

**AFRICA REGION COMMENTS ON
THE GUIDELINES ON DATA FLOWS AND GLOBAL DATA REPORTING FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

I. Background

1. In its resolution 48/101 (I), the UN Statistical Commission requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG)¹ “to develop detailed guidelines of how custodian agencies and countries can work together to contribute to the data flows necessary to have harmonized statistics” for global SDG data reporting. The guideline document is expected to assist countries and international organizations alike on how best they can collaborate to improve the transmission and validation of high quality data for the SDGs at the global level.
2. During its sixth meeting that took place from 11-14 November 2017 in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, the IAEG-SDGs received a case study of data flows from national to global and regional custodian agencies and agreed to develop a document on best practices for the data flows between countries and custodian agencies.
3. The IAEG-SDGs presented the draft guidelines on Data Flows from National to Regional and Global databases at the 49th Session of the UN Statistics Commission in March 2018. The 49th Session, among others, requested the IAEG-SDGs to work jointly with custodian agencies and establish a fruitful dialogue between all parties, to further refine the guidelines, and to prepare criteria for implementation of the guidelines that are based on best practices and on ways to limit the burden that the envisaged procedures may represent in terms of time and resources for both national and international statistical systems. Following the 49th Session, the IAEG-SDGs was urged to finalize them together with implementation plan by November, 2018 and be shared at the 50th Session of UNSC in March 2019.

II. Purpose

4. The IAEG-SDGs is in the process of finalizing the guidelines for data flows and global data reporting for SDGs and criteria for their implementation. Underscoring that reporting

¹ The IAEG- SDG membership include representatives from 28 countries from all continents (five of which African countries namely, Tanzania, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana and Botswana) and is mandated with executing the resolution of the 49th Session of UN Statistical Commission in relation to Data Flows. There is strong engagement and commitment in the region by being active members of IAEG - SDGs and the High-Level Group. Mexico and Tanzania are currently co-chairs of the IAEG–SDGs.

of data and data flow within countries and transmission to continental level also need to be guided by procedures that consider level of statistical development in the various regions of the world, it is imperative that the guidelines are informed by best practices and inputs from regional and country stakeholders. To facilitate this, best practices on data flows are being collected from different parts of the world, Africa included. The information and lessons are expected to shed light on the challenges and facilitating factors of data flows from National Statistical Offices, and other National Agencies to the Custodian Agencies and to the global database.

5. The purpose of this report is to present African Countries' views, informed by realities and challenges of the National Statistical Systems in the region, on the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for Sustainable Development Goals. It is based on a case study of best practices on data flows conducted in Tanzania and experiences from Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Ghana.

III. Regional context

6. The Africa Agenda 2063 presents a socioeconomic transformation agenda for the continent for the period of 50 years starting from 2013, and has the commitment of all African countries. With its 7 aspirations, 20 goals and 174 targets, the Agenda 2063 has considerable overlaps with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.² The implementation of the Agenda is complemented with the and complemented with the African Development Bank's Ten-Year Strategy 2013-2022, and together these present significant demand for availability, easy access and flow of reliable and harmonized statistics in all the domains of the regional integration aspirations.
7. Two major subsidiary and complementary regional fora are in place to address statistical system and data development challenges in the region:
 - i. The **Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa)**, under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development which meets every two years; and
 - ii. The **Committee of Directors-General of National Statistical Offices (CoDG)**, under the aegis of the African Union (AU) Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance (CAMEF), meets on annual basis.

² https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/images/arfsd2017_acs-eca.pdf

8. Both fora are composed of African countries represented by Heads of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and are also attended by Regional Statistical Training Centres, Regional Economic Communities, and Pan-African organizations (the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)), as well as international organizations and eminent experts.
9. The Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD), a forum of statistical community in Africa, is a country-led initiative and represents a unique platform to tackle strategic challenges facing the African Statistical System. The ASSD meets once every year. At its inception, the ASSD started with a focus on addressing low participation of the continent in the Rounds of Population and Housing Censuses. The focus has expanded and now also includes improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, and improvement of Economic statistics for compilation of National Accounts.
10. In addition to the fora, two main frameworks (the **Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA)** and the **African Charter on Statistics**) guide statistical activities in the Region:
 - i. The **Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA)** is built around the importance of having harmonized and standardized definitions and concepts, adapting international statistical norms to African realities and specificities; and using common methodologies for the production, management and dissemination of statistics by all African countries.
 - ii. The **African Charter on Statistics** aims at serving as a policy framework for statistics development in Africa, especially the production, management and dissemination of statistical data and information at national, regional and continental levels. The Charter also includes provisions for advocacy for statistical development; promotion of the fundamental principles of production, storage, management, dissemination, and use of statistical information in the African continent; data quality and coordination of statistical activities and statistics institutions in Africa, including coordination of partners' interventions at national, regional and continental levels.
11. One of the major challenges to successful implementation development agendas at the national level has been the inability of countries to effectively measure progress and to respond comprehensively to the diverse data needs emerging from national, regional, continental, and international initiatives that promote economic and social development in African countries.

12. In response to this challenge, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank resolved in 2007, among others, to set up a joint data collection mechanism for socioeconomic data from African countries; the development of a common harmonized database; and the production of a joint African Statistical Yearbook (ASYB).³ This joint collection and sharing of data between regional institutions is to promote wider use of country level data, reduce costs, significantly improve the quality of data, and lead to better monitoring of development initiatives on the continent. As of 2018, ten series of the ASYB have been produced. The ultimate objective of the ASYB remains the establishment of a regional database that will be the unique repository of national data provided by Member States.

IV. Coordination

13. One of the key challenges in the current statistical arena in many countries is weak coordination of statistical activities and in effect dissemination, sharing, and flow of statistical information. It is hard to find all official data or links to important data repositories in one place even in countries that are reasonably advanced in terms of Information and Communication Technology. In many Countries also, the websites of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) do not have data on all SDGs indicators and their trends even for information that may already exist at the country level.

14. African countries are committed to implement the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data which calls for coordination and strategic leadership on data for sustainable development.

15. A number of African countries have conducted needs and capacity assessment of their national statistical systems in order to improve their ability to produce and share their statistics. Most countries have also developed and are implementing National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) where coordination has been highlighted as a nucleus. However, despite this fact, in most countries, coordination remains a complex challenge with regard to setting and implementing standard concepts and definitions for data collection, agreed calendar for statistical activities, standard metadata, data sharing, and putting effective coordination structures like councils and committees.

16. Existing coordination mechanisms within the NSS should therefore be strengthened with the NSOs as the centers of statistical coordination including at sub national level. The

³ <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/publications/african-statistical-yearbook/>

statistical system Stakeholders in Africa need to explore new technologies and approaches for setting effective, vertical and horizontal coordination structures and improving data quality. This will help to reduce duplication of efforts and investment of resources and promote coherence and efficiency. In some cases, reviewing the statistics law to facilitate effective coordination will be necessary.

V. Data reporting

V.1 The Role of the National Statistical System (NSS)

17. The primary role of the NSS is to provide quality data for decision making and monitoring of national, regional, and global policies and frameworks to stakeholders at national, regional, and global levels. To achieve this, partnerships among stakeholders of the NSS (the National Statistics Office, other Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Private Sector, Research and Academic Institutions and Development Partners) in collection, analysis, presentation and dissemination of statistics are crucial.
18. The main challenges facing NSS include among others, weak communication and collaboration between line ministries, Departments and Executive Agencies (MDAs) and NSOs, between NSOs and Non-State Actors in the NSS, and between the NSSs and Custodian Agencies (CAs). Responsibilities of production and dissemination of data in the NSS creates another level of complication, especially where there are no clear policy frameworks to guide dissemination and sharing of such data.
19. Depending on country contexts and on the legal mandates of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs), the NSOs play a crucial role in coordination of the NSS by setting and safeguarding standards, concepts and definitions in line with the international norms including to support production of high quality statistics by other national entities. Effectiveness of NSSs in playing this role will need to be further strengthened.

V.2 Custodian Agencies (CAs) Role

20. According to the draft Guidelines on Data Flows and Global Data Reporting for Sustainable Development Goals, custodian agencies are responsible for providing internationally comparable data in the different statistical domains, global and regional aggregates, and feeding UNSD database with data and accompanying metadata.

Custodian agencies are also responsible for developing international standards and recommending methodologies for monitoring SDGs.

21. Another central responsibility of the Custodian Agencies is to strengthen national monitoring and reporting capacity, by working closely with stakeholders in the NSSs. When country data are missing, are collected, or computed by National Agencies using a different methodology compared to international norms, or is reported differently by different sources, Custodian Agencies may need to compute estimates or adjust the data so as to harmonize the indicators for global comparison. In order to facilitate transfer knowledge to countries, and build consensus around statistics used for global monitoring and comparisons, this exercise is recommended to be done in collaboration with the affected countries, and that all estimated or adjusted national data should be validated and approved by countries before their submission to Global Data base -UNSD.
22. Experiences from selected countries in Africa suggest that some practices and existing relationships and links between CAs and national reporting agencies would need to be improved. The following areas require interventions to improve SDGs data flow from National to Regional and to global databases:

(i) Communication between Stakeholders

The findings from the case study on Tanzania and experiences from the selected countries shows that there is, at times, communication break down between CAs and national reporting agencies. For instance, there was a request from UNSD to national reporting agencies for contact information of national focal points for SDG indicators, that most of the national reporting agencies were not aware. The situation was similar with regard to request from CAs to national agencies. Hence, there is strong need for improvement of communications on SDG indicators between CAs and national reporting agencies.

(ii) Limited cooperation between CAs and National Reporting Agencies in validating modelled or adjusted statistics for global comparison

There is limited cooperation between CAs and National Reporting Agencies in African countries in validating modelled or adjusted statistics for global comparison. This undermines acceptability of the indicators computed by CAs for use at the national level – often it means that national agencies would not use them for reporting/tracking progress and for decision-making. Improving collaboration and assisting national government agencies to build the necessary capacity to be able either to compute the

indicators on their own or validate them will be crucial in enhancing credibility of the CAs modelled indicators for national use.

(iii) Discrepancies between the National and Global reported SDGs indicators

The findings from the case study and the experiences from selected countries indicate that there are cases where national indicators exist but differ significantly from globally reported indicators. Often, in such situations there is limited proof of CAs having made effort to validate the indicators with national agencies even though national agencies are already collecting data and computing statistics for the indicators (e.g. 3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic accidents, and 9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport in Tanzania). Moreover, there are cases where a modelled indicator exists but has not been validated by national agencies and therefore not used at national level for decision-making. The current data flow process in Africa has, therefore, to be improved, including through establishment of clear arrangement and calendar for validation by national reporting agencies in collaboration with the CAs.

(iv) Use of CAs modelled and harmonized indicators which are not produced by countries in their National Reporting Platforms (NRP)

Most of African countries would be willing to use the modelled and harmonized indicators in their NRP only if the national reporting agencies participated in the validation process and endorsed the indicators. However, if an indicator is produced at the country by national reporting agencies and it differs from the globally modelled indicator, African countries are of the view that the national indicator should continue to be used until a consensus is established and methodologies are harmonized or validated between the national agencies and the CAs. This is important to avoid sending out multiple or contradictory values for the same indicator.

Custodian agencies need to give enough time for countries (at least one month as proposed in the guideline) for the validation process in order to provide better quality data, while also being conscious of and taking steps to address potential capacity gaps that may exist in countries to limit effectiveness of the validation processes. The reporting burden on countries should also be minimized by effective coordination among all partners in the NSSs. The validation process by custodian agencies should be transparent to avoid data discrepancies. Countries should be fully involved in the process of imputations and adjustments before dissemination of the results.

V.3 Guidelines on Big Data

23. Big data, which arises from interactions with various technological environments such as telecommunications, the Internet and use of cloud computing services, should be seriously exploited by African NSSs to increase, in the near future, their performance and use to complement data from other sources such as government administrative data, surveys and censuses.
24. One of the issues limiting utilization of big data relates to concerns about the extent of adherence to fundamental principles of official statistics. The most important risk is with respect to the requirements of privacy and confidentiality, and restrictions posed by statistical and other national laws. At the same time, there are also concerns about the quality of the information collected, and limitations in capacities as well as utilization of technological tools for their analysis in National Statistical Offices. Generally, access to big data databases seem to be very difficult, and may need special arrangements that stakeholders of the NSSs may not be sufficiently prepared to set up.

V.4 Data quality

25. The Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data underscores the importance of quality and timely data for enabling governments, international organizations, civil society, private sector and the general public to make informed decisions and to ensure the accountability of representative bodies.
26. UNSD designed National Quality Assurance Framework to be used by countries. At its forty-third session in 2012, the UN Statistical Commission fully endorsed the generic national quality assurance framework template and encouraged countries to use it. With the view of enhancing quality of statistics produced in the continent, African countries have adopted the African charter on statistics and some of them have developed data quality assurance frameworks. Implementation of the framework continues to be challenging for many countries, and extensive data quality checks are needed still, especially but not only for administrative data sources.

VI. Guidelines on the production of international data series for SDG indicators

V.1 Data Sharing and Partnership

27. Given the large number of goals, targets and indicators of the SDGs, reporting of SDGs requires an enormous amount of data from different sources. For example, data gap assessment that was done in Tanzania shows that only 39 percent of data required for

SDGs reporting come from surveys and censuses and the rest (61 percent) is expected from administrative records and other non-traditional data sources. The same assessment in Ethiopia shows that, 36 percent is from survey and censuses and the rest from administrative and other sources. However, data sharing and partnership on statistics production is relatively weak in many African countries.

28. In order to strengthen data sharing and partnership of different data producers in the country, the following are recommended:

- i. All major data producers in the country should have systems that will allow exchange of data, metadata etc. in the most efficient way (interoperability). The data and metadata structures to facilitate interoperability do not exist in many African countries or where it exists it is not fully operational. As far as possible, African countries should develop data and metadata structures to facilitate easier exchange so as to allow reporting and dissemination at the national, continental and global levels.
- ii. The use of appropriate data transmission standards and tools that enable the automation of data exchanges such as through Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) in open data format should be promoted.
- iii. Although many National Statistical Offices in Africa are mandated by law to coordinate National Statistical Systems in their respective countries, introduction and use of Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) between the NSOs and other producers may be helpful to improve the partnership aspect within the NSSs. It has been tested and used in Botswana and Cameroon and proved helpful in increasing data production and accessibility for evidence-based decisions. Signing of the MoUs will “bind” the signing parties to compile and share data on time and hence do away with challenges of delay and discrepancies; and,
- iv. Since the National Statistical Offices are the official coordinators of NSSs in countries, then NSOs should always be involved in ongoing activities between custodian agencies and other data producers in the country.

V.2 Coordination with Regional Initiatives for Data Dissemination

29. In addition to direct work with countries’ NSOs and other National Reporting Agencies, Custodian Agencies and the UNSD are encouraged to coordinate their interventions for data flows to global level with Africa Regional entities initiatives, specifically the StatCom – Africa, the Africa Union Commission and the African Development Bank, as well as with Regional Economic Cooperation Offices. This is important to reduce

reporting burden to countries, and to facilitate coordinated investments in statistics capacity development. On the data dissemination front, one option is to explore, for example, how the UNSD National Reporting Platform Initiatives could link with the African Development Bank – African Information Highway (AIH) Data Portals initiative, and the Africa Statistics Year Book. It may be useful that needs assessment is done as some adjustments and improvements may be required to accommodate response to the various data demands on National Reporting Agencies.

VII. Capacity Building

30. From the statistical perspective, the implications engendered by the monitoring framework of the Agenda 2030 are enormous, raising important questions about the NSS's capacity to meet the widening, increasing and evolving needs of data users.
31. The quality of the human and infrastructural resources of an NSS is essential for the monitoring and evaluation of the country's policies and strategies; whether it is the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or other commitments and the different development strategies formulated at the level of each country.
32. The challenge for Africa is how to build statistical systems that are flexible and responsive to the enormous task of the SDG indicator and monitoring framework. Africa needs long-lasting investment and technical support from partners in order to build strong and appropriate Statistical Systems that can meet the existing and future demands.
33. Comprehensive and updated capacity building action plan based on the carefully identified needs of country NSSs and in compliance with SHaSA and the African Charter on Statistics has to be elaborated to improve capacity of the region to meet requirements of SDG monitoring.

VIII. Recommendations

34. On capacity development in Africa

In line with commitments towards implementation of the SHaSA and as per the AU Union Member States Ministerial decision to allocate a minimum of 0.15% of the national budget to statistics, African countries are encouraged to set aside sufficient resources from internal sources for statistical capacity development. This is crucial to demonstrate political will in promoting evidence-based decision making.

Partners and international organizations are urged to support African countries in their efforts to develop NSDS actions aimed at the acquisition of knowledge, know-how and skills, staff qualifications and equipment strengthening as well as for improvement of statistical infrastructure and technology resources.

35. On Data gap assessment

UNSD and other partners are encouraging to work with African countries to support assessments of the statistics capacities of the NSSs to compile the global SDGs indicators and to provide technical and financial assistance in the preparation of the National Strategic Implementation Plans to measure the progress towards SDGs in the countries.

36. On custodian agencies interventions

In order to improve communication between CAs and national institutions it is recommended that, all requests to NSS should go through NSOs, and in particular through the SDG Coordinators in the NSOs.

Partners are invited to collaborate with the national agencies to build necessary capacity for the computation and validation of global indicators to avoid reporting multiple values for the same indicator from the same country.

IX. Conclusion

37. The presented African experience on how data flow for SDGs is managed in countries from national to regional and global levels, paved the way for identification of existing gaps and challenges in coordination among the national reporting agencies in countries and between the countries and other partners including Custodian Agencies.

38. The report provides crucial inputs to the global and Africa region stakeholders on areas where improvements are needed in implementation of the guidelines on data flows and global data reporting for sustainable development goals. It is expected that implementation of the recommendations on the identified areas will help to improve coordination and the efficiency of data flows at all levels.

Annexes

Annex 1: Endorsement by NSOs and Sharing Arrangements

This report has been shared with National Statistics Offices of the five countries selected to be part of the case study on data flows for review and endorsement. Upon their Endorsement, the report will be presented to StatCom forum in October, 2018 for more comments and improvement before it is presented to the next IAEG-SDGs in November 2018. On completion the report will be shared broadly with Stakeholders in the Africa Region and beyond through fora for statistics development.

Annex 2: Data Flow from National to Regional and Global Databases, (Tanzania Case Study Mini Report)

Data Flow from National to Regional and Global Databases Tanzania Case Study Report

1. Introduction

Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics led the compilation of information for the case study on SDG data flows from country to regional and global agencies. The assessment has been carried out in consultation with various departments within the National Bureau of Statistics, and other Government Ministries and Executive Agencies that are currently producing data for computation of the indicator, or (where the indicator is not produced at the moment) are considered as the relevant agencies that could take the task of producing the indicator. Efforts were also made to get in touch with CAs although this was not achieved in all cases. The case study covered 10 SDG indicators falling under the following categories:

- I. Indicators Modeled by Agencies***
 - 3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (CO: WHO)
 - 11.6.2: Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted) (CA: WHO)
- II. Indicators Where National Statistics are Calculated by Agencies Using Geospatial Information***
 - 15.4.2: Mountain Green Cover Index (CA: FAO)
- III. A Non-Statistical Indicator Based on a Questionnaire Whose Responses May be Adjusted by the Custodian Agency***
 - 5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (CAs: UN Women & World Bank)
- IV. Indicators Where Agencies Use Data Transmitted by Countries Through a Well-Established Process.***
 - 17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (CA: OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI) (CA: OECD)
 - 17.3.1 Foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget
- V. Indicators Where Some National Statistics are Transmitted Already to an Intermediary International Database***
 - 6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time (CA: FAO)
 - 6.4.2 Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources (CA: FAO)
- VI. Indicators Calculated by the Agency Without a Validation of the National SDGs Focal Point Which Has Been Nominated***
 - 3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries (CA: WHO)
 - 9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport (CA: UNIDO/ITF)

The assessment builds on another one that was conducted by the international agencies/custodian agencies (World Bank, FAO, WHO, UNICEF, UN Habitat, IUCN⁴, and UNODC⁵), and which in the case of Tanzania covered the following three SDG indicators.

- 1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural) (CA: World Bank)
- 3.3.2 - Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population (CA: WHO)
- 16.3.2 - Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population (CA: UNODC)

Thus, with this study having been completed, data flow assessment for 13 of the 165 **Tier I and Tier II** indicators have been completed in the case of Tanzania.⁶

Consultations carried out for the purpose of completing this study have been very helpful in identifying the current practices and to pinpoint areas where improvements in data flows are needed. This mini report aims to highlight the key findings concerning each indicator for ease of reference.

2. General Findings

This section presents some general findings that cut across the board and could be of relevance to other indicators not covered in this exercise:

- (i) There is strong need for improvement of communications and requests related to SDG indicators to the national agencies.
 - a. Although the survey indicated that there was a request from UNSD to Tanzanian agencies requesting contact information of national focal points for each SDG indicator, we could not establish whether this request was delivered to the relevant institutions. None of the contact persons consulted in the Ministries and Executive Agencies were aware of this request.
 - b. There appears to have been a similar request from the CAs to national agencies, which is alluded to in the survey. However, only in one case for **SDG 15.4.1 Mountain Green Cover Index** could we confirm that the request was received.

To enhance coordination, it is recommended that the requests for focal persons contact information are sent again and are copied to the national SDGs focal person at the NSO, or are sent through the NSO so that responses can be coordinated for all indicators and ensure that the NSO and the CA and UNSD have the same information in their databases. Generally, however, all requests are to be directed to the heads of institutions. In addition, there is a need for SDGs data flow guideline to stress on establishing systematic reporting flow between UN Agencies themselves to reduce work load for countries of reporting the same information or data to different international organizations.

- (ii) There is at the moment limited cooperation between CAs and National Reporting Agencies in validating modeled or adjusted statistics for global cross-country comparison. This

⁴ International Union for Conservation of Nature

⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes

⁶ Classification as of 11 May 2018. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>

undermines receptivity of the indicators computed by CAs at the national level and often it means that national agencies would not use them for reporting/tracking progress and for decision making. Improving collaboration and assisting national government agencies to build the necessary capacity to be able to compute and/or validate the indicators will be crucial in enhancing credibility of the CAs modelled indicators for national use.

- (iii) The current data flow process leaves a lot to be improved, including for indicators that are said to already have an established process. We are able to report cases where national indicators exist but differ significantly from globally reported indicators while at the same time, there is limited proof of CAs making effort to validate the indicators with national agencies (e.g. 3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic accidents, and 9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport) and cases where a modelled indicator exists but has not been validated by national agencies (no capacity at the national level to validate) and therefore not used at national level for decision making (e.g. 3.91. Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution; and 15.4.2 Mountain Green Cover Index)
- (iv) Tanzania would be willing to use the modelled and harmonized indicators in its NRP where it does not produce the statistics yet. However, this is subject to validation by national reporting agencies. In the case where Tanzania already produces the indicator and the national indicator differs from the globally modelled indicator, Tanzania will continue to use its nationally produced indicator until a consensus is established and methodologies are harmonized with the CAs. This is important to avoid sending out multiple values for the same indicator.
- (v) We appreciate the resources available at UNSD and which have been very useful in this assessment. These include the contact information of custodian agencies and data collection calendar (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataContacts/>), the metadata (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>), and the global indicator database (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>). We have noted some gaps however, for example in the contact information in the data production calendar for 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 17.2.1 and 17.3.1. We think it would help if more complete information can be provided. The CAs could work closely with national agencies, and particularly the NSO to enhance completeness of country information.

3. Case Study Findings for Each Indicator

3.1 Indicators Modeled by Agencies

The Custodian Agency for both indicators covered in this category is WHO

- **3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (CA: WHO)**

This indicator is currently not produced in the country, and the frequency of its production can only be determined once the country starts producing it. In ideal scenario, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (National Reporting Agency) would be working closely with the National Bureau of Statistics (the NSO) to produce the indicator.

WHO has produced a modelled value available at <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.GSWCAH37v> for 2016, although there is no reference in the global data collection calendar about how frequently the data is produced.

The modelled value does not seem to have been validated by national agencies. Further consultation with the focal person for global reporting at WHO indicated in the data collection calendar confirmed that; WHO sent a circular letter to all Member States in December 2017 to inform them about the forthcoming consultation for SDG indicators 3.9.1, 3.9.2, 7.1.2 and 11.6.2, and asking them to nominate focal persons from Ministries of Health and/or Water, Environment, Energy. There was no response from Tanzania and they decided to send the data for country consultation through the Regional Offices. They have not received any responses from either national or regional level indicating weak communication between them which needs to be addressed to improve efficiency of the whole process.

The case study indicated that there were two requests (from UNSD and WHO) for information about SDGs statistics focal person(s) for this indicator at the country level.

In our assessment, the national agencies capacity will also need to be enhanced in order for the validation exercise to be meaningful and to benefit both the country and the Custodian Agencies (CAs). We therefore recommend enhancement of collaboration between the WHO and the National Agencies, specifically the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare as well as the National Statistics Office. We also recommend that validation exercises would include the National Statistical Offices.

- ***11.6.2: Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted) (CA: WHO)***

This indicator is currently not produced in the country. In ideal scenario, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (National Reporting Agency) would be working closely with the National Bureau of Statistics (the NSO) to produce the indicator.

We are however aware of WHO having produced modelled values and data for 2010 is available here: http://www.who.int/phe/health_topics/outdoorair/databases/OAP_database_8_2011.xls

Since it is not yet produced, the frequency will be determined when the country is able to do so. From the global data collection calendar however, WHO indicates that the indicator would be produced every two years.

The WHO data collection calendar does not indicate who their counterpart institution in Tanzania is. From Tanzania side, it is determined that this will be the National Environment Management Council, which is an agency under the Vice-Presidents Office -Environment and Union Affairs.

The modelled values of this indicator were not validated by the relevant national agencies, and we could not find evidence that there were any requests to do so that effect delivered to them. It is important for transparency and for consensus building that modelled indicators that are published as referring to national governments are first (before they are published) validated by the national reporting agencies and the national statistical offices.

The case study survey indicated that there were two requests (from UNSD and WHO) for information about SDGs statistics focal person(s) for this indicator in Tanzania, but none of the relevant organizations were aware of the requests. We would recommend that the UNSD and WHO sends the requests again with a copy to the NSO to enhance coordination.

Also, Tanzania has established a National Technical Working Group on Environment Statistics (led by the NBS) which coordinates activities for production of environment statistics, and can be the appropriate alternative contact in addition to the NEMC. NEMC is a member of this working group.

3.2 Indicators Where National Statistics are Calculated by Agencies Using Geospatial Information

• **15.4.2: Mountain Green Cover Index (CO: FAO)**

Tanzania is not producing this indicator at the moment, and its frequency will only be determined when Tanzania starts to produce it. In ideal scenario, the indicator will be produced by The Tanzania Forest Services Agency (under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism) in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics.

Currently national efforts have been limited to undertaking land use cover assessments. The latest assessment which has been supported by FAO is available at: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/43612-09cf2f02c20b55c1c00569e679197dcde.pdf>

The case study survey indicated that there were two requests (from UNSD) for information about SDGs statistics focal person(s) for this indicator in Tanzania, but neither the focal person at NSO nor at the TFS were aware of this request.

Tanzania received a request to validate baseline statistics for this indicator for 2017 from FAO (sent to the Director General of the National Bureau of Statistics). In fact, this is the only indicator for which we could confirm that a request was sent and received.

Even though there was no consensus with the national agencies about it, we are aware that the baseline statistic has been published already (at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>).

The NSO agrees with the proposal in the guidance note for SDG data flows that required that “*A note indicates both the data are calculated by the custodian agency and the status of validation by the country (e.g., Validated by country/Country can’t validate/Not validated by country/Pending review) is included. Doing so, all globally harmonized national data or statistics are published in the UN global database.*”

However, the NSO wishes to check FAO's calculations before they are published.

The NSO would also be willing to include the indicator in the NRP if there is a common agreement with National Agencies (NSO and the TFS) about the methodology used.

We would therefore recommend another round of discussion between FAO and Tanzanian agencies in order to reach a common agreement about methodology for computation of the indicator. Similarly, we recommend closer collaboration in capacity building so that the indicator can be produced by National Agencies in the future.

3.3 A Non-Statistical Indicator Based on a Questionnaire Whose Responses May be Adjusted by the Custodian Agency

We understand there is joint custodianship for this indicator (UN Women and World Bank). We could not find a data production calendar for this indicator nor contact information of focal persons at the CAs at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataContacts/>. This information would have been very helpful in confirming details that have been provided by the dedicated national reporting institution.

5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (COs: UN Women & World Bank)

The case study indicated that a questionnaire was sent to the national agency (from CAs, without saying whether it was from UN Women or from the World Bank) to fill information that would be useful for determining this indicator. In the consultations we made to assess data flow for this

indicator we found that the Ministry of Community Development Gender the Elderly and Children (MCDGEC), which is the national focal institution for this indicator was not aware of the request. Similarly, the Gender Focal person at the National Statistics Office was also unaware of the request.

The case study survey indicated that there were two requests (from UNSD and the CO) for information about SDGs statistics focal person(s) for this indicator in Tanzania. However, neither the NSO nor the Ministry are aware of these requests. We recommend enhancing coordination around these requests: the requests if sent to the Ministry should be copied to the NSO focal person on SDGs to ensure the NSO has information and can support follow ups.

Since this indicator will be determined by CAs, it is important that there is transparency about the criteria used and that there is consensus between the CAs about it before it is published. Doing so will enhance acceptability of the indicator and its use for decision making and tracking at the national level too.

3.4 Indicators Where Agencies Use Data Transmitted by Countries Through a Well - Established Process.

- ***17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI) (CA: OECD)***
- ***17.3.1 Foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget***

According to the SDGs metadata for these indicators, there is an already established process that involve national reporting statisticians from Ministry of finance (in the case of Tanzania). Unfortunately, we were unable to establish which person in the Ministry of Finance may have responded to any requests for information from OECD for this indicator in the recent few years.

Moreover, we could not find a data production calendar for this indicator nor contact information of focal persons at the CAs at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataContacts/>. This information would have been very helpful in confirming details that have been provided by the dedicated national reporting institution.

In our assessment we feel that the metadata is sufficient. We also agree with the proposal that “When data for an indicator are transmitted to agencies and validated according to a well-established process by a national data provider designated by the country, countries also should designate the same data provider as an SDG focal point for the indicator to avoid duplication and confusion.”

However, we recommend that information about the national data provider for the indicator should be provided to the NSO as well to avoid duplication of effort and confusion.

The NSO would also be willing to include the indicator value produced by the CA in the NRP if the NSO can confirm with the “nationally-nominated statistical reporter” that the details are a true reflection of what is known at the country level about the flow. A note will also be included that the statistics have been computed by the CA.

We therefore recommend enhancement of cooperation between the OECD and both the national reporting institution (Ministry of Finance and Planning) and the National Statistics Office.

3.5 Indicators Where Some National Statistics are Transmitted Already to an Intermediary International Database

- ***6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time (CA: FAO)***
- ***6.4.2 Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources (CA: FAO)***

We could not find details about the custodian organization contact point for this indicator (6.4.1) at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataContacts/>. There is however information for 6.4.2, but in the data collection calendar, in the case of Tanzania, the relevant cells are all blank. We would recommend that this information is filled comprehensively for both indicators. Further consultation with the FAO focal person for indicator 6.4.2 reveals that; he is working with his colleagues Virginie Gillet as focal persons for 6.4.1 and 6.4.2. He also confirmed to receive the name of the nominated focal person for AQUASTAT from Tanzania Mr. Robert Kasililwa. He insisted the important of filling and submitting the AQUASTAT on time to facilitate filling the UN data collection form.

We believe that the information in the metadata is sufficient. We are also aware that a data value for SDG 6.4.2 for 2014 from FAO is included in the global SDG database at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>. However, we do not have evidence of any validation process for the indicator with national agencies. We would therefore encourage FAO to pursue engagement with national agencies to validate the indicator.

Last year the NSO received a request from FAO to nominate a national focal point and a deputy. The request was sent to the National Bureau of Statistics and was forwarded to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. The NBS identified a national focal point from its office, from the department responsible for Agricultural Statistics. The deputy, who is expected to come from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation is yet to be identified. Once this information is received it will be sent to FAO.

As for the request from UNSD that is alluded to in the survey, neither the focal person at the NBS nor at the Ministry of Water and irrigation are aware of the request having been delivered. We would suggest resending this request with a copy to the national SDGs focal person at the National Bureau of Statistics to ensure proper coordination of response.

The NBS encourages FAO to coordinate their data collection process on water with existing data flows already implemented.

However, while we appreciate the intention to lighten the burden to countries in validation of these indicators, we believe that it would help both countries and the FAO and other global stakeholders if a transparent process of validation is in place.

We also encourage that where a country has capacity to produce an indicator, CAs should use country data. However, if there are other adjustments made for harmonization and for global comparison that information should be shared with and validated by the country experts (i.e. it is not sent for information purposes only).

If the information (adjusted indicator) has been validated by the national agency(ies) then the process can be considered transparent and would safeguard against disagreements by national authorities to use such indicators for tracking country progress.

In Tanzania, we would specifically prefer to calculate our national statistic and transmit it to FAO in order to more closely monitor our country's statistics for global SDG indicators. We think the CAs

should always seek to have consensus with national authorities about the indicators used for tracking country progress, and national indicators reported in NRP if available should become the first choice. It is also important that CA works closely with national agencies to build national capacity so they can speak the same language.

3.6 Indicators Calculated by the Agency Without a Validation of the National SDGs Focal Point Which Has Been Nominated

- ***3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries (CA: WHO)***

Tanzania has been producing statistics for this indicator annually since 2000 although these are not reported through existing process to international intermediary/custodian organization database. The statistics are produced by the Tanzania Police Force (traffic Department) with support from the National Bureau of Statistics

We are also aware that information for this indicator for Tanzania exists in the global database (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>) for year 2000 up 2013 but the information is not consistent with the nationally reported statistics available at (https://www.sumatra.go.tz/index.php/component/docman/doc_view/262-improvement-of-road-safety-in-tanzania-mainland?Itemid=256).

The WHO indicates that their contact person for data for this indicator is the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and that this data would be collected every three years. It is also noted in http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/ that “Tanzania is among countries lacking eligible death statistics.

We note however that there is no indication that the CO has attempted in the past to validate their statistics with national agencies. Thus, we recommend in line with the guideline for data flow that “When the custodian agency calculates or adjusts national data/statistics and publishes them in the global database, agencies should always transmit these data/statistics to the National SDGs focal point nominated by the country, even if a previous well-established collection process already exists”.

This is crucial to prevent misunderstandings and ensure that there is a harmonized way of generating statistics both at the country level and at the CO for global comparison.

While the survey indicates there were requests from both UNSD and the FAO for information about national focal points for this indicator, we found that neither the department responsible for supporting the production of this indicator at the NSO nor the Tanzania traffic police were aware of the request. The MOHSW was also unaware of the request.

In order to enhance coordination, we suggest that the requests be sent again through the NSO focal person who can coordinate responses from other agencies.

Also, we encourage the Custodian Organization to work closely with Tanzanian agencies to harmonize methodology for computation of this indicator, and to ensure there is sufficient capacity to enhance availability of eligible death statistics and in general CRVs.

At the moment for example, Tanzania may not use the WHO indicator in its NRP because it would be confusing if Tanzania reports two different values for the same indicator. The only way the WHO statistic can be used is if the methodology is agreed with the national agencies and the indicator is validated as a true representation of the national situation.

- ***9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport (CO: UNIDO)***

Tanzania is producing statistics for this indicator for air and railway transport only. It is not yet producing the indicator for road and marine transport. The statistics are produced annually in

collaboration with the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) in the case of air transport statistics, and with Tanzania Railways Limited, in the case of railway transport.

Tanzania is not a member of ITF, but is a member of ICAO where it is represented by the TCAA. We also note that ITF has indicated that Civil Aviation Authority (under the Ministry of Transport) is the national agency they coordinate with, and that they receive data from TCAA monthly and produce the indicator annually.

We have seen that there are statistics for this indicator in the global SDGS database at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>.

However, it is not certain whether it has been validated by national reporting agencies. At least we could not establish any requests from ICAO and ITF-OECD to Tanzania to validate the indicator.

In order to ensure there are harmonized statistics for this indicator, we recommend that the ITF consults with national reporting agencies.

The survey questionnaire indicates that there were requests from both UNSD and the ITF for information about national focal points for this indicator. While consulting for this case study we found that neither the department responsible for supporting the production of this indicator at the NSO nor the TCAA were aware of the request.

We are however aware of a request from ECA to NBS in 2017 validate the information for this indicator as part of an assessment of availability of economic indicators for SDGs in African Countries.

Tanzania endorses the proposal that ‘Even if the custodian agency’s calculation is based primarily on data transmitted by the country, the agency should always transmit globally harmonized national data to the national SDGs focal point nominated before publishing them in the global data base in order to identify possible errors.’”

This option will be helpful in that it will ensure that all parties, reporting for national use and reporting for global use, are on the same page. It would also enhance relevance of the indicator so it can be used for decision making at the country level.

At the moment, for example, the ICAO/ITF-OECD statistic cannot be used in the NRP until it is validated and there is an agreement with national agencies about the methodology and the statistics.

We therefore encourage more cooperation and exchange going forward and joint efforts between the CA and National Reporting agencies to facilitate availability of more comprehensive data. We suggest that the ITF should not limit its consultations to the TCAA but that it should also be in contact with the NBS. The NBS in its capacity as coordinator of the NSS can manage engagements with other sector stakeholders such as TRL, SUMATRA and Tanzania Harbours Authority.

4. Conclusion and Way forward

This exercise has been very helpful in understanding the present scenario around data flows for SDGS. For example, we have been able to identify gaps in communication as well as in coordination of production and sharing of indicators with Custodian agencies, and it is now possible to start considering options for better coordination both between the NSO and other designated reporting agencies on the one hand, and between the NSS and Custodian agencies on the other.

The importance of enhancing national capacity in production and dissemination of statistics for tracking SDGs cannot be overstated. We therefore encourage and would appreciate if CAs become

more open to collaborate with/work closely with national reporting agencies so that where indicators are modelled or adjusted they are also accepted for use at country level by national authorities.

We believe that there is a need to broaden this analysis to cover as many of the 165 Tier 1 and Tier II indicators in each country, starting with indicators that countries, and where resources are available Tanzania will undertake this exercise as part of a national mechanisms to improve coordination of production and sharing/dissemination of statistics for monitoring of SDGs.

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