

**Inter-agency Meeting on Preparation for the 2017 SDG Reports**

1-2 March 2017

Venue: UN Headquarters (New York), Conference Room 6

**Report of the Meeting**

**I. Introduction**

1. The Inter-agency Meeting on Preparation for the 2017 SDG Reports took place on 1-2 March 2017 at UN Headquarters. The meeting was hosted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division, and was attended by approximately 50 experts from international agencies and regional organizations.
2. The main objective of the meeting was to bring together the focal points and other representatives of the international agencies responsible for submitting storylines and data for the 2017 SDG global reports and the global SDG indicator database to: 1) review inputs received by the submission deadline and missing inputs, and brainstorm on the content and main messages for the reports; 2) discuss how to improve the quality and availability of data; and 3) review measurement issues regarding the SDG indicators, and 4) discuss how to move forward for future collaboration among agencies.
3. Ms. Francesca Perucci provided opening remarks, welcoming the agencies to the meeting, and noting in particular the importance of discussing measurement issues regarding the SDG indicators and collaboration among agencies for ongoing and future SDG work.
4. All documents and presentations from the meeting are available at the following website: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/meetings/sdg-inter-agency-meeting-2017/>.

**II. Preparation of the Secretary General's 2017 SDG Progress Reports and review of inputs received and identification of gaps: content and main messages**

5. UNSD provided a presentation on the preparation of the 2017 SDG Progress Reports, highlighting the mandate, objective and scope of the reports; reviewing structures of the two reports and the overarching theme linked to the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2017: *Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world*; presenting timeline for the production of the reports and other outputs; as well as reviewing storyline and data requests from agencies. Further information can be found in the presentation under agenda item 2, available on the website.
6. The main discussions points raised following the presentation were:
  - a. Many questions were raised regarding the following: inputs used for the reports; aggregations at regional and global level; the use of the new SDG regions; and ways

to include more information in the two reports using different approaches to deal with the word and space limitations.

- b. Submissions for the reports are included based on space availability and content. The SG's progress report is more comprehensive and has short messages on each indicator, primarily all the Tier I and II indicators. The glossy report contains selected indicators, charts and main messages for the general public and the media.
  - c. The new SDG regions are geographic regions based on the M49. Some agencies raised the issue regarding the small grouping of Australia and New Zealand (separated out of Oceania); this can be reviewed on a case by case basis and the SDG regions may undergo slightly changes going forward.
  - d. There has not yet been a discussion on a baseline year, but the report will use a similar approach to last year starting most data series at the year 2000.
  - e. There was a recommendation to include sources for the charts, which are not currently included in the glossy report due to space limitations and also since the charts may be compiled with multiple agencies. UNSD will explore the possibility to include them on the website.
  - f. Additionally, it was pointed out that users may want additional data to the ones presented in the charts and that it may be useful to indicate websites where more detailed information can be accessed. UNSD will consider the possibility of creating a webpage for these additional materials and include the link in the glossy report.
7. UNSD then provided an overview of inputs received as of 28 February and identified gaps for all the Goals (some indicators were listed as 'in process' since their information was not yet logged).
  8. Agencies provided an update on their submissions for storylines, including the main messages, data and charts for the indicators under their custodianship, primarily focused on Tier I and Tier II indicators. If an agency had not yet provided inputs, they were requested to kindly inform of the projected date. Further information and specific inputs that were discussed can be found in the presentation on agenda items 3 and 4 available on the website.
  9. Information on approximately 100 indicators had been received by the deadline or shortly thereafter, comprising almost two-thirds of the information expected for the reports. UNSD expressed extreme appreciation for the agencies' work in providing inputs by the deadline.

### **III. Discussion on Cross-cutting storyline and Data Story**

10. UNSD provided a presentation on the outline of the section on the data story for the SDG report. The data story will focus on data innovation and statistical capacity building, reflecting two of the six thematic areas of the UN World Data Forum and linking to the Cape Town Global Action Plan as the strategic framework for the way forward. Further information can be found in the presentation on agenda item 5 available on the website.
11. Agencies provided updates on information that can possibly be provided for the data story section, including:
  - a. Paris21 with regard to capacity development.

- b. UNEP-WCMC mentioned examples they could possibly provide regarding partnerships for biodiversity indicators.
  - c. WHO offered to provide some country examples touching on some of the aspects listed in the outline.
  - d. UNICEF mentioned work on leaving no one behind and an update on the surveys for MDG monitoring that could possibly be included (innovation and capacity building).
  - e. Population Division will consult with colleagues for possible inputs.
  - f. UNDP offered to possibly provide contributions on the collaboration between official and non-official data providers, understanding data ecosystems, and disaggregation and innovation.
12. The discussion also focused on the inputs for the cross-cutting storylines that will also focus on the HLPF theme: *Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world* and in particular storylines that can link two or more Goals under review during the HLPF, namely: Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14, 17. It was emphasized that storyline inputs for this section should be based on the indicators in the SDG global indicator framework.
13. Agencies provided updates on information they can possibly contribute for the cross-cutting section, including:
- a. Analysis on asset ownership from a gender perspective from the EDGE project, provided by UNSD.
  - b. Cross-linkages on Goals 1 and 3 and 5, access to reproductive rights and its relation to reducing poverty and shared prosperity, provided by UNFPA.
  - c. Contribution on Goals 3 and 5 by WHO.
  - d. Information on the working poverty indicator, by ILO
  - e. World Bank mentioned a report on poverty and shared prosperity published last October, which may have content that is useful, in particular on early childhood development, rural infrastructure, cash transfers and other interlinkages.
  - f. UNICEF mentioned looking at cross-cutting issues such as children in multi-dimensional poverty.
  - g. OECD, UNISDR and UN Women also offered to provide possible inputs to this section and offered to collaborate.

#### **IV. Review of data/metadata inputs for the database**

14. UNSD provided a review of data and metadata inputs to the database provided by agencies as well as an overview of the new SDG regional groupings. Data for global and regional aggregates should be provided for at least the following years (to the extent possible): 2000, 2005, 2010 and the most recent year. Agencies are also encouraged to provide data for all years starting with 2000 when possible.
15. It was requested that agencies please use the newly established SDG regional groupings and the previous MDG regional groupings for this year's data submission. In addition, aggregates for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS were requested.

16. Further information can be found in the presentation on agenda item 6 available on the website, in particular on the updates of the database (contents, timeline and presentation) as well as the regional groupings list, and metadata and international guidelines.
17. The main discussion points raised following the presentation were:
  - a. Inclusion of additional indicators to the database and guidance. In general the database should mainly include indicators agreed to by Member states. The inclusion of additional indicators will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
  - b. Data updates for the database. It is important to keep the database aligned with the two SDG yearly reports, meaning the database will not be updated for some time after the launch (possibly 2-3 months), but when agency data are updated, UNSD can include updates on a case-by-case basis.
  - c. The new SDG regions do not make reference to ‘developed’ and ‘developing regions’ and are based on the M49.
  - d. It was recommended to include a link to the original source of the data in the SDG database, so that users can go directly to the original information.
  - e. Discussion also focused on standardizing aggregation and providing information on the methodology for aggregation in a more transparent manner.

#### **V. Monitoring of the SDGs: measurement issues**

18. UNSD provided an overview of issues related to the monitoring of the SDGs: measurement issues, responsibilities and criteria for a ‘data custodian agency’; indicators that are without a custodian agency currently; Tier III indicators that have a 2020 target deadline and those missing a work plan. Further information can be found in the presentation under agenda item 7 available on the website.
19. In line with this agenda item, UNSD also provided an overview of the work of the Intersecretariat working group on household surveys (ISWGHS), including the background for establishment of the group, its governance structure and membership as well as progress to date and priority areas. Further information can be found in the presentation under agenda item 7 available on the website.
20. The main discussion points raised following the presentations were:
  - a. Looking at the global data compilation, the custodian agency is the agency that provides data at the global level. It is up to the custodian agency to coordinate with partner agencies. Additional criteria are provided in the presentation on measurement issues listed above.
  - b. In a few cases, organizations lack a mandate to collect data or work jointly with other agencies in collecting data from countries, making it more difficult to identify an exclusive ‘custodian agency’.
  - c. It was highly encouraged that agencies work together to resolve outstanding issues where two or more agencies are involved in the provision of data.

- d. As requested by Member States at the Statistical Commission, it is necessary for any adjustments and estimations to be conducted in close consultation with countries and methodology to be shared in a transparent manner.
- e. There was a request for general principles needed for custodian agencies and Tier III work plans. UN Women offered to provide information regarding their process on these indicators as an example and FAO on their work on definition/concept development.
- f. The ISWGHS group is currently analyzing the SDG indicator framework to estimate what percentage of the indicators can be derived from household surveys.

## **VI. Improving the quality and availability of data for SDG reporting**

- 21. Under this agenda item, UNSD introduced issues related to data quality and metadata as well as information on capacity building projects and initiatives underway, including pilot projects under the Development Account (DA) initiatives and the DFID project.
- 22. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) provided information on the recently launched national reporting guidelines: *Guidelines to Support Country Reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals*. The publication is available at the following website: <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Guidelines-to-Support-Country-Reporting-on-SDGs.pdf>.
- 23. Specific information on these projects and the UNDG guidelines can be found in the presentations under agenda item 8 available on the website.
- 24. The main discussions points raised following the presentations were:
  - a. UNDG noted that regarding the frequency of national reports, countries are encouraged to prepare such reports at least twice during the 15 year period, but will vary by country. It is possible that some countries will produce reports annually. It is expected that countries will use national indicators, which to the extent possible will follow closely the global indicators.
  - b. The ECLAC representative outlined work that has recently been undertaken in the Latin America and Caribbean region on a survey on national statistical capabilities for the production of SDG global indicators. The ECE representative presented the regional roadmap for ECE.
  - c. Capacity building initiatives were discussed by OECD, Paris21, ILO, UNEP and the World Bank. Agencies were requested to provide a short note to UNSD on capacity building initiatives that could be of interest to others.

## **VII. Way Forward: discussion of strategies for future collaboration among agencies**

- 25. UNSD provided an overview on the SDMX-SDGs working group of the IAEG-SDGs, highlighting its composition, timeline for activities, challenges and approach, as well as the work plan going forward. Further information can be found in the presentation on agenda item 9 available on the website.
- 26. Discussions on the way forward highlighted:

- a. Discussions focused on aligning capacity building activities with the Cape Town Global Action Plan; technical issues regarding regional aggregation methodologies and imputations; the possibility to address other groups beyond regional groupings (i.e. income groupings); a UNEP ontology group and the establishment of other working groups.
- b. Introduction of the World Bank’s work for a global tracking framework for transport: sustainable mobility for all and work to develop more in-depth monitoring for transport.
- c. Discussion also centered on the request for more opportunities for in-person exchanges between the group, possibly one meeting to focus on the SDG reports and another on technical issues and data quality related to the SDG indicators.

## VIII. Additional Information

### Timeline for the 2017 SDG Reports:

Validation/consultation of data with countries	December 2016- February 2017	
Storyline for Reports (including data & Excel, etc. file used for the charts)	28 February 2017	
National data, regional and global aggregates	28 February 2017	
	<b>SG Report Deadline</b>	<b>Glossy Report Deadline</b>
Editing	March/April	April/May
Submission deadline	1 May	1 June
Layout/Design	--	May
Translation in all languages	May (UN Docs Control)	June
Printing	Parliamentary Doc (UN Docs Control) end of May	June
Launch	Available on UN website 6 weeks before HLPF (end of May)	17-19 July

### Follow-up/Next Steps:

1. Agencies are kindly requested to send short summaries of capacity building initiatives they would like to share with the group.
2. Any updates, changes or submissions of the storyline, data, charts and metadata, should be sent to: [sdgindicators@un.org](mailto:sdgindicators@un.org)