

Development of a global reporting mechanism

Background note

Third Meeting of the IAEG-SDGs, 30 March – 1 April 2016

Item 9 of the provisional agenda: Development of global reporting mechanisms and data flows on SDG indicators from the national to the global level

Annual SDG progress report – process and responsibilities

The Secretary-General has been mandated to produce an annual progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals to support follow-up and review at the high-level political forum. The report is to be based on data produced by national statistical systems and information collected at the regional level. It is expected that the global reporting of progress on the 2030 Agenda will be based on global and regional aggregates of data on indicators as compiled by international agencies based on their respective existing mandates and/or expertise. Quality standards and best practices, including for the estimation of data and the provision of metadata should be defined and followed, also taking in consideration Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6 on strengthening statistical capacity, which contains reference to the fact that estimates should always be carried out in full consultation with concerned countries and through transparent methodologies.¹

Conclusions: International agencies are requested to compile global and regional aggregates of data on the SDG indicators based on their respective existing mandates and/or expertise, following quality standards and best practises, and depending on the status of development (data availability) of those indicators.

Role of national data - reporting

Global monitoring should be based, to the greatest possible extent, on comparable and standardized national data, obtained through well-established reporting mechanisms from countries to the international statistical system. Where needed, such mechanisms should be improved, in particular by strengthening the coordination function of national statistical offices and/or other national institutions. Efforts should be made to fill data gaps and improve international comparability by increased adoption of internationally agreed standards at the national level, strengthening national statistical capacity and improving reporting mechanisms. International organizations must support these efforts to standardize indicators in accordance with international guidelines and assure compliance. Every effort should be made to reconcile data provided at the global level with the data published by the national statistical authorities, and any differences should be resolved, when possible, or carefully explained. Regional mechanisms, with the support of the regional commissions and other regional organizations and offices, will also play a significant role in facilitating this process,

¹ See Report of the IAEG-SDGs, para. 29.

taking into account regional priorities and strengthening the link between the national and the global level.²

Furthermore, the Statistical Commission at its 47th session agreed that global indicators will be based to the greatest extent possible on comparable and standardized national official statistics, provided by countries to the international statistical systems and that when other sources and methodologies are used, these will be reviewed and agreed by national statistical authorities and presented in a transparent manner.

Conclusions: International agencies will receive data from countries through well-established and further improved reporting mechanisms, support increased adoption and compliance with internationally agreed standards at the national level, and work for strengthening national statistical capacity and improving reporting mechanisms. Differences between data published at the national level and at the global level by international agencies will need to be systematically addressed; regional mechanisms will facilitate the data transmission process from the national to the global level.

Data flows (see chart on following page)

- Countries will provide their national data and metadata to international agencies, coordinated by the national statistical office, and facilitated as appropriate, by regional mechanisms;
- Countries may set up SDG data dissemination platforms for their national purposes and to allow general access to their data and metadata;
- International agencies will provide global and regional aggregates and accompanying metadata to UNSD for use in the annual progress report and inclusion in the SDG indicator database;
- International agencies will provide country level data and accompanying metadata to UNSD for inclusion in a SDG indicator database, which will be used during the preparation of the annual SDG progress report and to monitor indicator 17.18.1;
- As much as possible, all data exchanges should strive to follow internationally established formats.

Technical assistance

- International and regional entities will support countries in the implementation of the SDG indicators according to their specific mandates with the aim to fill data gaps and achieve international comparability of national data;
- International and regional entities will support countries in the implementation of integrated national SDG data platforms with the aim to increase data availability.

² See Report of the IAEG-SDGs, para. 30.