Using non-traditional data sources in the VNRs and engaging stakeholders: National experience from Finland

Mr. Jukka Hoffrén and Ms. Hannele Orjala

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Statistics Finland

- Independently acting government agency belonging to the administrative sector of the Ministry of Finance.
- A workplace for around 850 persons.
National implementation of Agenda 2030 in Finland

- Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) is the key actor in advancing sustainable development and process owner of SDG-work.
- National monitoring network covers all relevant stakeholder groups. It consists of experts from ministries, other government bodies, research institute, industries and NGO’s and maintains set of national indicators.
- PMO organizes also yearly a citizens’ SD panel to engage, contribute and assess achievements. It is open to all interested citizens.
Compilation Voluntary National Report 2020 for Finland

• Finland completed first United Nations Voluntary National Report (VNR) for High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2016 and second one is due in summer 2020.
• VNR will consist of government’s perspective as well as the perspectives of companies and NGOs.
• The statistical annex of Finnish VNR will be compiled by Statistics Finland. It will based on Finland’s global SDG – indicator reporting platform for the first time.
• Statistics Finland participate to PMO’s VNR editorial board in steering the process 27.11.2019 – 30.6.2020.
Global and national reporting on SDGs

- Director-general Marjo Bruun of Statistics Finland is also a member in UN’s High Level Group (HLG).

- Agenda 2030 global set of 244 SDG-indicators.

- Finland has also established a national set of 45 sustainable development indicators to monitor progress towards national goals.
National compiling of data for global SDG indicators

• Statistics Finland (National Statistical Office, NSO) is responsible for national compilation of data for global SDG-indicators. NSO also act as UN SDG focal point and participates as observator to IAEG-SDG work. Statistics Finland supervises co-operation group and data producers, network.

• National compilation of global SDG data was conducted by Statistics Finland in 2018 and the Finnish National Reporting Platform (NRP) was released in February 2019: www.stat.fi/yk-indikaattorit

• Beside NSI, some 23 data providers are identified.

• Data mainly from national sources, but some data from UN organizations’ databases (UNESCO, FAO, WHO etc.).

• Translation of indicator names into Finnish and Swedish were important for dissemination and stakeholder cooperation.
Global SDG data availability

- Collected: 137 indicators (56%).
- No data: 61 indicators (30%).
- Tier III: 35 Indicators (14%).
- Global indicators: 11 indicators (5%).
Data providers

- Responsible provider organisation has been defined for all of the SDG indicators.
- Currently even all statistics producers are not able to provide the data:
  - The biggest provider is Statistics Finland responsible for 85 indicators of which data is available for 59 indicators.
  - The Finnish Environment Institute can provide 12 out of 24 indicators.
  - Natural Resource Institute 1 out of 9.
  - Customs: 0 out of 2.
- In order to extend and update the SDG indicator data in NRP, Statistics Finland set up a co-operation network of main data producers and Prime Minister’s office in May 2019. Group has advisory and coordinating functions.
Examples of important non-statistical providers of data

SDG data producer network (ca. 20 organisations) is a loose network of mostly non-statistical data providers. It is managed by bilateral meetings with different national agencies and organisations.

• Foreign Ministry: SDG 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16 (15 indicators)
• Ministry of Interior: SDG1, 11, 13 (6 indicators)
• Cities and city alliances: SDG 11 (7 indicators).
• Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy (University of Helsinki): SDG 5 and 16 (3 indicators)
• Other important, non-statistics providers include:
Experiences of engaging stakeholders

• Identifying, motivating and engaging stakeholders requires a lot of regular contacts to experts: Personal contacts are preferred.

• Continued political and institutional support from prime ministers’ office justifies the priority of the work to stakeholders.

• Confidential cooperation, assistance and transfer of expertise between NSO and other organizations’ experts is greatly appreciated.

• NSO is required new and board expertise: Understanding of society and social phenomena and processed exceeding traditional data collection and dissemination are essential in order to ask right things from right experts.

• Talking the language of other fields of expertise: “If you do not know exactly what you asking, you most probably are not going to get it.”

• In the process, NSOs are finally solely responsible for the validation and ensuring data quality of non-NSO data.
Thank you!

jukka.hoffren@stat.fi
hannele.orjala@stat.fi