

**Twelfth Meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group
on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators**

2-4 November 2021

Venue: virtual

Report

I. Introduction

1. The twelfth meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) took place from 1-4 November 2021 virtually. An IAEG-SDG member meeting took place on 1 November 2021, followed by a plenary session, open to all countries, international and regional agencies and entities, and stakeholders on 2-4 November 2020.

2. The main objectives of the meeting were to: i) review and update the tier classification of indicators; ii) review the refinement proposals of the global SDG framework; iii) discuss the work of the IAEG-SDG sub-group on metadata review; iv) review the work of the three working groups of the IAEG-SDGs: SDMX, geospatial information, measurement of development support; v) share best practices on implementation, monitoring and reporting on SDGs, including national, regional, and global SDG reporting; vi) discuss the progress made by the work stream on leaving no one behind and data disaggregation; vii) share current data innovations and initiatives for SDG monitoring and implementation; viii) introduce and present capacity building activities for SDGs; and ix) review the workplan and next steps of the IAEG-SDGs.

3. At the plenary session, Ms. Karen Chavez of Colombia and Ms. Cara Williams of Canada, co-chairs of the IAEG-SDGs, opened the meeting and welcomed participants to the twelfth meeting of the IAEG-SDGs. They noted that this virtual meeting provided an opportunity to review the work of IAEG-SDGs and custodian agencies, as well as hear from countries, stakeholders and others on the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the SDGs. Ms. Francesca Perucci, chief of the Development Data and Outreach Branch of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), also offered opening remarks expressing gratitude to all colleagues for contributing to the work stream on SDG monitoring and new innovative working areas. Ms. Perucci stressed the importance of data innovation, especially in response to the pandemic. She also expressed her hope of the possibility of hosting the next IAEG-SDGs meeting in person or

at least in a hybrid format next year. The meeting had close to 400 participants, including representatives from 21 member countries of the IAEG-SDGs and 41 observer countries.

4. All documents of the meeting, including presentations for each agenda item and the recordings for each day, are available on the meeting website (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-12/>).

II. Update on latest events

5. This session provided updates on the latest events related to SDG monitoring. Agenda item 2 provided updates from the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and The Sustainable Development Goals Reports 2021. Both presentation and a video providing an overview of the SDG report 2021 are included on the meeting website.

6. Agenda item 3 gave the main outcomes of the 2021 World Data Forum (WDF) held in October 2021. A presentation was jointly given by Ms. Gabriella Vukovich, United Nations WDF Programme Committee Chair, and the Secretariat. The presentation for this agenda item (3) is included on the meeting website.

7. Agenda item 4 presented updates on the work of the High-Level Group on Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda (HLG-PCCB). A presentation was given by Ms. Elsa Dhuli of Albania, co-Chair of the HLG-PCCB. The presentation for this agenda item (4) is included on the meeting website.

8. Agenda item 5 provided updates of the revamped SDG Global Indicator Database website, which was launched in September 2021. The updates include the new interface of the Global SDG Database, SDG Country Profiles, SDG Analytics, and various Advanced Access options. The presentation for this agenda item (5) is included on the meeting website.

III. Updates on the IAEG-SDG working groups

9. Agenda item 6 focused on the updates on the progress made by the three working groups of the IAEG-SDGs: SDMX, geospatial information and measurement of development support. First, Mexico, chair of the SDMX working group, presented the achievements in 2021 and the proposal for the 2022 work plan, indicating the working group will continue to expand data exchange and provide capacity development to assist countries in using the SDMX.

10. Ireland, co-chair of the geospatial information working group, provided an update on the progress of its work plan 2020-2021 and its new work plan. During the presentation, Ireland

presented its SDGs Geospatial Roadmap, noting the main objective of the Roadmap is to bridge the geospatial information and the official statistics for the SDGs.

11. Norway and Colombia, co-chairs of the measurement of development support working group, provided an overview of its working progress and its proposal of the indicator 17.3.1—**additional financial resources mobilized for developing countries from multiple sources**. Following the presentation, OECD and UNCTAD briefly provided interventions on the proposed indicators as co-custodian agencies, noting the proposed indicator is the first framework to measure South-South Cooperation and its various modalities. All presentations for this agenda item (6) are included on the meeting website.

12. The SDGs Geospatial Roadmap and the new indicator proposal 17.3.1 need the decision of the IAEG-SDGs for the inclusion in its report to the 53rd session of the Statistical Commission. Following the presentations, the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap proposed by the geospatial information working group was approved by 19 IAEG-SDGs members during the meeting and by two members via email correspondence following the meeting for its submission to the 53rd United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) as a background document to the IAEG-SDGs' report. The indicator 17.3.1 proposed by the measurement of development support working group for its submission to the 53rd UNSC for adoption was endorsed by 17 IAEG-SDGs members during the meeting and by three members via email correspondence following the meeting. It was noted that no member expressed objection to the proposals.

IV. Data availability review and refinements of the global SDG framework

13. Agenda item 8 provided an update of changes in tier classification based on data availability, introduced by the Secretariat. It was noted that there were no indicators recommended to be downgraded from Tier I to Tier II. Six indicators met the criteria for being reclassified as tier I; and one tier II indicator was reclassified as a multi-tier indicator (where one component of the indicator moved to Tier I, while the remaining component(s) remained Tier II): they are indicators 1.3.1, 1.5.3/11.b.1/13.1.2, 2.5.2, 5.2.1, 6.1.1, 12.3.1 (b), 17.13.1, and 17.17.1. After a further review by the IAEG-SDGs in December, it was decided to keep both indicators 2.5.2 and 12.3.1 (b) as Tier II. A review of data submitted to the global database showed that there are 18 indicators with missing data. Among these missing submissions, 15 indicators have a projected date for submission of data; 2 indicators require additional follow-up with custodian agencies for updated status; and 1 indicator (17.18.1) is not yet established. All indicator changes and the list of indicators with missing data can be found in the presentation under this agenda item (8) on the meeting website.

14. Agenda item 9 reviewed refinements to some of the indicator names in the framework, introduced by the Secretariat. These refinements will be formally submitted to the UNSC at its

53rd session in March 2022. There is one indicator with a proposed minor refinement (16.1.4). The presentation for this agenda item (9) is included on the meeting website.

V. The IAEG-SDG metadata sub-group and metadata review process

15. Agenda item 10 reviewed the process for updating metadata and presented the work programme and prospective timeline of the IAEG-SDGs sub-group on metadata review, introduced by Ms. Cara Williams of Canada, co-chair of the IAEG-SDGs. It was noted that the sub-group will review all indicators fully transferred to new metadata template by February 2022. During the discussion, the use of non-traditional data and alternative data sources on monitoring the SDGs was mentioned. The Secretariat noted that UNSD is facilitating a compilation of good practices from countries on best practices, including the use of non-traditional data, which would be one of the work programmes of the IAEG-SDGs next year and would be presented under agenda 12. The presentation for this agenda item (10) is included on the meeting website.

VI. SDG implementation, monitoring and reporting – national, regional and global

16. Agenda item 12 highlighted best practices on implementing and monitoring of the SDGs at global, regional, and national levels. There were five presentations given by countries, regional and international organizations, and stakeholders. First, Ms. Cara Williams of Canada, co-chair of the IAEG-SDGs, and Ms. Angela Me, UNODC and co-Chair of CCSA/CCS-UN, jointly presented the outcomes of meetings between the IAEG-SDGs and CCSA/CCS-UN in May and September, including the SDG global data collection/validation process, consistency on the use of population data, validation of data based on satellite images, and implementation of the indicator framework. The Secretariat then presented the preliminary results from the Best Practices on SDG Monitoring questionnaire, expressing gratitude to all countries that has already provided input to the questionnaire and informing the dissemination plan of best practices. Nigeria presented the development of their national indicator framework and work carried out to implement the framework, including data mapping and data collection. Denmark presented progress of the Task Team on well-being and sustainability, including a list of proposed global core indicators to be submitted to the 53rd UNSC for adoption. The presentation highlighted the importance of measuring sustainability and the impact of the private sector, as well as work Denmark has carried out in this area. Finally, UNESCAP presented regional SDG monitoring in Asia and the Pacific, introducing an analytical tool for governments to track national SDG progress--the National SDG Tracker-- where member states can generate a customized SDG progress snapshot and dashboard at country level.

17. During the discussion following these presentations, the data flow and validation process were discussed by participants. FAO suggested to limit the validation process to the indicator

methodology and data sources. The co-chairs of the IAEG-SDGs and CCSA agreed to discuss the data validation process during future meetings. There were also discussions on local and sub-national SDG monitoring, focusing on coordination mechanisms and the inclusion of SDG indicators in government planning. CCSA noted that training series for the data focal points within UN Country Teams are under development to facilitate SDG monitoring at the local and national levels. All presentations for this agenda item (12) are included on the meeting website.

VII. Data disaggregation

18. Agenda item 13 presented on the recent updates of work on data disaggregation. There were four presentations given by a country, two international organizations and a CSO. The Secretariat presented the progress on work being carried out on Small Area Estimation (SAE), including the SAE toolkit and a set of upcoming e-Learning courses, which are currently under development by UNSD in collaboration with UN ECLAC and UNFPA. The United Kingdom then introduced their report by the Inclusive Data Taskforce focusing on leaving no one behind and shared their findings and recommendations related to inclusive SDG monitoring. UN Women presented the key findings and conclusions from the recently launched report, *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2021*, developed by UN Women in collaboration with UNSD. Finally, CLEAR Global presented their key findings on data gaps caused by the lack of local languages. The need for translated language through communications and data collections was also highlighted during the presentation.

19. Following these presentations, a discussion on the agenda item highlighted the importance of conducting inclusive data collection on vulnerable groups. OHCHR noted that demographic questions on gender identity and sexual orientation are included in the household survey modules for collecting data of SDG 16. The Secretariat also noted that sampling guidance on vulnerable groups, including LGBTQ, is under development by the Inter-secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys (ISWGHS). UN Women commented on its toolkit, *Counted and Visible*, developed by UN Women in collaboration with the ISWGHS. The toolkit provides guidelines for countries to better utilize data from household surveys in order to conduct intersectional analysis from a gender perspective. The accuracy and challenges of translation throughout the data collection process were also highlighted and discussed. All presentations for this agenda item (13) are included on the meeting website.

VIII. Data innovations and initiatives for SDGs

20. Agenda item 14 focused on different data innovations and initiatives to support SDG data collection and monitoring. There were three presentations included in this session. First, the Secretariat provided an overview of its work on the Data4Now project and presented a country experience on behalf of Senegal. The presentation focused on filling the data gaps on monitoring

SDG indicators, the new IT infrastructures in Senegal for data collection, and building partnerships with custodian agencies for capacity building. Next, the International Civil Society Centre presented their two ongoing projects, which aim to build and facilitate data partnerships for promoting the use of alternative data sources, including citizen-generated data and human rights data, to strengthen SDG monitoring. Finally, UNICEF shared their experience on monitoring SDG 6.1.1 (safely managed drinking water services) through the innovative method of integrating water quality testing with household surveys.

21. After these presentations, there was a discussion on the inclusiveness of civil societies in conducting statistical analysis and reports. It was noted that civil society play a critical role in data collection and should be involved in official data reporting processes in the future. In terms of new developments to effectively monitor the SDGs, the Secretariat indicated that an innovative data architecture developed by the Data4Now project would contribute to improving the efficiency of data access and SDG monitoring, while UNICEF highlighted three main areas for strengthening SDG monitoring including data coverage with disaggregated information, data quality with harmonized definitions and manageable costs of data collection. All presentations for this agenda item (14) are included on the meeting website.

IX. Capacity building activities for SDGs

22. Agenda item 15 focused on different capacity building initiatives to strengthen and facilitate countries' data collection, reporting and dissemination of SDG data. There were six presentations included in this session. Colombia presented their capacity building workshops, including the enhancement on measuring with geospatial information for SDG indicators and facilitating countries on reporting SDG data through the SDMX standard. The Secretariat then provided an overview of the CCSA/IAEG-SDG initiative on a capacity building knowledge base. It was noted that all received information through the questionnaire sent by CCSA would be compiled and available on a new knowledge base webpage under the IAEG-SDG website.

23. PARIS21 introduced their newly launched platform, the Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data, which aims to provide timely data to better connect supply and demand of financing for development data. The platform reveals the key data funding gaps in recipient countries and facilitates partnerships among donors, countries, and projects. The World Bank introduced the Global Data Facility, which provides funds and catalyses additional financing to support data and statistics capacity at the global, regional and national levels. The Secretariat then presented updates of the UNSD-FCDO project on SDG monitoring, including achievements in project countries and training materials available on the project webpage. It also included information on the SDG & COVID-19 Data Visualization Toolkit, which contains icons and templates for use by countries to disseminate materials related to the SDGs and the COVID-19. Finally, UN ECLAC presented regional capacity building efforts on SDG data reporting,

introducing the main functions of online information systems that aim to improve the production and dissemination of SDG data through the linkage between supply and demand of SDG statistical capacity building activities.

24. During the discussion following these presentations, the scope of financing capacity building was discussed noting that statistical capacity building should also be available for non-traditional data providers and alternative data sources, including administrative data, satellite images, citizen-generated data, etc. With regard to data updates for the SDGs indicators, the Secretariat indicated that the SDG Global Database is updated quarterly based on the submissions from custodian agencies. Others also mentioned the newly launched disability data advocacy toolkit which aims to provide knowledge on data collections and analysis of data on persons with disabilities. A regional training series for measuring SDG 16 in Asia was recently held and details noted to participants. All presentations for this agenda item (15) are included on the meeting website.

X. Work plan and next steps

25. The IAEG-SDGs work plan for November 2021 – March 2022 and its workplan for the following year were presented by the Secretariat as the final agenda item of the meeting. A summary of the key items in the work plan are included below and the presentation for agenda item 16 is also available on the meeting website. Additionally, quarterly open virtual meetings of the IAEG-SDGs are posted on the following website: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/>.

26. The work plan of the IAEG-SDG for the remainder of 2021 includes several key items, including preparing the group's report to the 53rd session of UNSC and the background documents, including a report of the working group on measurement of development support with details on its work and its indicator proposal for target 17.3; the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap; and guidelines on small area estimation.

27. The work plan for March 2022 – February 2023 includes six key areas of work as described below:

1. Focus on the implementation of the indicator framework, including integration of geospatial information and statistics; share experience and best practices on monitoring the SDGs, including on national SDG platforms/dashboards/portals, communication of data for the SDGs, data disaggregation, and national efforts in bridging data gaps for SDG indicators; encourage data innovations; and review and make recommendations on capacity building for SDGs in coordination with the HLG-PCCB;

2. Regularly review methodological developments and issues related to the indicators and their metadata and improve the overall quality of metadata for the SDG indicators through the work programme of the metadata sub-group;
3. Continue the work stream on data disaggregation in order to provide further guidelines and liaise with the other working groups and existing mechanisms for the data disaggregation work;
4. Continue the work of the IAEG-SDG working groups on SDMX and Geospatial Information, and review the workplans of the working groups to ensure that they are in line with the work of the IAEG-SDGs;
5. Continue dialogues with custodian agencies to enhance the data flow process for global reporting on the SDGs;
6. Hold quarterly open meetings and the 13th meeting of the IAEG-SDGs in the fourth quarter of 2022, and continue to interact through monthly meetings.

**Twelfth Meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group
on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators**

2-4 November 2021 | 8:00-11:00 am NYC EDT

Venue: virtual

Agenda

Tuesday, 2 November 2021

For information

1. Opening session, Ms. Cara Williams, Canada and Ms. Karen Chavez, Colombia, IAEG-SDG co-Chairs and Ms. Francesca Perucci, UNSD
2. Updates from the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021 (video)*, Ms. Yongyi Min, UNSD
3. Outcomes of the UN World Data Forum 2021, Ms. Francesca Perucci, UNSD and Ms. Gabriella Vukovich, UNWDF Programme Committee Chair
4. Update on the work of the High-Level Group on Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda, Ms. Elsa Dhuli, Albania, HLG-PCCB co-Chair
5. Update of the revamped SDG global indicator database website, Mr. Matthias Reister, UNSD
6. Q&A session

Short break (5 min)

For discussion

7. Update on the working groups of the IAEG-SDGs:
 - a. SDMX, Mr. Juan Muñoz, Mexico, Chair
 - b. Geospatial information, Mr. Kevin McCormack, Ireland, co-Chair
 - i. *SDG Geospatial Roadmap*
 - c. Measurement of Development Support, Ms. Ann Lisbet Brathaug, Norway and Mr. Camilo Mendez, Colombia, co-Chairs
 - i. Global consultation and indicator proposal

Wednesday, 3 November 2021

8. Data availability review of the SDG indicators and corresponding updates to the tier classification, Mr. Paul Pacheco, UNSD
9. Refinements of the global SDG framework: review of proposals, Ms. Heather Page, UNSD
10. Metadata review, Ms. Cara Williams, Canada, IAEG-SDG co-Chair
 - a. Review of process for proposals for updated metadata
 - b. Work of the IAEG-SDG metadata sub-group
11. Q&A session

12. Implementation, monitoring and reporting on SDGs (including national/regional/global SDG reporting)
 - a. Data flows and global SDG reporting, Ms. Cara Williams, Canada, IAEG-SDG co-Chair and Ms. Angela Me, UNODC, CCSA co-Chair
 - b. IAEG-SDG best practices on SDG monitoring, Ms. Heather Page, UNSD
 - c. Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting of progress on SDGs: Nigeria, Ms. Anne Ibrahim, Nigeria
 - d. The SDGs and the private sector – work on the follow-up, Mr. Maciej Truszczynski, Denmark
 - e. National SDG Tracker in Asia-Pacific region, Mr. Arman Bidarbakhtnia, UN-ESCAP
 - f. Q&A session

Short break (5 min)

13. Data disaggregation
 - a. Update on IAEG-SDG/UNSD data disaggregation work: small area estimation, Ms. Haoyi Chen, UNSD
 - b. Inclusive Data Taskforce report: Leaving no one behind – How can we be more inclusive in our data?, Ms. Silvia Manclossi, United Kingdom
 - c. *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2021*, Ms. Ginette Azcona, UN Women
 - d. Leaving no one behind, whatever their language, Mr. Jason Symons, CLEAR Global
 - e. Q&A session

Thursday, 4 November 2021

14. Data innovations and initiatives for SDGs
 - a. Accelerating implementation of Data For Now initiative, Ms. Faryal Ahmed, UNSD

- b. Data Partnerships to Leave No One Behind: working with civil society and human rights data for a more inclusive monitoring and planning, Mr. Peter Koblowsky, International Civil Society Centre
- c. Innovative approaches to monitoring 6.1.1 Safely Managed Drinking Water Services, Mr. Tom Slaymaker, UNICEF
- d. Q&A session

Short break (5 min)

15. Capacity building for SDGs

- a. Capacity building activities articulated by Colombia, Cepei and GPSDD, Mr. Juan Daniel Oviedo, Colombia
- b. CCSA/IAEG-SDG initiative on capacity building knowledge base, Ms. Yongyi Min, UNSD
- c. Collective action for the implementation of the CTGAP and smarter financing for data, Ms. Jurei Yada, PARIS21 and Bern Network Co-ordinator
- d. Global Data Facility, Mr. Craig Hammer, World Bank
- e. UNSD-FCDO resources and tools, Mr. Richard Tonkin, UNSD and Ms. Heather Page, UNSD
- f. Linking the supply and the demand on SDG statistical capacity building activities in LAC, Ms. Pauline Stockins, UN ECLAC
- g. Q&A session

16. Workplan and next steps, Ms. Yongyi Min, UNSD

17. Other business/closing

* * * * *