Designing an Indicator and Monitoring Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

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With the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reaching their deadline at the end of 2015, governments and people around the world have come together to design a new pathway to inclusive and sustainable development for all. The UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recently proposed a new set of 17 goals, covering a much broader scope than the MDGs, from ending poverty and hunger, promoting prosperity and well-being for all, to protecting environment and addressing climate change. The newly proposed SDGs will underpin the post-2015 development agenda, which is expected to be adopted by the Member States at a high level summit in September 2015. For the monitoring and reporting of progress on the new agenda, an indicator framework will need to be in place.

This paper presents the ongoing discussion on how to design a coherent set of indicators that addresses the overall monitoring requirements of the post-2015 development agenda. The paper also reviews the main principles for the design of the indicator framework, the criteria for the selection of indicators, and the process and modalities on how to carry out the work for their compilation. The new monitoring requirements demand better, faster, more accessible and more disaggregated data to assess progress towards achieving sustainable development and hold governments and other stakeholders accountable. Finally, the paper discusses how to set up the monitoring framework, operationalize the data revolution and develop a country-based sustainable data system to monitor sustainable development.

Key Words: Data revolution, measurability and accountability, statistical capacity, country ownership, new technologies, data infrastructure.