UNECE Data Flow Pilot Study Results

Claire Plateau
Insee – France

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0- Purpose, approach and limitation of the study

➢**Objective**

  ➢Describing the experiences, needs and resources of the main actors involved in producing SDG statistics

➢**Methods**

  ➢An observational study of participating countries and custodian agencies actual experiences using their planned monitoring process

  ➢Guidelines and template questionnaire were provided to assist participants' responses,

  ➢Countries and agencies were asked to record experiences at each data flow stage (initial reporting, harmonization, verification and delivery estimates for the Global SDG indicator)

  ➢Countries and agencies were invited to deliver their self-analysis of what has worked well or not and to make suggestions

➢**Limitation of the study**

  ➢Limitation in scope with few actors (5 countries and 6 agencies) and the selection of the indicators

  ➢Five UNECE countries with rather similar data production process

  ➢ Only Tier 1 indicators tested which describe the "best case scenario"

  ➢Everything has not been solved because of limitation of time of the pilot study

  ➢This pilot study should be viewed as a first step to identify challenges and to make practical suggestions

  ➢Note it is a first draft we should still be discussed by the UNECE Steering group

Indicator		Country France	Russian Fed.	Turkey	USA	UK		Agency feedback
2.1.1	Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	X			X			**FAO for each country and self analysis**
4.b.1	Volume of official development assistance flow for scholarships by sector and type of study	not concerned	not concerned	X	not concerned	not concerned		**OECD (self analysis)**
12.4.1	Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement	X	X	X	X			**UNEP (only self assesment)**
15.1.1	Forest area as a proportion of total land area	X	X	X				**FAO for each country and self analysis**
16.1.1	Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	X	X	X	X			**UNODC for each country and self analysis**
17.1.2	Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes	X	X	X	X			**IMF data observation with one country**
8.1.1	Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	X	X	X	X	X		
8.6.1	Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training	X	X	X	X			
9.5.1	Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP	X	X	X	X			
3.1.1	Maternal mortality ratio	X	X	X	X			
3.6.1	Death rate due to road traffic injuries	X	X	X	X			
15.5.1	*Red list*	*X*						*IUCN withone country with the UNSD Pilot*
General comments on NSO organisation		X	X	X	X			
Self analysis		X	X	X	X			CCSA

Key Observations

1- Delayed and/or impaired communication due to unclear points of contacts

2-Custodian agency and country monitoring schedules are unclear, resulting in delays and discrepancies

3- Metadata for requested statistics are unclear, resulting in delays

4 - Data transmission processes should be made more efficient

5- A collaboration process should be established early to reduce possible conflicts

6- The validation process of methods and data is unclear

Key Suggestions

1- Identify points of contact at country and custodian agencies for each indicator

2- Provide an advance schedule of anticipated agencies data requests and updates and of countries data releases

3- Global and national metadata should be provided by according to the format agreed by the IAEG-SDGs. Make accessible information about working groups engaged in Tier 3 methodology development

4 - Discuss extant and emerging transmission needs and potential solutions (at the IAEG-SDG meetings or Jan 2018 UNSD meeting)

5- Establish early the collaboration style that works best allowing variation by indicator and custodian agencies (an appropriate technical consultation with countries)

6- Provide a transparent (and flexible) validation process of methods and data that allows maturation

Possible Tools?

1- On a secure location on the UNSD SDGs website, post a dashboard of points of contact for each indicator—for and updated by--countries and agencies

2- Provide a master schedule for updates of data and metadata for each indicator on the SDGs website

3- Interactive metadata pages should facilitate the work of countries and custodian agencies

4 - Include on the UNSD SDG dashboard a way for countries to indicate, through secure access,

- the status of validation in a manner that protects the sensitivity of deliberations

- using a format that allows for progression of validation

- that does not unduly impede publication of statistics

Next steps

Receive feedback from IAEG-SDG (Nov)

Receive feedback from UNECE CES Steering Group (Dec)

Based on IAEG-SDG recommendations (and UNSC decisions), think about how this information could be used to facilitate flows in the UNECE CES region.

Consider how this may inform the UNSD workshop on the use of national reporting platforms (Jan)

Detailed Findings

1- Delayed and/or impaired communication due to unclear points of contacts

➢ **Observations**

  ➢Before the pilot, all countries reported unknown custodian agencies points of contact

  ➢All countries reported out of date country points of contact transmitted by agencies

  ➢Some agencies are looking for appropriate country contacts

➢**Suggestion: Identify points of contact at country and custodian agencies for each indicator**

  ➢A central point of contact, preferably at the NSO, to assist with coordination

  ➢Request agencies points of contact for each indicator

  ➢If data flows for particular indicator have occurred through a process for other reporting purposes, the SDGs data transmission should thake this into account to avoid duplication of effort and to improve communication

➢**Tool: Provide a secure location on the UNSD SDGs website, a dashboard providing points of contact for each indicator for countries and for agencies**

  ➢To be updated by agencies and by countries, using secure access/password

  ➢The national coordinator for SDGs and the agencies should regularly update this dashboard

  ➢A link towards the national reporting platform should also be provided on the SDGs website if any

2-Custodian agency and country monitoring schedules are unclear, resulting in delays and discrepancies

➢ **Observations**

➢Agencies noted the importance of well-established reporting schedules to facilitate good reporting and validation by countries

➢Most countries reported metadata concerning the agencies data collection and data release calendar are incomplete or unclear

➢Agencies reported most countries do not publish release calendars for national SDG indicators

➢**Suggestion: Provide an advance schedule of anticipated agencies data requests and updates and of countries data releases**

➢Allow sufficient time for countries to examine specific data to be published on the UN SDG website

➢ Allow sufficient time for custodian agencies to meet their publication deadlines for the SDG Annual Report

➢**Tool: Provide a master schedule for updates of data and metadata for each indicator on the SDGs website**

➢To be updated by custodian agencies using secure access/password

➢The schedule should provide a realistic timeframe giving countries sufficient notice to submit and verify data

3 - Metadata for requested statistics are unclear, resulting in delays

➢ **Observations**

  ➢ Metadata for certain Tier 1 and Tier 2 indicators were not posted on the UNSD SDG website when the pilot was launched

  ➢ Metadata for Tier 1 and 2 indicators posted on the UNSD SDG website were not sufficient to explain why national data differ from data pulled from international intermediary base (8.1.1)

  ➢ Countries noted they were unaware of working groups established by custodian agencies to develop and refine methodology for certain Tier 3 indicators

  ➢ Although data for indicators are collected, some metadata for Tier 1 or 2 indicators seems to be still in development

➢**Suggestion: Global and National metadata should be provided by Agencies and Countries according to the format agreed by the IAEG-SDGs. Information about working groups engaged in Tier3 methodology development should be made accessible**

  ➢Global metadata should always provide information on data sources, the data collection process, methods of calculation and methods of aggregation at the regional and global level

  ➢Reference to international standards of classification and methods should be mentioned

  ➢National metadata should always be communicated with National data (on NRP or other method of reporting)

  ➢Information on global metadata development should be available, including points of contact for relevant working groups

➢**Tool: Interactive metadata pages should facilitate the work of countries and custodian agencies**

  ➢The UNSD metadata pages could be displayed in a way that allows for easy updating by custodian agencies via secure login

  ➢For Tier 3, information on the development of methodology should be provided on the website, with links to ongoing work and contacts for relevant groups

4 - Data transmission processes should be made more efficient

➢ **Observations**

  ➢ USA has developed a National Reporting Platform for SDGs

  ➢ France has currently developed a SDGs database

  ➢ Russian Federation and Turkey are thinking how to make the data transmission, maybe using NRP and/or SDMX format

  ➢ Two agencies are planning to develop an Agency Report platform to collect data (FAO with FRA online Platform for Forest reporting or UNODC with a platform to collect responses of UN-Crime Trend Survey)

  ➢ In addition, FAO currently uses web scraping for 2.1.2 with the USA.

➢**Suggestion: Discuss extant and emerging transmission needs and potential solutions (at the IAEG-SDG meetings or at the January 2018 UNSD meeting on reporting platforms)**

  ➢Consider the inputs provided by the SDMX for Global reporting provided by the working group established by the IAEG-SDGs

  ➢Consider custodian agencies system to gather information from different national sources to reduce the compilation process, such as an agency reporting platform that read from national reporting platforms or other electronic sites

  ➢Consider including functionality that allows comparison of statistics reported for other purposes (such as for convention) and those reported for the SDGs

5- A collaboration process should be established early to reduce possible conflicts

➢ **Observations**

➢ All countries expressed support and willingness to continue discussions with involved custodian agencies

➢All agencies indicated strong and positive relationships with participating countries

➢**Suggestion: Countries and custodian agencies should establish early the collaboration style that works best for them allowing variation by indicator and custodian agencies (an appropriate technical consultation with countries)**

➢ Establishing this process and relationship early, especially when initiating data flows or modifying data source, methodology, will inform the precise content of the data transmitted by the country and the adjustments proposed by the agencies and facilitate agreements.

➢Agencies clarifying the specific methodological requirements of the indicators may reduce the need for adjustments to official national statistics or estimations by non-country-source

➢Agencies should document fully their estimation methods and data sources in order to guarantee transparency

➢NSOs establishing a dialogue with Custodian agencies regarding their statistical capacity development efforts

➢ Prior to their release in the UNSD database, countries should always have the possibility to to review their national data within a reasonable time frame

6 - The validation process of methods and data is unclear (1)

➢ **Observations**

  ➢There is no agreed standard procedure for the validation of methods and data at international level

  ➢All countries of that pilot expressed concern that they were not requested to validate the statistics reported for their country before publication

  ➢UNODC reported that annual or biennial meetings assist understanding for the validation process

  ➢UNODC reported sharing responsibility with WHO for supporting harmonization of national data for the indicator on intentional homicide (since both agencies publish these (somewhat different) data, achieving convergence can make the validation process unclear

  ➢ FAO reported that some NSOs declined to validate the global estimate even if national official data were not available, seeming to indicate that only national official data can ever be used for SDG reporting

  ➢FAO reported that many NSOs did not respond to the request of validating the global estimate, despite many reminders.

  ➢There is no agreed standard procedure on how to treat non responding countries. Standard practice in custodian agencies so far has been to treat these as tacit approval but some countries disagree. FAO has requested to discuss this matter at the IAEG-SDG

  ➢FAO reported that the data validation process for each indicator is extremely resource intensive and time consuming. This has significant implication on the timeliness of data release and on the possibility to provide updated data to the Global SDG report.

6 - The validation process of methods and data is unclear (2)

➢ **Suggestion: A transparent (and flexible) validation process of methods and data that allows maturation**

➢Country-level statistics published in the SDG global data base should always be published with the status of validation by country

➢Countries should have the discretion to approve the use of non-official national statistics for SDG reporting purposes, consistent with UNSC 48/101/1

➢The validation negotiation process between countries and custodian agencies may be sensitive, and such deliberative discussions should be protected

➢A method is needed that allows flexibility in country approval

➢If data are taken from international database, the citation and date of that harvest should be cited in the global data base

➢Discussions between custodian agencies sharing custody to determine a common approach and single estimates should be encouraged and reported to the IAEG

➢Request the IAEG-SDGs to consider a scenario whereby global statistics would not need to undergo country validation, when global statistics are produced using an approved methodology/classification

6 - The validation process of methods and data is unclear (3)

Tool: Include on the UNSD SDG dashboard, when countries are invited to validate, a mechanism to facilitate the validation negotiation process by allowing countries to indicate through secure access, the status of validation in a manner that protects the sensitivity of deliberations and using a format that allows for progression of validation and does not unduly impede publication of statistics

Three status variables are proposed. the values for the first two variables would be limited to viewing by identified points of contacts at countries and custodian agencies. The third variable would be viewable by all. Countries would be notified to validate indicator according to the master schedule (describe above)

➢Status variable 1: For each indicator in the global SDG data base, country should be able to select among these labels (viewable only by points of contact)
  ➢Not reviewed by country (default)
  ➢Country reviewing
  ➢Country reviewed

➢Status variable 2: The level of validation could then be indicated with a second variable (viewable only by points of contatc)
  ➢Data source confirmed by country/data source not confirmed by country
  ➢Method of calculation confirmed by country/not confirmed by country
  ➢Method of comparability (adjustments) confirmed by country/not confirmed

➢Status variable 3: Then the country signal its approval status (viewable by all)
  ➢Pending input for country (default, country unable to validate these data)
  ➢Country approves its data
  ➢Country does not approve its data

Thank you for your attention