



Transparency, Accountability  
& Participation in Post-2015

## **The First Meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) 1-2 June 2015 in New York**

**Official Website:** <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/first-iaeg-sdgs-meeting/>

The IAEG-SDGs has been established by the Statistical Commission at its 46th session to develop an indicator framework for the monitoring of the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda at the global level, and to support its implementation. (Click [here](#) for the IAEG-SDGs Terms of Reference)

The main objectives of the first meeting of the IAEG-SDGS were to:

- Set up the process for the development of the indicator framework;
- Develop a work plan and agree on the way forward;
- Establish the methods of work of the group; and
- Discuss technical issues, including the interlink ages across targets and data disaggregation.

Click [here](#) to download the provisional agenda in PDF format

### **Documents**

[Provisional agenda](#) (as of 28 May 2015)

[List of participants](#) (as of 29 May 2015)

[First list of proposed priority indicators and detailed inputs](#)

Introduction to agenda item 2: [Methods of work](#)

Introduction to agenda item 3: [Indicator framework](#)

Introduction to agenda item 4: [Process of selecting indicators](#)

Introduction to agenda item 9: [Way forward](#)

### **Summary of key highlights:**

- Election of Co-Chairs of IAEG-SDGs for 1 year term:
  - Ms. Fabiola Riccardini, Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat)
  - Ms. Lisa Grace S. Bersales, National Statistician Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

- Clear disagreement on methods of work, voting procedures, process of selecting indicators and the role of CSOs and Observers in providing inputs into the IAEG-SDGs among member states.
- Very vocal discontent from many Member States, including some who were participating from the UN Missions in New York, on the lack of definition on the late notice they received for the meeting, its working methods, and how the group will engage with non-member countries.
- Co-chairs proposed to set up two work streams:
  - Work stream on Interlinkages
  - Work stream on General Framework for indicators
- The IAEG-SDGs will conduct online consultations with its Members and agree/conduct their method of work through an electronic platform setup and managed by UNSD.
- UN Secretariat and UNSD will provide a summary of proposals made during the First meeting of the IAEG-SDGs by the end of June 2015 to member states.
- All outstanding issues (methods of work, voting procedures, workstreams, process of selecting indicators and the role of CSOs and Observers) will be decided through electronic consultations. Member States will have two weeks to respond to the Co-Chairs communicated proposals on the work streams.
- Disagreement on the key dates to report back to Member States and the political process, as some believed they should stick to the original timeline of March 2016 to produce the final set of indicator recommendations, and some proposing to report back periodically with drafts to the political process
- Next meeting of the IAEG-SDGs meeting to be tentatively held 12-16 October 2015.

**Proposed timeline:**

- June/July 2015: First round of consultations
- July 2015: Review of status of discussion and decision on next steps
- August/September 2015: Second round of consultations
- September 2015: Discussion of open issues
- 25–27 September 2015: UN Summit to adopt the post-2015 Development Agenda
- October 2015: Third round of consultations
- October/November 2015: Second meeting of the IAEG-SDGs – Finalization of the indicator proposal
- 8–11 March 2016: 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission
- March 2016: Third meeting of the IAEG-SDGs

## 1. Opening

Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs/Statistics Division (UNSD)

- Stated more meetings of the IAEG-SDGs will be organized until 2030.

Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

- Stated global monitoring of the MDG brought global attention to pressing development challenges.
- Stated developing a robust indicator framework is a technical process, which is why member states supported the creation of the IAEG-SDG.
- Stressed the indicators must directly respond to goals/targets proposed by the OWG. Also it must not undermine or reinterpret target nor introduce new/contentious issues. It must cover and give equal weight to all targets while maintaining achieved balance.
- Emphasized member states stressed the importance of disaggregated data to leave no one behind and address development issues. This will have resource implications that need to be addressed.
- Stressed the importance of establishing a global database of SDGs indicators similar to the MDGs global database. It can help facilitate the development of national and regional indicators, foster capacity building and allow reporting in an integrated way.

## 2. Methods of work of the group

### *Introduction by UNSD*

Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs/Statistics Division (UNSD):

- Stressed the importance of Creativity, Cooperation and Compromise in leading the work of the IAEG-SDGs.
- Underlined the indicator framework for the next 15 years will be refined.
- Election of Co-Chairs for 1 year term:
  - Ms. Fabiola Riccardini, Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat)
  - Ms. Lisa Grace S. Bersales, National Statistician Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

Ms. Francesca Perucci, United Nations Statistics Division/DESA:

- Highlighted the IAEG-SDGs report must be submitted by November or December to member states.

### *Open discussion*

Cuba:

- Recommended documents from IAEG-SDGs are translated into UN official languages.
- Stressed invitations need to be sent out in advance of meetings.
- Agenda Item 2: recommended decisions by the IAEG-SDGs be made by consensus.

UK and Sweden:

- Agenda Item 2: recommended to take decisions by majority if consensus is not reached.

Russian Federation:

- Asked if the IAEG-SDGs will conduct wider consultations with all members of the UN Statistical Commissions?

Botswana:

- Raised concern about how the IAEG-SDGs will make decisions.

USA:

- Requested clarification if the IAEG-SDGs will use UN-NGLS civil society online platform when taking inputs from CSOs?

Tanzania:

- Requested clear ToRs for CSOs groups.

### **3. Indicator framework: global, regional, national, sub-national and thematic indicators**

#### ***Introduction by UNSD***

Ms. Francesca Perucci, United Nations Statistics Division/DESA:

- Presentation: [Developing an indicator framework for the post-2015 development agenda \(UNSD\)](#)
- Stressed we will have a global indicator framework for global monitoring; have national indicator that overlap with global and sub-national indicators. Also we will look at thematic indicators without losing the integrated framework.
- Why global indicators? Important to inform global political discussions. It is simple and easy to communicate to non- technical audience. Help put together structure for audiences. Simple indicator for advocacy and communication campaigns.

#### ***Presentations:***

#### National and sub-national monitoring, and its link to global monitoring (The Philippines)

- Presentation: [National and sub-national monitoring of MDGs in the Philippines: Link to global monitoring \(The Philippines\)](#)
- Learning from the MDGs
  - Role of NSOs
    - Engagement with various stakeholders
    - Coordination with various data producers
  - Updated NSDS (or a document similar to an NSDS) with a chapter on SDGs and MTEF
    - Committee on SDGs
    - SDGs Watch in open data format
    - Capacity building of staff
    - Appreciation sessions for policy –makers and high-level government officials
    - Generation of more frequent and disaggregated data
  - Data concerns
    - Data quality (including administrative data)
    - Data frequency
    - Data disaggregation
    - Data for emerging areas
  - Development of Methodologies to address subnational level indicators

#### Regional monitoring, and its link to global monitoring (Cameroon)

- Presentation: [Regional monitoring, and its link to global monitoring \(Cameroon\)](#)
- [Draft proposed SDG Indicators - May 2015 \(African Group\)](#)
- [A costed Strategy for Harmonization of Statistics in Africa \(African Group\)](#)
- Stated Africa is among most concerned by the agenda and, they need to take ownership and leadership on SDGs.
- The African Group to adopt process on two levels:
  - National: Involvement of all parties; governments and international partners as well as civil society involved.
  - Regional: main regional organizations leading the process (UNECA/AUC/AfDB), all 54 countries involved, Common African Position, using methodology and approach such as workshops, direct home consultancies, regional agenda to validate.
- Held Workshops:
  - Pretoria, April 2015 to review the matrix elaborated from UNSC report (46<sup>th</sup> session) on the indicator framework to be adopted in 2016.
  - Algiers May 3-8 2015: expert group meeting to review and validate MDGs 2015 report and “Assessing Progress towards the MDGs” 3-4 May 2015 and Continental Consultations meeting to review and finalize indicators for the SDGs from 5-8 May 2015, both in Algiers, Algeria.

- Pretoria 18-29 May - costing Shasta
  - To review and costing of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA). The meeting is a response to the need to review and quantify the SHaSA in preparation for the Funding for Development meeting scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa in July 2015. The meetings was divided into two: (1) to lay the content foundation for the SHaSA costing, and (2) including the statistical development partners and SHaSA working groups chairs to do the actual costing in preparation for the Heads of State Summit and the Financing for Development meetings to be held in June in South Africa and July in Addis Ababa, respectively
- Tangible outputs up to now:
  - A proposal matrix of indicators, review and commented, somehow add valued to be share in the meeting;
  - No One Left Behind approach
  - A proposal of the cost (MOI) to be validate (June/AU Heads Of States & Addis Ababa in July)
  - CAP on the Political hands to be fine turned.

Thematic monitoring, and its link to global monitoring (WHO/UNICEF)

- [Thematic global monitoring: 25 Years of WASH Monitoring \(WHO/UNICEF\)](#)
- Key lessons:
  - Good monitoring takes time (JMPsince1990)
  - Keep it simple (universally relevant proxy)
  - Based on national surveys (accuracy and credibility)
  - Transparent method using agreed rules (MDG-IAEG)
  - Strategic Advisory Group (technical and political)
  - Expert Task Forces (methods, sanitation, water, urban)
  - Country Missions (harmonization and capacity building)
  - Policy relevant (Sanitation and Water for All)

### ***Open discussion***

UK:

- Stressed we need a reporting framework specifically for the SDGs.

IUCN:

- Recommended the IAEG-SDGs build from existing international processes.

## **4. Process of selecting indicators**

### ***Introduction by UNSD***

Mr. Matthias Reister, United Nations Statistics Division/DESA

- Presentation: [Process of selecting indicators \(UNSD\)](#)
- Guidance received at the IGN on post-2015 DA in March 2015:
  - Member States stressed that the indicators:
    - Must directly respond to the goals and targets agreed in the OWG and their level of ambition.
    - Must not undermine or re-interpret the targets.
    - Cover all targets including targets on means of implementation.
    - Give equal weight to all targets, maintain the balance achieved.
    - And should not introduce any new or contentious issues.
  - There was also wide consensus that the number of global indicators should be limited and should include multi-purpose indicators that address several targets at the same time.
  - Results of the Expert Group Meeting in February 2015 on indicator selection
    - The global level-monitoring framework should be limited to a small number of indicators.
    - Such indicators should be selected on the basis of an agreed set of criteria.
    - It is necessary to ensure national ownership of indicators (including of the estimation process).
    - It is necessary to ensure disaggregation of indicators and to include a human rights dimension to the indicator framework (following the “no one left behind” principle).
    - It is important to draw from existing integrated statistical frameworks.
    - Flexibility
  - Criteria for Indicator Selection: SDGs are to be accompanied by indicators that “are action-oriented, global in nature and universally applicable” and “take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities” (OWG, July 2014)
  - Criteria for Indicator Selection:
    - Relevant: Linked to the target; Policy relevant, Applicable at the appropriate level of monitoring; Consistent with international law.
    - Methodologically Sound: Based on sound methodology; Tested to be valuable; Coherent and complementary to other indicators in the framework.
    - Measurable: Sustainable and of high quality; Allowing disaggregation; Managed by one or more responsible agencies.
    - Easy to communicate and access: Easy to interpret and communicate; Easily accessible.

- Limited in number and outcome focused at the global level: Limited in number; Flexible; Outcome focused (for non-MOI target)

### ***Presentations:***

#### Integrated statistical frameworks - Example SEEA (UNSD)

- Presentation: [Integrated statistical frameworks - Example SEEA \(UNSD\)](#)
- Two points:
  - Standards-based statistical architecture
    - Basically two systems: economic statistics that provides broad measure such GDP; system of environmental economic accounts. Indicators based on standards - pyramid structure.
    - Integration of environmental stats: policy need and statistical response
    - There's a lot of fragmented data; able to bring together different targets that are related.
  - System architecture for SDG
    - Bring together a common interface
  - We can have a short term AND long term view; these can be tiered and integrated by aligning thematic monitoring with international standards.

#### Critical issues (disaggregation, inequality, etc.) (SCRPD)

- Presentation: [Critical issues: The case of disability \(SCRPD\)](#)
- In What Way Can Indicators Address Inequality?
  - Disaggregating data on indicators for specific/vulnerable groups
    - By income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts
  - Defining indicators on the needs faced by specific groups
    - Women: maternal mortality, VAW
    - PwD: environmental barriers for PwD (accessible green and public spaces; accessible transport as mentioned in the SDG)
  - Aligning indicators with existing international human rights standards (development without discrimination)
    - UN Charter, Convention on Rights of PwD (CRPD)
    - CRPD: inclusive education, universal design
- Process of Selecting SDGs Disability Indicators
  - Inter-agency Support Group on Disability and Development shared their suggestions on SDG indicators last Friday
  - SCRPD is making efforts to establish a new and strengthened network for a disability-inclusive monitoring and evaluation of post-2015 development agenda and SDGs (to inform post-2015 and the UN Flagship



- Report on Disability and Development) – mix of policy and monitoring experts
  - Include relevant stakeholder in the development of disability indicators for the SDGs (e.g. PwD organizations)
  - Create a working group under the IAEG-SDG indicators to focus on indicators of inequality, disaggregation and needs of specific groups
- SDG Disability Indicators – Data & Sources
  - Define indicators on accessible educational facilities, transport and green/public spaces for PwD – administrative data.
  - Promote the inclusion of disability modules in LFS, education, ICT surveys, DHS, MICS
  - Use techniques to link census data on disability with survey data on poverty/food security (Hoogeveen 2004)
  - Data revolution - explore alternative data sources: surveys from NGOs, research institutes

### ***Open discussion***

France:

- Stated the IAEG-SDGs should first agree on a global statistical framework to deal with crosscutting issues.

Italy:

- Suggested the need for clarification on meanings of indicators, themes, and interlink ages.
- Stated we need equity indicators based on social groups, and then we can establish what we mean for equity.

Russia:

- Emphasized when we talk about selection of indicators we need to take into account availability of information and the need to have more detail metadata.

China and USA:

- Stressed to need to use existing data/frameworks.

India:

- Emphasized global reporting should be based on data including estimations.

Botswana:

- Stressed the approach that should be taken by the IAEG-SDGs should be based on consensus on targets.

Egypt:

- Stressed the indicators list need to reflect member states inputs.

## 5. Statements by Major Groups and other stakeholders

- [Statement by major groups and other stakeholders on the indicator framework](#)
- [Statement by major groups and other stakeholders on interlink ages, multi-purpose indicators and integrated statistical frameworks](#)
- [Statement by major groups and other stakeholders on critical issues for selecting indicators](#)

## 6. Way forward

France:

- Recommended setting up sub-groups for the IAEG-SDGs.

Colombia:

- Expressed concerns about the methodology used to define indicators.
- Underlined the IAEG-SDGs give NSOs enough time to prepare for upcoming meetings.

UK:

- Support working groups within IAEG-SDGs.

Russia:

- Support working groups within IAEG-SDGs.

USA:

- Requested details on setting up sub-groups.
- Recommended leaderships of sub-groups are managed by UNSD staff.
- Recommended posting documents using wiki.

Egypt:

- Stressed the IAEG-SDGs does not have the mandate to change its working methods.

Sweden:

- Requested information on the next meeting of the IAEG-SDGs.

Senegal:

- Support setting up sub groups/work streams.

Indonesia:

- Requested clarity on the role of observers during the IAEG-SDGs meetings.
- Requested clarity on sub groups/work streams.

USA:

- Recommended two work streams used electronic consultations for developing the framework and list of indicators.

Argentina:

- Reiterated Brazil, Egypt and Cuba concerns about how the IAEG-SDGs were organized.
- Requested clarity on how observers will use the electronic consultations platform.

Ms. Francesca Perucci, United Nations Statistics Division/DESA:

- Stated UNSD will provide an electronic platform that is user-friendly.
- Two workstreams will be lead by the two co-chairs to engage the appropriate stakeholders and get appropriate parties involved.
- By end of June 2015, send report to IGN on first meeting of IAEG-SDGs meeting.
- By July 2015, try to organize two sub groups 1) interlink ages and 2) general framework.
- Put together first draft documents related to interlink ages, general framework and first discussion on indicators.
- August and September; updated documents.
- After September, come back to consultations in Oct or Nov.

Brazil and Cuba:

- Adoption of the way forward for the IAEG-SDGs should be deferred.

UNDP:

- Recommended the IAEG-SDGs utilize UN TST when developing indicators.

Brazil:

- What is the deadline for NSOs to react to the Co-Chairs proposals?
- If there is agreement to the work-streams, can they be chaired by other members?

Co-Chairs:

- Member States have two weeks after the Secretariat sends out proposals from the first meeting of the IAEG-SDGs.

Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs/Statistics Division (UNSD):

- Next meeting of the IAEG-SDGs meeting to be held 12-16 October 2015.