



Plenary Meeting

5th Meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs)

Agenda Item 7. Guidelines on data flows and global data reporting

Review of outcomes from the High Level Forum of the 48th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, entitled *Working together to measure progress towards the SDGs*

30-31 March 2017

Ottawa, Canada

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Overview:

- Discussed how the global statistical community can work together to measure progress towards the SDGs
- Two panels that included chief statisticians from NSOs and regional and international organizations
 - Panel 1: The importance of global reporting on SDGs for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
 - Panel 2: Cooperation and coordination between international organizations and national statistical systems

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Keynote Address:

- The President of the General Assembly delivered the key note address of the forum and highlighted that:

“in an environment where an unprecedented amount of data is required for SDG implementation and monitoring, greater coordination for global data-generation efforts are urgently needed.”

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Key points from the Forum

- Two keyword and concepts that were repeated throughout the discussions were **transparency** and **coordination**.
- National representatives stressed the importance of a continuous and transparent dialogue with international agencies
- It also stressed the need to improve coordination both at the national level across government agencies and, globally, among international agencies.

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Role of Different Organizations at National, Regional and International Level

- It was agreed that National Statistical Systems play the central role in the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and that they are the main source of data.
- Regional organizations are indispensable for reporting at regional level, facilitating the coordination of reporting at global level, and coordinating capacity building activities
- International organizations produce internationally comparable data for the monitoring of the SDGs at global level and help to create synergies among all partners.
- Building partnership with other data producers and users is important

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Improving Coordination and Communication at all levels

- A national statistical coordination body (the **NSO**) body with political support will facilitate:
 - Effective national monitoring of the SDGs
 - Effectively communicating with the public and all data users
 - Reporting to regional and international organizations
- Regional coordination mechanisms ensure regional coordination on statistical activities and facilitate global reporting
- International agencies play a key role in coordinating efforts on data collection, methodology development, and in providing technical support to countries.
- Continuous and transparent mechanisms of collaboration and communication within countries, among agencies, between countries and agencies are essential to build trust and ensure effective working relationships between national statistical systems and regional and international organizations.

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Harmonized, adjusted and estimated data

- Countries must be consulted on harmonized, adjusted or estimated data for global comparability and the methods by which these adjustments or estimates are produced should be transparent and accessible
- These data must be validated by the national statistical system
- National statistical office should be involved and informed, even in cases where the communication takes place mainly with other parts of national statistical system

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Effective Global Reporting

- Work must take place to reduce the reporting burden on countries. Agencies must improve coordination between each other and their data collection schedules and use existing mechanisms for data collection.
- It was recognized the diversity of indicators and that they may require different approaches in the reporting mechanism.
- Technological tools and services, such as SDMX and open data platforms, can be used to facilitate the transmission of data and ease the reporting burden. Work is necessary to facilitate interoperability between data systems and to simplify the data exchange process.

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Beyond global reporting

- While global reporting will be a focus of work by both international agencies and national statistical systems, the ultimate goal is to strengthen **national statistical capacity** for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national and local level
- For national reporting, International agencies play an important role at country level, in particular the UN Country Teams.
- National guidelines for SDG national reporting were recently released by the UN Development Group

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Outcomes and the way forward

- There is a need to develop principles and criteria for reporting from national to international statistical system
- Work already undertaken by regional and international agencies and recommendations by IAEG-SDGs provide a good starting point
- IAEG should further discuss these issues and develop guiding principles and practices on data reporting and data sharing between national statistical systems and international organizations to improve coordination.