

**Friday Seminar on the development of an indicator framework for the post-2015
development agenda**

Towards a nationally owned monitoring system for the SDGs

New York, 27 February

Concept note

Purpose

1. The Friday Seminar is a part of a series of high-level seminars dedicated to topics of great relevance for the global statistical community, and organized by UNSD the Friday before the Statistical Commission session.
2. This year's seminar will focus on the monitoring requirements for the new goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda – the SDGs – from a national perspective. The seminar will provide a forum for both data producers and users from different areas to exchange views on how to deal with the new monitoring needs in an effective way and on how the national monitoring of the SDGs should be conducted, including by ensuring full national ownership of the process.
3. National statistical systems will be faced with significantly increased data requirements because of the wider scope of the new agenda and the increased needs for disaggregation at the sub-national level. The seminar will also offer statistical experts from national statistical offices, private sector and civil society an opportunity to discuss how to utilize traditional and innovate ways to meet the data demand for the monitoring of the SDGs.

Participants

4. All participants of the forthcoming Statistical Commissions are cordially invited. The seminar is also open to policy makers, experts from civil society, academia and the private sector. An interactive discussion is expected.

Time and Venue

5. The one-day seminar will take place in Conference Room 1 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 27 February, 2015. Morning Session is 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. and the afternoon session is 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Discussion note

6. 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 SDGs proposed a new set of 17 goals and 169 targets, ranging from ending poverty and hunger, promoting prosperity and well-being for all, to protecting environment and addressing climate change. The 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.

7. An effective monitoring and review framework is an integral part of the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda. The synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Development Agenda – *The road to dignity by 2030* – asks for a rigorous and participatory review and monitoring framework to hold governments, businesses, and international organizations accountable to the people for results.

8. Country ownership and leadership is the foundation to the successful implementation and achievement of the SDGs not only at national level, but also at regional and global levels. Governments, in collaboration with other stakeholders, are responsible for designing a nationally owned monitoring system to guide national sustainable development policy and assess its progress. In the meantime, the national monitoring system should be aligned with regional and global monitoring systems to ensure effective and efficient global action.

9. The proposed SDGs are complex and cover a breadth of issues. The monitoring of the SDGs requires more, better, timelier and more accessible and frequent data to assess the progress. It also needs disaggregated data by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts to ensure no one is left behind. The monitoring of the agenda will pose a significant challenge to even the most developed countries.

10. To meet these requirements, a “data revolution” is needed at national and global level. The data revolution not only requires bringing new information technologies and existing data infrastructure together to produce improved development data, but also needs continual reinforcement of the existing data infrastructure, such as the registration of births and deaths, health and education information systems, and survey systems. In addition, promoting open access to and effective use of data will provide the basis for transparent measurement to monitoring the progress towards the SDGs.

11. The SG’s synthesis report asks to “significantly scale up support to countries and national statistical offices with critical needs for capacities to produce, collect, disaggregate, analyse, and share data crucial to the new agenda. ... Specifically, we will carry out in close cooperation with country experts an in-depth analysis of the existing data and information gaps and, thus, determine the scale of the investments needed to establish a modern SDG

monitoring system.” Data will play a central role in advancing the new development agenda. We need to build a country-based sustainable data infrastructure to support sustainable development.

12. Key discussion questions:

- How to deal with the new SDGs monitoring needs in an effective way and to inform national development policy making and track the progress?
- What are the steps for formulating a national monitoring framework for the SDGs? What are the main elements of the framework?
- How to align the national SDGs monitoring with regional and global SDGs monitoring?
- What resources are need for countries to monitor all 17 goals and 169 targets?
- How can we improve the use of available resources at national statistical systems, and how can we join forces and tap into resources from internal and external, and public and private sources?
- How to operationalize the data revolution at the national level in support of the monitoring of the SDGs?
- What is the best way to build partnerships with private sector, civil society and other data providers and coordination mechanisms for the national monitoring system?
- How do we ensure the investment and commitment to the national statistical system and statistical capacity building to be long-term and sustainable?