Nowcasting and Forecasting for SDG Monitoring

Side Event at the United Nations Statistics Commission

1:15 – 2:30 pm, 2 March 2020

Conference Room C; United Nations Secretariat, New York

Concept Note

To monitor progress and fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, policy makers need quality, timely and disaggregated data to support their decision making. In particular, up-to-date data is critical for timely policy interventions by governments and development partners. However, SDG indicators and other official statistics relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda often are released with significant time lags by national statistical systems and international organizations, so countries lack the necessary information to make sound policy decisions.

As noted at the launch of the Data4Now initiative, "Too much of our data is out-of-date, and too many people are missing from the numbers. There is an urgent need for more accurate, timely, and comprehensive data to make the SDGs an actionable framework for sustainable development that can drive policies and programs in real time for all people."

To address this challenge, the global statistical community is making progress in the development and implementation of 'nowcasting' and 'forecasting' modelling techniques that leverage existing data sources to produce near real-time estimates for SDG indicators at the national and global levels. At the meeting of the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System, which took place in September 2019, a proposal was made to accelerate and mainstream the use of nowcasting and forecasting techniques by national statistical systems and international custodian agencies.

This side event will bring together national and international experts to identify countries' priority needs for timely data on SDG indicators and related statistics, share experiences and best practices in the use of nowcasting and forecasting methods, discuss how best to communicate to users the resulting estimates, and chart the way forward.

Preliminary agenda

- **Introductory remarks**
  - Ms. Yongyi Min, Chief of SDG Monitoring Section, DESA Statistics Division
- **Experiences in the use of forecasting and nowcasting methods for the SDGs**
  - Mr. Steve MacFeely, Chief Statistician, UNCTAD
  - Mr. Timo Koskimäki, Deputy Director General, Statistics Finland

- o Mr. Julian Slotman, DESA Economic Analysis and Policy Division

- **Discussion: Challenges and opportunities**
  - o Ms.Ariunzaya Ayush, Chief Statistician, National Statistical Office of Mongolia
  - o Mr. Babacar Ndir, Director General, National Statistical Office of Senegal