



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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2018 HLPF Thematic Review - Monitoring progress towards achieving the SDGs: Reviewing the progress in achieving the SDG and Better data for sustainable development

Introduction on the Global Indicator Framework

The Statistical Commission of ECOSOC, at its 48th session in March 2017, adopted the global SDG indicator framework for the follow-up and review of the progress towards achieving the SDGs. The global indicator framework was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) through an open and transparent process involving all stakeholders. The group, established by the Statistical Commission in 2015 with the task of developing the indicator framework and addressing related methodological issues, is composed of 27 members.

The Economic and Social Council on 7 June 2017, adopted the Statistical Commission's resolution on data and statistics for the 2030 Agenda, which contains the global indicator framework. **The resolution was then adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017, at which point it officially came into effect.**

The agreed global indicator framework contains 232 indicators, addressing each and every one of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Commission also recognized that the development of a robust and high-quality indicator framework is a technical process that will need to continue over time. The global indicators will be yearly refined and comprehensively reviewed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2020 and 2025. The IAEG-SDGs continues to work in an open, inclusive and transparent manner to ensure that indicators are fully implemented so that all goals and targets are appropriately reviewed and no individual or group is left behind. The global statistical community is working together to strengthen statistical capacity-building for countries fully implementing the indicator framework and advance methodological development for Tier III indicators.





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Where we are, vis-à-vis the 2030 Agenda, the 2018 HLPF theme and the focus SDGs

In the three years since the Sustainable Development Goals were unanimously adopted, countries' have significantly enhanced their efforts to achieve each of the 17 Goals. However, climate change; conflict; inequality; rapid urbanization, capacity and resource constraints; and persistent pockets of poverty, hunger other deprivations are all challenging countries' efforts to achieve the Goals and targets. The pace of progress to date is insufficient to fully meet the SDGs and targets by 2030. This is especially true for the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Many people are living better lives than they were at the turn of the 21st Century with the proportion of the world's workers below the extreme poverty line declining significantly, from 27 per cent in 2000 to 9 per cent in 2017. The under-five mortality rate dropped by almost 50 per cent and in the least developed countries, the proportion of population with access to electricity more than doubled between 2000 and 2016. The global unemployment rate was 5.6 per cent in 2017, down from 6.4 per cent in 2000. In 2018, the mean coverage of marine key biodiversity areas protected increased by close to 50 per cent since 2000. Access to electricity increased from 78 percent in 2000 to 87 percent in 2016.

However, progress to ensure that no one is left behind has not been rapid enough. In 2015, 2.3 billion people still lacked even a basic level of sanitation service and 892 million people continued to practice open defecation. Around 3 billion were still cooking with polluting fuel and stove combinations, with significant impact on health. Close to 4 billion people were left without social protection in 2016. For the least developed countries, the annual growth rate of real GDP per capita fell sharply, from 5.7 per cent in 2005-2009 to 2.3 per cent in 2010-2016.

Alarmingly, for the first time in more than a decade, the number of hungry people in the world has gone up, rising from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016. Conflict, droughts and disasters linked to climate change are among the main drivers. In 2017, the world experienced the costliest North Atlantic hurricane season on record, driving the global economic losses attributed to the disasters to over \$300 billion. Small island developing States are particularly vulnerable. Disaster risk reduction measures are also urgently required to strengthen the resilience of cities, which include a growing majority of the world's population.





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The importance of data for implementation

To fully implement and monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, there is a great need for quality, accurate, open, timely, sufficiently disaggregated data and statistics. Significant efforts are needed to strengthen data collection and countries' capacity in order to meet the data demand for the implementation of the necessary policies and measure to achieve the SDGs and fulfill the ambition of reaching those that are left the furthest behind first.

Ensuring that the commitment of leaving no one behind is translated into effective action requires an accurate understanding of target populations, their needs, circumstances and their roles in development. However, the level of disaggregation needed to address all vulnerable groups – including children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants, among others (as specified in the 2030 Agenda) - are sparse. Few or none of the current SDG indicators, for example, are able to shed light on the particular situations of migrants, refugees, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities and indigenous peoples.

The data revolution is an important enabler to help meet this new demand. The scope of traditional statistical development has been broadened to nurture collaboration and synergies across different data communities and development stakeholders focusing on data – both demanding and offering more and better data themselves, and opening new fields of applications. Efforts are needed to bring innovations and synergies across the data ecosystems and to build partnerships among different stakeholders.

National statistical systems, in particular in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Small Island developing states, will require additional commitments and technical support for statistical capacity development, and increased domestic resources and international support. Global and national initiatives will be needed with full political commitment and support.

Some examples of data being used in novel ways to assess the implementation of the 2030 Agenda include the use of Big Data, such as satellite data and mobile phone data. For example, the statistical community, in partnership with the private sector, currently uses satellite data to calculate SDG indicator 6.6.1 “Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time”. Algorithms are tested on a subset of satellite data to learn the





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recognition of water surfaces, and are then subsequently used to map other regions and countries, and calculate the water extent.

In another example, mobile phone data are successfully used to measure the movement of people. Tourism statistics can now be estimated with roaming mobile phone data, including details on distribution of tourists by sub-national region and attendance on major events. Activities are planned at this moment to extend the use of mobile phone data in combination with other data sources to derive migration statistics.

Building statistical capacity of countries to achieve better data for sustainable development

The Cape Town Global Action Plan is the international statistical community's response to the data needs. Data and statistics are seen as key enablers for achieving the SDGs. The Cape Town Global Action Plan sets out a framework for discussion on, and planning and implementation of statistical capacity building necessary to achieve the scope and intent of the 2030 Agenda. It requires strong political commitment and increased resources to support global and national efforts to strengthen statistical systems and leverage technology and synergies across the data ecosystems through partnerships among multiple stakeholders within national statistical systems and beyond.

UN agencies and many partner organizations are working closely together and coordinate their efforts effectively to provide assistance to countries to significantly strengthen national statistical capacities to meet the data demands of the SDG agenda.

Increased statistical capacity at the national level is key to better data for sustainable development. Placing the national statistical authorities at the centre of data and statistical systems in countries and in capacity building activities is important to achieve stronger statistics and data systems.

There is a strong call to review ways to increase country capacity and resources for data and statistics for the 2030 agenda, a strong call for more and better financing for data and statistics.

Overall guiding questions for the full session:





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- Who are the furthest behind and are we managing to build the resilience and improve the lives of those people?
- What are the trends in improving the situation of the furthest behind?
- How can we accelerate progress towards collecting and analyzing disaggregated data that can help assess and review the situation of the furthest behind?

For sub-session 1:

- What does progress towards the SDGs look like in your country or within your area of work?
- What are some policies and actions that have shown a significant positive impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

For sub-session 2:

- What will it take to increase financing, from both domestic and international sources, to strengthen and build the statistical capacity of countries?

