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Items for discussion and decision: Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

COVID-19 and the global SDG indicators

Prepared by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs)

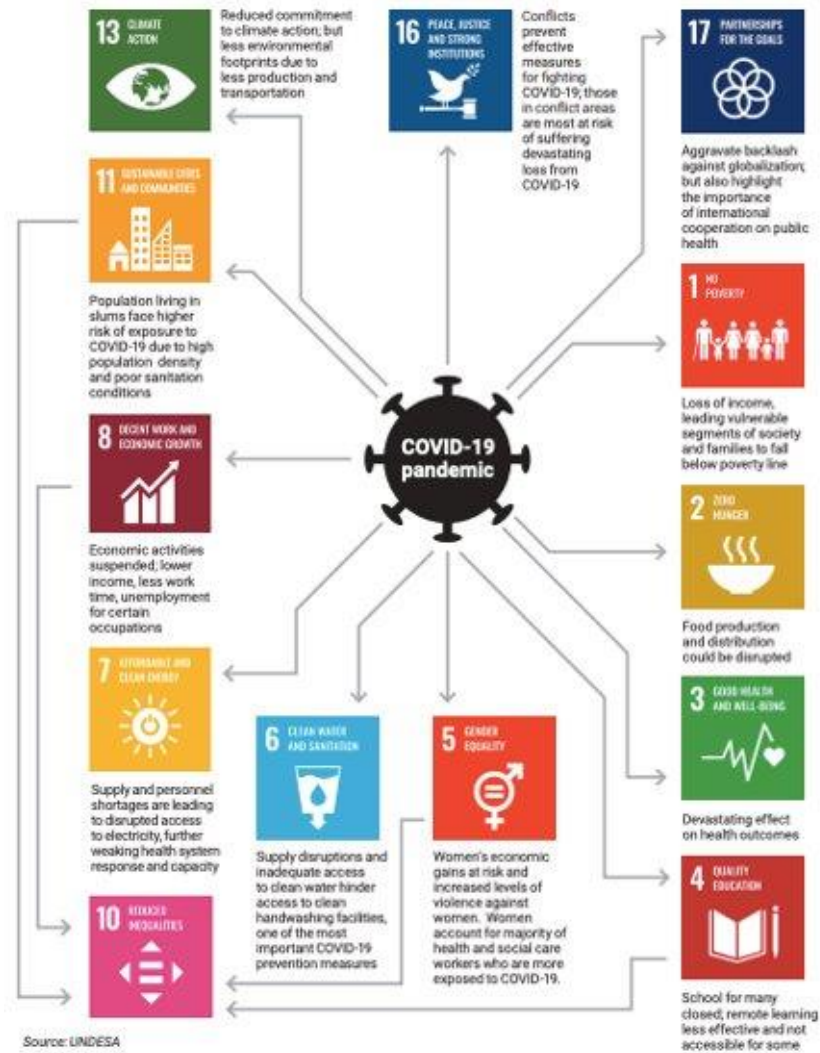
COVID-19 and the global SDG indicators

The global pandemic has resulted in considerable changes to society, the economy and the environment – the three dimensions of sustainable development. As governments, civil society, businesses and populations around the globe have experienced significant changes in all aspects of their lives and livelihoods, COVID-19 has impacted the progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is too early to determine if the shocks that have resulted in major changes as a result of the pandemic are short-term or if they will have a longer time horizon and therefore a sustained impact. Nonetheless, it is important to closely monitor various aspects of the Agenda to determine not only how COVID-19 has impacted various areas, and more importantly to use this information to identify areas where progress may have stalled or was negatively impacted, to enable governments to establish the way forward.

Over the last several months, there have been many discussions related to the impact of COVID-19 on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development given the impacts of the pandemic on societies¹ and UNDESA provided an example of the impact of COVID-19 at the Goal level as illustrated in the figure below². This work has helped inform the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) as they examined the global indicators in relation to the pandemic.

¹ UNDP. COVID-19 and the SDGs. Available at <https://feature.undp.org/covid-19-and-the-sdgs/>; Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals. Available at <https://sdgintegration.undp.org/accelerating-development-progressduring-covid-19/>; United Nations, Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. COVID-19 Dispatches from the Field. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/category/covid-19/>; United Nations. Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. Available at <https://sdghub.com/project/shared-responsibility-global-solidarity-responding-to-the-socio-economic-impacts-of-covid-19/>; UNCTAD. COVID-19 stalls progress on Global Goals. SDG Pulse. Available at <https://unctad.org/news/covid-19-stalls-progress-global-goals>; and UN WOMEN. Will the Pandemic Derail Hard-Won Progress on Gender Equality? Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/spotlight-on-gender-covid-19-and-the-sdgs-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5013>.

² UNDESA from United Nations. Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. Available at <https://sdghub.com/project/shared-responsibility-global-solidarity-responding-to-the-socio-economic-impacts-of-covid-19/>.



Given the potential impacts of COVID-19 on the progress towards the 2030 Agenda in all dimensions of sustainability, the IAEG-SDGs agreed to look at the global indicator framework in light of the global pandemic to examine areas that have been highly impacted. Additionally, this assessment also took into consideration the importance of leaving no one behind, by also considering impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable populations including the poor, marginalized groups, and women. While the IAEG-SDGs agrees that all global indicators remain important and relevant, the Expert Group noted that many National Statistical Offices (NSOs) have had disruptions and delays in the collection of data for the SDGs. As such, having a limited list of indicators that potentially reflect the SDGs highly impacted by the pandemic could be useful for NSOs as they move forward with data production for the SDGs and as a means to inform policy makers of the impact of the pandemic on the Agenda. This list can serve as a starting point for countries to focus their monitoring efforts on the impacts of COVID-19 on the SDGs, with adaptation with additional or alternative national indicators based on national circumstances.

To facilitate the work, the Expert Group looked into those indicators monitoring the SDGs that have been highly impacted by COVID-19 by examining data and information related to impacts in the various domains. Each indicator was examined in relation to COVID-19 and the impact assessed based on existing empirical evidence and knowledge³, understanding that impacts may vary by region, country and locality. As a result, the following list of indicators reflecting the impacts of COVID-19 may not be fully comprehensive and some countries or regions may denote other indicators that reflect their national circumstances, priorities and situations. The group examined the SDG indicators using an economic, societal, environmental and human rights and equality impact lens to assess impact and considered the effects of lockdowns and other measures taken to address the pandemic.

The Expert Group noted the following list of 74 unique indicators (of the 231 in the Global Framework) that are likely to reflect the Goals highly impacted by the global pandemic:

Goal 1

1.1.1 Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographic location (urban/rural)

1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age

1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

1.5.1/11.5.1/13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population

1.5.4/11.b.2/13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies

1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

GOAL 2

2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment

³ For instance, the IAEG-SDGs considered impacts of governments' increased spending to facilitate stay at home orders resulting in significant economic slowdowns on the labour market, incomes, supply chain disruptions, price anomalies and GDP. The group also considered indicators that could be highly impacted as a result of lockdowns of societies including consideration to education, food insecurity, access to public services, family and intimate partner violence, mental health, suicide and access to care, and internet connectivity, among others. With respect to the environment, the group considered the impacts of the pandemic on air quality and water as well as hazardous waste generation.

2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)

2.c.1 Indicator of food price anomalies

GOAL 3

3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio

3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate

3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate

3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease

3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate

3.5.2 Alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol

3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group

3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services

3.8.2 Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income

3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)

3.b.1 Proportion of the population with access to affordable medicines and vaccines on a sustainable basis

GOAL 4

4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex

4.1.2 Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)

4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex

4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill

GOAL 5

5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age

5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence.

5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

GOAL 6

6.2.1 Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water

GOAL 7

7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity

GOAL 8

8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita

8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person

8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex

8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities

8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training

8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age

8.8.1 Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers, by sex and migrant status

8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate

GOAL 9

9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport

9.2.1 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita

9.3.2 Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit

9.c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology

GOAL 10

10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population

10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities

10.3.1/16.b.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law

10.5.1. Financial Soundness Indicators

10.b.1 Total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g. official development assistance, foreign direct investment and other flows)

GOAL 11

11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing

11.5.1/1.5.1/13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population

11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted)

11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

11.b.2/1.5.4/13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies

GOAL 12

12.3.1 (a) Food loss index and (b) food waste index

12.4.2 Hazardous waste generated per capita and proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment

GOAL 13

13.1.1/1.5.1/11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population

13.1.3/1.5.4/11.b.2 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies

13.2.2 Total greenhouse gas emissions per year

GOAL 14

14.1.1 (a) Index of coastal eutrophication; and (b) plastic debris density

GOAL 16

16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age

16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause

16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months

16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live

16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month

16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18

16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms

16.3.2 Unsensenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population

16.3.3 Proportion of the population who have experienced a dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution mechanism, by type of mechanism

16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services

16.b.1/10.3.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law

GOAL 17

17.1.1 Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source

17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes

17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI)

17.3.1 Foreign direct investment, official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of gross national income

17.3.2 Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP

17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services

17.6.1 Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed

17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet

17.13.1 Macroeconomic Dashboard

17.19.1 Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries