

## **Working together to measure progress towards the SDGs**

### **High Level Forum on Official Statistics 48<sup>th</sup> United Nations Statistical Commission**

**Monday, 6 March 2017, 3:00 – 6:00pm**

Data requirements for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets and over 230 global indicators presents an unprecedented challenge for both national statistical systems and the international statistical community. In GA Resolution 70/1, Member States stressed that follow-up and review processes at all levels would be based on high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable data, disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics. Also, both General Assembly resolution 70/1 and Statistical Commission decision 47/101(l) stress that the compilation of the global indicators is to be based on data produced by national statistical systems. In particular, the Commission's decision 47/101(l) states that "the compilation of global indicators will be based to the greatest extent possible on comparable and standardized national official statistics provided by countries to the international statistical system and if other sources or methodologies are used, they will be reviewed and agreed by national statistical authorities."

In 2017, the UN Statistical Commission will celebrate 70 years of global statistical cooperation in which standards and practices for the compilation and dissemination of internationally comparable data have been continuously established and improved through the collaboration of national experts and statistical experts from regional and international organizations responding to ever evolving new requirements and needs. During those years, one of the unifying and common purposes of all members of the international statistical system has always been to facilitate the availability of high quality and internationally comparable data and global and regional aggregates based on nationally produced data, and to make such data available in line with the fundamental principles of official statistics. Therefore, the monitoring of the SDGs should be approached in that same spirit of common purpose, partnership and cooperation, addressing new requirements and possible shortcomings by further developing existing mechanisms and further improving data availability and data quality.

The foundations of the international statistical system are the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities, the quality assurance frameworks implemented at national, regional and global levels as well as the international agreement on concepts and definitions, and on methods and best practices for data compilation at the national and international levels in the different statistical domains. Based on the different mandates and existing data compilation mechanisms, national statistical systems submit data to the regional and global entities designated for global data

collection in specific statistical domains, which allows for assessing quality and comparability and for making these data available to users. Regional and sub-regional entities are sometimes involved in the international data compilation. In many statistical areas, agreements for data sharing among regional and international agencies exist in order to avoid duplication of data collection. At the national level, national statistical offices (NSOs) often coordinate and facilitate the submission of national data from the national statistical system (NSS) to the international statistical system, in line with the existing institutional arrangements in countries. In some cases, data are reported directly by the relevant parts of the statistical systems (generally various line ministries) to the international system. When other sources and methodologies are used, these are generally reviewed and agreed by national statistical authorities and efforts are made to present the process in a transparent manner. In response to the monitoring requirements of the 2030 Agenda, some countries are creating or have created new coordination and data dissemination mechanisms for data reporting.

Within this overall context, the forum will emphasize the importance of cooperation between all members of the international statistical system based on common principles and discuss how the compilation, validation and transmission of data for SDG monitoring can be further improved, taking into account national ownership of data and the need for internationally comparable data.

### **Conduct of sessions**

The forum will open with a keynote address by the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Peter Thomson, setting the stage and placing the global monitoring framework on SDG indicators into the context of the 2030 Agenda at large. Following the opening, there will be two sessions – the first will focus on the role of the global statistical system in reporting on progress towards the agenda, while the second will focus on specific issues that surround the transmission of data from the national to the global level. Following the presentations from each panel member, questions and comments will be taken from those attending and the panelists will then have the opportunity to respond.

## **Tentative Agenda**

### **Key Note Address: H.E. Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the United Nations General Assembly (10 minutes)**

- The role of global data and statistics in the full implementation of the 2030 sustainable agenda and the need to improving and strengthening the global statistical system

### **Session 1: Global Reporting on the 2030 Agenda (80 minutes)**

- Why the global monitoring framework and the UN Statistical System are important for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
- Central role of national statistical systems in the global monitoring framework
- Mandates of UN agencies, funds and programmes and other international organizations, their governing bodies, and data collection programmes
- Quality assurance of international agencies when compiling and disseminating internationally comparable data and global and regional aggregates

### ***10 Minute Break***

### **Session 2: Cooperation and coordination between the UN Statistical System and National Statistical Systems to monitor and report on progress of the 2030 Agenda (90 minutes)**

- Best practices in data reporting mechanisms from the national to international statistical system
- Supporting countries in the compilation of high-quality SDG indicator data through increased capacity building efforts
- Country review process on adjustments, estimates or modelled data produced by international agencies
- Developing mechanisms to reduce the reporting burden of national statistical systems to the global statistical system
- Ensuring effective communication and coordination of data reporting at national level between National Statistics Offices and Line Ministries and between NSS, regional, and global organizations
- Practical tools and mechanisms for efficient data flows: metadata, technological advances (i.e. open data, SDMX, etc.) and best practices

### **Session 1 Participants:**

Moderator: Dr. Lisa Grace Bersales, National Statistician, Philippines

Panellists:

- Mr. Dieter Sarreither, President, Federal Statistical Office, Germany
- Mr. Aboubacar Sedikh Beye, Director General, National Agency of Statistics and Demography, Senegal
- Mr. Pietro Gennari, Director, Statistics Division, FAO
- Ms. Silvia Montoya, Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- Ms. Martine Durand, Chief Statistician, Statistics Directorate, OECD

### **Session 2 Participants:**

Moderator: Ms. Francesca Perucci, United Nations Statistics Division

Panellists:

- Mr. Julio Santaella, President, National Institute of Statistics and Demography, Mexico
- Ms. Ola Awad, President, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
- Ms. Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, United States of America
- Mr. Oliver Chinganya, Director, African Centre for Statistics, UNECA
- Mr. Atilla Hancioglu, Chief, Data Collection Unit, UNICEF
- Mr. David O'Connor, Permanent Observer of IUCN to the United Nations