lieu of using the criterion of *access to safely-managed drinking water services*, the metadata only require *access to improved water services.* This is self-contradictory and far from satisfying the requirements of Target 1.4.

The requirement related to drinking water in the metadata describing this 1.4.1 indicator should be changed to track *safely-managed water services* in lieu of *improved water sources.*

This is as the more important as this target 1.4 is part of the Goal 1 fighting poverty and that poor people have the same human right to safe drinking water as the wealthier ones. By not ensuring that water is not contaminated, 'improved water sources' are far from satisfying the human right of water-users.

Note : this rationale and our proposal have already been exposed to the IAEG-SDGs through a letter that we sent on February 25, 2019 to the IEAG-SDGs Chair in the context of the meeting in Lebanon where we had been invited.

2. Information on how and when the methodology has become an international standard and who is the governing body that approves it

We are not aware of any "governing body" having endorsed the current metadata methodology.

3. Data sources and data availability

Data on access to safe drinking water are collected and reported by the WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme. This programme computes and reports both basic access and access to safe drinking water services. Data is available on their website www.washdata.org.

4. Confirmation/explanation of joint submission with other partner/co-custodian agencies (if applicable)

N/A

5. Conclusion

The metadata of SDG indicators 1.4.1 and 11.1.1 should be amended to track access to *safely-managed drinking water services* and no longer *access to improved water sources as the water component of access to basic services.* This is because these 'basic services' or "essential services' should be more than basic in quality but should comply with the level of access that is targeted for all by target 6.1.

Please see proposed revised metadata in attachment (Word file in "tracked changes" mode).