Tier Re-classification Request

Indicator Number and Name: 16.1.2 Number of conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause

Custodian Agency(ies): Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Current Tier: Tier 3

Proposed Tier: Tier 2

1. **Background and rationale for indicator re-classification**
   The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *seeks to strengthen universal peace and commits to redouble efforts to resolve or prevent conflict*. It recognizes that *there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.*[1] Counting deaths occurring in situations of armed conflict is therefore essential to the measurement of the Agenda, including and beyond its Goal 16. Monitoring conflict-related deaths is also necessary to help protect civilians and other potential victims, ensure respect of humanitarian and human rights standards, and understand the patterns and consequences of armed conflicts to prevent future armed conflicts.

   The conceptual, methodological and data collection framework for this indicator has been developed by OHCHR based on international legal standards, existing statistical classifications, and on a groundwork of established practices on casualty recording by United Nations (UN) entities working in situations of armed conflict. It is the result of an extensive series of consultations involving National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and other relevant stakeholders. The re-classification of the indicator to Tier 2 will contribute to expanding data collection, provide stronger basis for stakeholders to apply the methodology and for OHCHR and its partners to support capacity building.

   Given the need to broaden and harmonize data collection practices, OHCHR will seek resources to expand the provision of technical support to relevant stakeholders engaging in data collection or dissemination after the indicator's reclassification. OHCHR will continue its collaboration with NSOs, independent National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs, based on SDG indicator 16.a.1), UN entities, and relevant civil society organizations.

2. **Information on how and when the methodology has become an international standard and who is the governing body that approves it**
   The methodology was developed based on already agreed legal, statistical and casualty recording standards and practices at international level:

   - International human rights law and international humanitarian law are two bodies of law that are complementary sources of standards in situations of armed conflict. These laws find their source in a series of international treaties, reinforced and complemented by customary international law.

[1] A/RES/70/1

- International Classification of Crimes Statistics (ICCS) includes and distinguishes intentional homicides, killings directly related to armed conflicts, killings that amount to war crimes and other violations of the laws and customs applicable in international or non-international armed conflict. The ICCS is being disseminated by the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and endorsed by both the UN Statistical Commission[2] and the UN Criminal Justice and Crime Prevention Commission in 2015.[3]
- The World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), which includes a classification on war operations involving different weapons.
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) overview of weapons regulated by international human rights law.
- OHCHR Guidance on Casualty Recording, which provides methodological and operational guidance based on international law and drawing on OHCHR practice.[4]

3. Development and testing of the methodology (please also include information on how NSSs, and in particular NSOs, are involved in methodology development, data collection and data validation)

Since 2016, OHCHR has engaged in a process of methodological development and validation that has been inclusive, transparent and bridged standards and practices of relevant stakeholders, including NSOs, at international and country levels.

The first consultation for this indicator was held during the meeting of the Praia working group in Paris on 4-6 July 2016.[5] Seventeen NSOs attended the consultation. OHCHR also consulted on the work plan for the indicator during the Expert Meeting on Estimating Indirect Conflict Deaths organized by the Small Arms Survey last 25 January 2017. UN entities and other international organizations, academia, civil society organizations and experts on estimation of indirect deaths attended the meeting.

Based on the recommendations from these consultations, OHCHR undertook a survey of practices on producing data on conflict-related deaths by UN entities, NSOs, NHRIs and civil society organizations. The survey has benefited from the work and support of the Small Arms Survey, which conducted a review of existing sources on conflict-related deaths. OHCHR conducted its own review, expanding its assessment of UN sources and casualty recording practices, in particular by UN Missions and OHCHR presences in situations of armed conflict. OHCHR also discussed with NSOs in situations of armed conflict to understand better their practices.

Following these consultations, mapping of existing practices, desktop research and bilateral discussions with relevant institutions, a background note on a proposed methodology was prepared for consultation. OHCHR presented the draft methodology during a Multi-stakeholder

[2] E/2015/24-E/CN.3/2015/40
[3] E/CN.15/2015/19
[4] Forthcoming publication
[5] The United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), at its 47th session, welcomed the support of the Praia Group for the development of indicators under SDG 16 (E/2016/24E/CN.3/2016/34).

Meeting on Human Rights Indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 5-6 September 2017. The consultation included NHRIs and NSOs from nine countries. Experts from UNODC, WHO, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the ICRC, civil society organizations working on conflict-related deaths, including the Small Arms Survey, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), and Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG). The participants endorsed the main features of the proposed definitional and methodological framework, which was then presented in a subsequent web consultation with civil society organizations working on conflict and casualty data recording on 29 November 2017. An additional multi-stakeholder consultation involving UN entities, NSOs, NHRIs and CSOs engaged in casualty recording was held on 22 February 2018. These consultations have helped to refine and validate the proposed methodology and supported the decision to submit the present re-classification request to the IAEG-SDG.

4. Results of the pilot studies and list of countries consulted that are regionally representative

The pilot study[6] confirmed the relevance and practicability of the main features of the definitional, methodological and data collection framework developed for the indicator. It validated the approach recommended for the identification of situations of armed conflict to be included in the indicator, based on official documents of the UN and other internationally mandated entities. It provided an assessment of available data on persons killed and incidents of documented deaths, that are necessary to identify the nexus with the armed conflict, meet the disaggregation required by the indicator and to conduct deduplication when having to use multiple data providers. United Nations entities operating in situations of armed conflict, given their mandate, proximity to hostilities, extensive local networks and cooperation with various organizations, are well placed to provide accurate data on documented conflict-related deaths, focusing on civilians. They collaborate with a wide range of sources, including governmental institutions and civil society for data gathering and verification.

The piloting has also demonstrated that data on documented direct conflict-related deaths of civilians, from official sources (UN entities/NSO), are available for most of the deadliest situations of armed conflict, in the SDG regions of Southern Asia, Western Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Northern Africa, Latin America and Europe.

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

Not applicable

6. Conclusion

The request by OHCHR for re-classification of indicator 16.1.2 from Tier 3 to Tier 2 is based on the following reasons: (a) all the elements of the indicator are based on universally-accepted standards and existing practices of UN entities (internationally mandated entities) operating in

[6] Consisting of desktop research, semi-structured interviews and country missions involving UN entities, NSOs, NHRIs, civil society organizations, legal experts and OHCHR field presences and covering all situations of armed conflict to be included in the indicator.

situations of armed conflict; (b) the methodology and data collection have been tested and generated preliminary data for most of the deadliest situations of armed conflict spreading across SDG regions; and (c) the approach was reviewed and validated by a number of NSOs (including the members of the Praia Group on Governance statistics), NHRIs, UN entities and other relevant stakeholders.

The re-classification of the indicator to Tier 2 will contribute to expanding the data coverage and capacity building of national data collections and data providers.