



Guidance Note

United Nations
Development
Programme

Data for Implementation and Monitoring
of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

September 2017

This Guidance Note aims to provide UNDP country offices with policy directions and indicative activities for coherent and coordinated support for data and statistics for sustainable development.

It explores options for aligning the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda with national monitoring and evaluation frameworks, prioritizing SDG indicators for national monitoring, strengthening national statistical capacities, and leveraging partnerships and innovations. It is a living document that will be, continuously refined with feedback, lessons-learned and case studies from ongoing efforts to support integrated approaches to SDG implementation and reporting, and scaling up of data innovations.

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Overview: Data and Sustainable Development

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in September 2015, the international development community has sharpened its attention on the challenges of implementing and monitoring the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 related targets. Already back in 2003, the adoption by the UN System of a set of 48 indicators for the MDGs raised the profile and importance of data and statistics for development, highlighting the significant data gaps, statistical capacity needs and resources constraints of developing countries. Considering a number of factors – the ground-breaking technological progress in recent years, massive increase and commodification of computing capabilities, nearly universal and ubiquitous connectivity, exponential increase in data production – the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda called for more evidence-based development policy-making and implementation bolstered by enhanced capacity for statistical production, better availability of quality data and statistics, and strengthened accountability of development stakeholders. In other words, they called for a “data revolution for sustainable development.”

The report of the Secretary-General SG’s Independent Expert Advisory Group on Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, titled *A World that Counts* (2014), further took note of the unprecedented technology progress and exponential increase in volume, level of detail, and speed of data available on societies, the economy and the environment. New and traditional data sources are being integrated to produce high-quality, detailed, timely and relevant information to foster and monitor sustainable development. Through greater transparency and openness, the usefulness of data can be increased while respecting privacy and human rights.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) recognizes the central role of national statistical systems supported by the private sector, civil society and academia, and calls for strengthening national capacities, ensuring access to tools, making data standards interoperable, and increasing global data literacy. It also notes that high quality data is essential for smart and transparent decision-making, and can improve policy-making analysis, monitoring and reporting of progress at all levels.

Building on and going further than the Millennium Declaration, the 2030 Agenda enshrines the principle of monitoring development results and the importance of data and statistics for sustainable development. SDG target 17.18 aims to “*increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts*”, while target 17.19 calls for new measures of sustainable development progress beyond GDP.

Taken together, these seminal documents affirm the critical importance of data and statistics for:

- Informing development policies and implementation;
- Leaving no one behind;
- Risk-informed development;
- Accountability, participation and empowerment; and
- Monitoring progress.

The complexity, indivisibility and inter-connectedness of the SDGs will require significant evidence-driven research and analysis to ensure the coherence of implementation efforts and to manage unavoidable trade-offs. The challenges of LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and other countries in special situation such as conflict or fragility will warrant special attention. Timely, reliable, open and accessible data not only enables governments and policymakers to be more responsive to the needs of citizens, but it also empowers people to make informed decisions and take action within their communities.

Ultimately, more and better data can contribute to informed advocacy for inclusive development, better policies, better decisions, greater participation and accountability and more empowered people, leading to better outcomes for people and the planet.

With at least 232¹ indicators and counting, an integrated and indivisible framework, and a fundamental principle of “Leaving no one behind” the 2030 Agenda increases by orders of magnitude the scale and scope of data required to implement and monitor sustainable development, challenging even countries with the best statistical capacity. No single stakeholder will be able to meet all these challenges alone. Data from non-official, third-party sources can complement official statistics where gaps exist, while respecting national ownership. Heeding the calls of the SDGs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda will require scaling up of resources mobilization and partnerships for statistics, leveraging of technological progress and new data sources, and engaging in innovative partnerships with third party stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society and academia.

By mobilizing the international community around measurable indicators, the MDGs set in motion a number of efforts and initiatives by various international development stakeholders to address those issues. UNDP, as well as other UN agencies and development partners, provided support in many areas of statistical development, including: national statistical strategies, capacity building, data collection and surveys, statistical analysis, data dissemination and reporting development results. As the UN’s MDG “scorekeeper” at country level, UNDP collaborated on strengthening of local data collection and analytical capacities, participatory reviews of the MDGs, and the production of regular nationally-owned MDG Reports (MDGRs). UNDP’s Strategic Plan 2014-2017 further commits the organization to continue providing such support in the context of the SDGs.

1. At its 48th session in March 2017, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted a refined list of 232 unique global SDG indicators and endorsed a workplan to further revise the list of indicators by 2020. The official list of global SDG indicators is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>.

UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 Output 7.2: Global and national data collection, measurement and analytical systems in place to monitor progress on the post 2015 agenda and sustainable development goals.

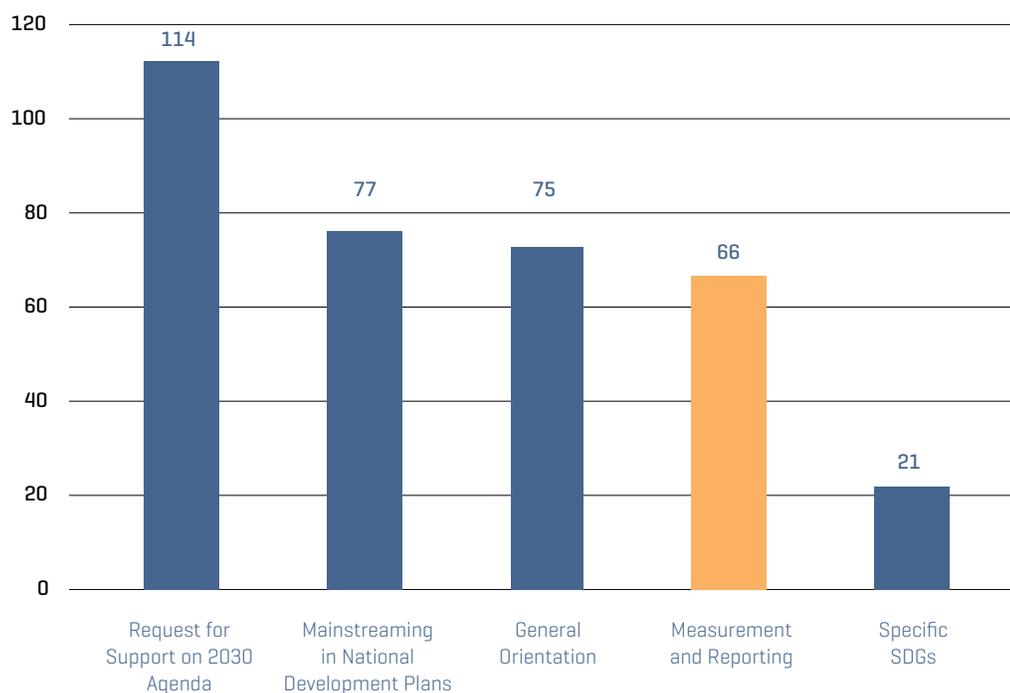
In order to facilitate coherence across the UN system, the UN Development Group (UNDG) adopted a common approach to frame support for SDG implementation, called MAPS. It consists of three main pillars of intervention:

- **Mainstreaming:** Land and contextualize the global development agenda at national and sub-national levels;
- **Acceleration:** Identify bottlenecks, synergies and trade-offs across sectors, for targeted policy interventions and resources allocation; and
- **Policy Support:** Pooled, coordinated and coherent response across different UN entities to countries' requests of policy support.

2. The UNDG Mainstreaming Reference Guide for UN Country Teams includes guidance on indicator development, data collection, data disaggregation and participatory and monitoring systems <https://undg.org/document/mainstreaming-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-reference-guide-for-un-country-teams/>

Strengthening data and statistical capacities is included as a cross-cutting element across all three pillars of the MAPS common approach². Indeed, more than half of the requests for support on SDG implementation received by UN Country Teams in 2016 related to measurement and reporting.

Figure 1: Support requests received from Governments by UNCTs in 2016



Source: UN Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO)

3. UNDP's Data Ecosystem Mapping project (report forthcoming) assesses official statistical capacity, legal and policy frameworks for data and statistics, stakeholders and their participation in national data processes, SDG data availability, and the infrastructure requirements for data collection, processing and dissemination.

This Guidance Note aims to provide UNDP country offices with policy directions and indicative activities for coherent and coordinated support for data and statistics for sustainable development. It further aims to provide an understanding of the current SDG indicators and reporting processes at the global to the regional, national and local levels, and to help facilitate consistency and coherence across these levels of follow-up and review. The note explores options for aligning the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda with national monitoring and evaluation frameworks, prioritizing SDG indicators for national monitoring, strengthening national statistical capacities, and leveraging partnerships and innovations. It further draws lessons from past and current efforts to report on the MDGs and to support the data revolution for sustainable development, strengthen national data ecosystems³ and report on development progress. The recommendations included in this Guidance Note should be considered a menu of options that should be tailored to specific country context, focusing on national needs and priorities, and not necessarily in a sequential manner.

Given the innovative, highly dynamic and fast moving nature of the data for development field, this Guidance Note is intended to be a living document, continuously refined with feedback and contributions from colleagues engaged in supporting practical implementation of statistical development policies at national and sub-national levels, case studies from ongoing efforts to support integrated approaches to SDG implementation and reporting, and lessons-learned from scaling up of data innovations.

The 2030 Agenda Follow-up and Review Architecture

4. A/RES/70/1, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Paragraph 74. <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

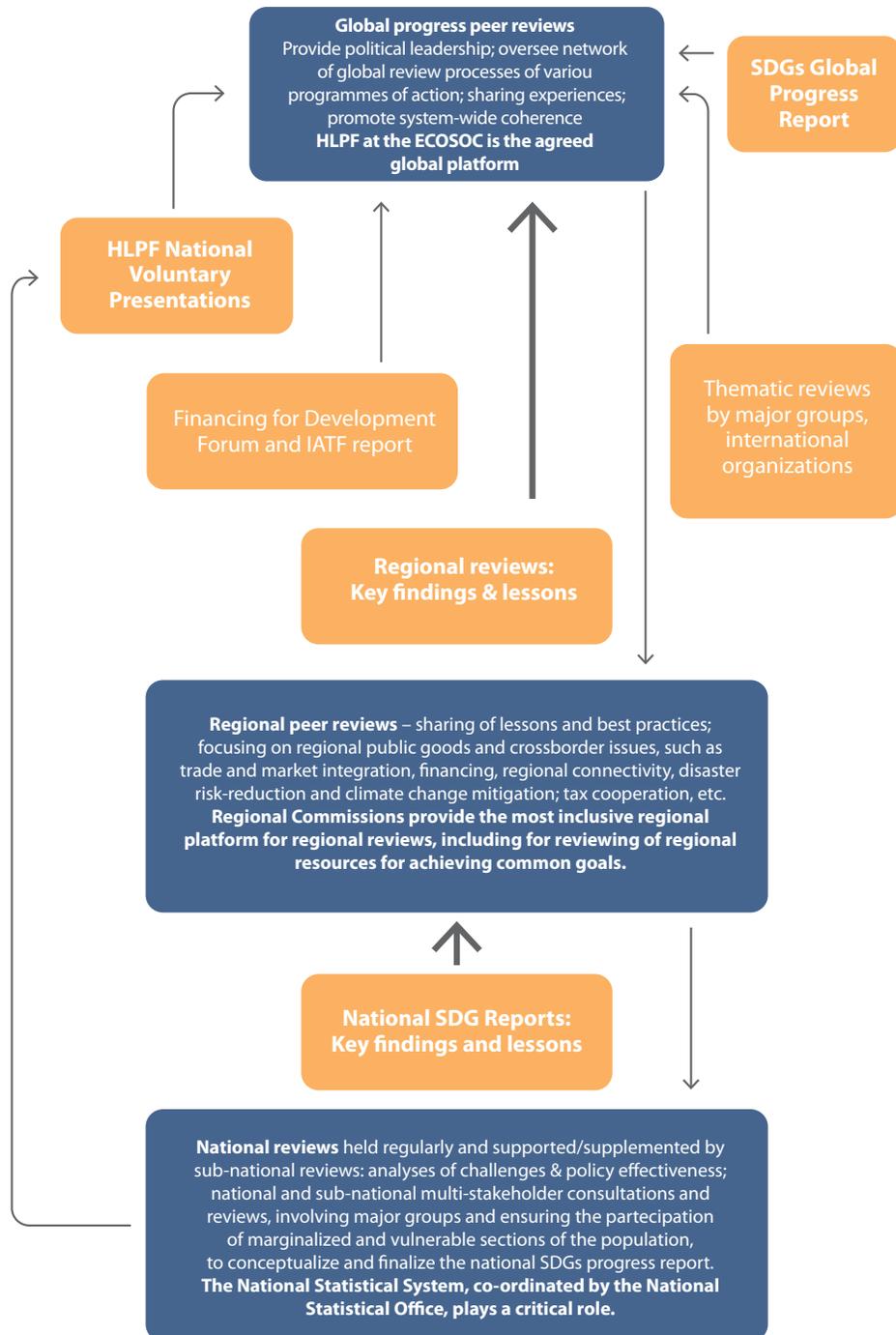
As an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, United Nations member states outlined fundamental principles⁴ for monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of the SDGs at all levels. The follow-up and review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda must:

- Be voluntary, country-led and nationally-owned;
- Respect integrated and inter-related nature of goals and targets, and the three dimensions of sustainable development;
- Be inclusive of all SDG targets, including the Means of Implementation targets;
- Be universal, applicable to all countries and involve all relevant stakeholders;
- Be participatory, inclusive, and transparent;
- Be people-centred, gender-sensitive, based on human rights, with a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind;
- Be rigorous, evidence-based, informed by country-led data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts;
- Build on existing platforms and processes.

At the **national and sub-national levels**, member states recommend undertaking regular and inclusive reviews. At the **regional** level, the follow-up and review of the SDGs could con-

sist of peer learning, sharing of best practices, and discussion on shared targets and cross-border issues. At the **global** level, the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) constitutes the apex of the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review architecture. It is mandated to promote better accountability and focus efforts towards action on the ground, review implementation of the SDGs by all member states across the three pillars of sustainable development, and respond to new and emerging development trends.

Figure 2: Follow up and Review architecture of the 2030 Agenda



5. A/70/684, Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level. <http://www.undocs.org/A/70/684>

The HLPF convenes every year at the **ministerial** level under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It brings together ministers covering economic, social and environmental portfolios. UN member states are encouraged to submit voluntary national reviews (VNRs) to the HLPF, following common guidelines proposed by the Secretary-General⁵. Each year, the HLPF will discuss a specific theme, focusing on a sub-set of SDGs for in-depth review (See Table 1). Every SDGs will be reviewed within a four-year cycle, with SDG 17 on Means of Implementation discussed at every HLPF session.

Every four years, the HLPF will meet at Heads of State level at the **General Assembly**, with the intent of keeping sustainable development issues atop the international political agenda. In these summits, Heads of State will negotiate declarations to provide high-level policy guidance and set the level of ambition for action and results. (The next session of the HLPF at the General Assembly will take place in 2019.)

The HLPF considers several reports to inform its deliberations, including:

- A quadrennial **Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR)**: Intended to strengthen the science-policy interface at the HLPF, the GSDR will provide an integrated, cross-cutting and evidence-driven analysis of sustainable development policies and their implementation. The timing of the GSDR will coincide with the Heads of State level meetings of the HLPF. The next GSDR (2019) will be drafted by an independent panel of 15 scientists appointed by the Secretary General, and supported by an inter-agency task team composed of the UN Secretariat, UNESCO, UNEP, UNDP, UNCTAD and the World Bank⁶.
- An annual **SDG Progress Report**: Prepared by the Secretary-General, this report is based on the global SDG indicator framework. Using data produced by national statistical systems, it assesses progress against the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.
- Thematic reports from ECOSOC functional commissions and other inter-governmental bodies and forums, as well as from non-governmental stakeholders.

6. UN Press Release: Experts, Eminent Scientists to Draft Report on Sustainable Development Ahead of Global Review Set for 2019, 3 January 2017, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2017/envdev1770.doc.htm>

Table 1: HLPF focus in upcoming years

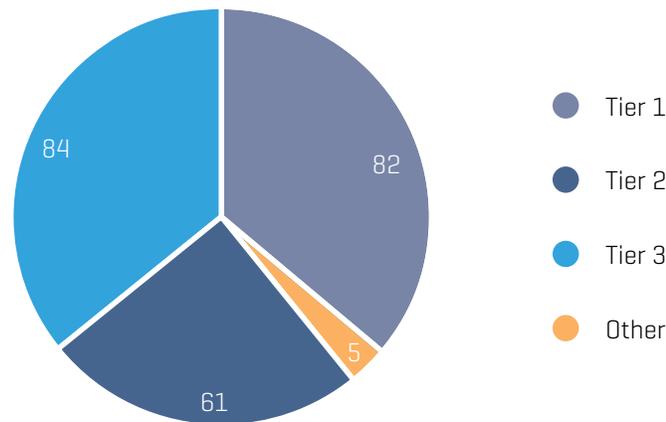
Year	Theme	SDGs to be reviewed in-depth
2016	Ensuring that no one is left behind	
2017	Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world	     
2018	Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies	    
2019	Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality	    

The Global SDG Indicator Framework

At its 48th session in March 2017, the UN Statistical Commission adopted a framework of 232 unique global indicators proposed by the Inter-Agency and Experts Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), representing the outcome of consultations among members, observers and other stakeholders. The indicators are categorized using a 3-tier system intended to help identify indicators which require focused efforts:

- **Tier 1:** an established methodology exists, and data is widely available;
- **Tier 2:** an established methodology exists, but data is not readily available;
- **Tier 3:** an internationally-agreed methodology is yet to be developed.

Figure 4: Number of SDG indicators per tier



Work in progress

The list of global indicators is an initial framework to be improved and refined over time, taking into account lessons from implementation, methodological development and technological advances. It is a “practical starting point”, allowing member states and development partners to move forward with implementation of the SDG monitoring framework. The IAEG-SDGs has adopted a schedule of reviews of the SDG indicators in 2020 and 2025. The reviews will focus on indicators, particularly in Tier 3, which are not sufficiently measurable or specific, for which methodological development or data collection have met significant difficulties, or for which new tools and/or methodologies have become available. International agencies and member states will also take stock of lessons from the monitoring of indicators in Tiers 1 and 2.

Box 1: The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG

The IAEG-SDGs was established by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2015 with the mandate of developing a global indicator framework for the 2030 Agenda. It is composed of 27 member states representing regional UN groupings. Other member states and UN agencies participate in the IAEG-SDGs as observers. UNDESA Statistical Division provides secretariat support to the IAEG-SDGs, which meets twice a year. The IAEG-SDGs undertakes its work through closed sessions, open plenaries, and online consultations. It has established three working groups for focus on specific issues of geo-spatial information, data standard (SDMX) and inter-linkages. The scope of the IAEG-SDGs is limited to indicators applicable at the global level only.

Source: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/>

Who does what?

The IAEG-SDGs has affirmed the overall ownership and primary responsibility of member states through their **national statistical offices**. They are expected to compile and provide data for global reporting.

Regional mechanisms such as **UN Regional Economic Commissions** may support, as appropriate and relevant, the development of national and regional SDG indicator frameworks, statistical capacity building, regional integration through harmonization of statistics, peer learning and sharing of experiences, and the transmission of data from national to global level.

UNDESA Statistics Division (UNSD) maintains the global database of SDG indicators, and produces the annual Progress Report of the Secretary-General, based on the SDG indicator framework (only data on Tier 1 and Tier 2 indicators). Typically, UNSD interacts directly with National Statistics Offices (NSOs), sometimes through regional economic commissions, and with agencies directly involved in data collection and survey instruments. A UNSD pilot project⁷ is focusing on a few countries to support the development of national SDG indicator frameworks, as well as knowledge sharing and exchange of experience at regional level.

While UNSD's main mandate and focus is on the global indicators, the ground work of supporting data collection and statistical capacities at national level will fall on resident agencies, in particular those with custodianship responsibilities and significantly on UNDP.

The IAEG-SDGs has identified "**custodian**" agencies for each indicator⁸, mandated with the responsibilities to help ensure comparability of country data, compute regional and global aggregates, and provide data in the global SDG indicator database. As specialized agencies with existing mandates in their domains, UNDP, other UN agencies, funds and programmes as well as international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank are expected to assume this custodian role to assist with data collection from countries, develop internationally agreed standards and methodologies and support their adoption at national level, and strengthen national statistical capacities and reporting mechanisms.

7. The UNSD Development Account Pilot Project on Enhancing National Statistical Capacity for SDG monitoring focuses on 6 countries: Cambodia, Ethiopia, Philippines, Rwanda, Uganda and Vietnam. It undertakes assessments of national statistical capacity and SDG data availability, and the development of implementation plans for national SDG indicator frameworks. Findings and results are shared in regional workshops. With DFID's support, the initiative will be scaled up to 20 countries in Africa and Asia through 2021.

8. Tier classification and custodian agencies for Global SDG Indicators. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>

9. Partnership for Statistics in the 21st Century (PARIS21), <http://www.paris21.org/>

10. <http://www.paris21.org/ADAPT>

11. World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/data/statistical-capacity-building/trust-fund-for-statistical-capacity-building>

12. The current 2020 census round runs between 2015 and 2024. All countries are encouraged to undertake a population census on average every 10 years. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/Demographic/sources/census/wphc/default.htm>

13. Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, <http://data4sdgs.org/>

14. See Annex 1 for an overview of UNDP's engagement on specific global SDG indicators

The **Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21)**⁹ promotes better use and production of statistics, notably through assisting countries to design, implement and monitor National Strategies for Statistics (NSDS). PARIS21 is developing and piloting the Advanced Data Planning Tool (ADAPT)¹⁰, intended to help countries meet the data demands of the SDGs, through undertaking a national consultative process on monitoring frameworks for development, estimating the cost of data production, and charting a road-map for addressing data gaps.

The **World Bank** collaborates with PARIS21 to support NSDS by providing funding to NSOs through a Trust fund for Statistical Capacity Building¹¹. Moreover the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have launched a Center for Development Data, with the aim to improve the regularity of data collection through household surveys.

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** collaborates closely with UNSD to support national population censuses¹², which provide essential baseline data for the SDGs.

UN-Women supports monitoring of SDG5, support the production of gender statistics and gender-disaggregated data across the SDG indicator framework.

The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** advocates for a human rights-based approach to the production of SDG data, and provides recommendations for data disaggregation as a means to implement the Leave No One Behind principle of the 2030 Agenda.

A non-exhaustive list of data collection instruments that provide critical data for the SDGs includes the **Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)** by UNICEF, the **Demographic and Health Survey** by USAID, the **Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS)** by World Bank, the **Labor Force Survey (LFS)** by ILO, the **Agricultural Survey** by FAO.

The **Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data**¹³, launched in September 2015, provides a platform bringing together governments, private sector, civil society and international development agencies to address the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration and advocacy for high quality data in support of sustainable development and mobilize resources for statistics.

What does UNDP do?

As of March 2017, UNDP has assumed the custodian role¹⁴ for three indicators under SDG 16 (quality of public service, inclusive decision-making), and two under SDG 17 (effective development cooperation). Additionally, UNDP partners with sister agencies to support specific indicators under SDG 1 (multi-dimensional poverty measure), SDG 5 (gender-based violence) and as well as substantive contributions in many other areas through various inter-agency networks, notably on water and sanitation, and disaster risk reduction.

Table 2: UNDP Custodianship of SDG Indicators

Indicator	Tier
16.6.2 Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services	Tier III
16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions	Tier III
16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	Tier III
17.15.1 Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation	Tier II
17.16.1 Number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the sustainable development goals	Tier II

Irrespective of support for specific indicators, UNDP has a lead role to play in strengthening statistical capacity overall and, critically, analytical reporting at national, sub-national and sectoral levels. Building on its experience in supporting MDG reports, UNDP co-led with UNSD a UNDG Task Team which developed guidelines for producing national SDG reports. These will help track national progress and provide analysis to support for more effective national implementation.

In Partnership with Tohoku University International Research Institute of Disaster Science, UNDP launched in 2015 the **Global Center for Disaster Statistics**, which aims to help improve disaster related statistics in countries, support the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and national governments to monitor the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and the 2030 Agenda, and support the integration of disaster risk reduction into development planning through evidence and analysis. UNDP has undertaken a 5-country pilot assessment of the relevance and efficacy of proposed indicators for SFDRR, as well as a mapping of the statistical capacity needs, data gaps and priorities for measuring progress in reducing disaster losses.

Tailored, demand-driven approach

The 2030 Agenda and its indicator framework already highlight a number of areas where focused interventions and support are required to leverage data and statistics for the achievement of the SDGs, notably data availability (for Tier 1 and 2 indicators), development of methodologies and standards (for Tier 3 indicators), data disaggregation, and data reporting platforms, among others. Moreover, member states have specifically called for scaling up partnerships with private sector and other non-official data stakeholders to explore the potential of innovations and non-traditional data sources, and mobilize resources for statistical development.

Learning lessons from the significant investment it already makes in many areas of statistical development, and the central role it plays within the UN system to support the 2030 Agenda, UNDP is poised to amplify the impact of its efforts by adopting a more strategic, coherent and coordinated organization-wide approach to statistical development, in line with the MAPS common approach for SDG implementation adopted by the UNDG. From global to sub-national levels, UNDP can provide leadership in strengthening the linkages between data and development policy design and implementation, ensuring that efforts target those furthest behind first, and in championing partnerships and innovations.

It is proposed that the overarching objectives of UNDP's interventions on statistical development be to strengthen national statistical systems and enable them to respond to the development needs and priorities of countries. Although the areas of support and activities suggested below may not be relevant in all country contexts, the following six principles are proposed for consideration in designing and supporting data and statistics initiatives:

- **Data as a means to an end:** While important in and of themselves, data and statistics are only as useful as they can meaningfully contribute to the fundamental vision, principles and goals of the sustainable development agenda, eliminate poverty, ensure no one is left behind, empower people to participate, and take action and hold duty bearers accountable. UNDP support to the analytical dimensions of SDG reporting goes along with securing connections between data and policy formulation and implementation – avoiding treating data supply as an end in itself.
- **Data more than just monitoring:** Although significant emphasis is placed on indicators for reporting progress, the production of additional indicators that are relevant and necessary for the analytical needs of SDG implementation and for evidence-based policymaking must be supported. Some MDG indicators for example, even if they are not included in the SDG indicator framework, remain highly relevant and must continue to be collected and used.
- **A holistic, end-to-end approach:** The full value of data for development can only be achieved if the entire data value chain is strengthened, from impact and needs assessment to data collection to data processing to data accessibility and dissemination to data use. By adopting an end-to-end data ecosystem approach, UNDP is uniquely positioned to identify the weakest links in the value chain on which to focus its interventions and maximize its return on investment for better development outcomes.
- **National ownership and prioritization of national needs:** In countries where resources for data collection are limited, UNDP must focus its efforts on strength-

ening nationally owned and managed data systems, and give preeminence to responding to national needs and priorities. The capacities of official statistical systems and their national statistics offices, as cornerstones for the data revolution at national level, must be prioritized. UNDP should support the routine, regular and sustained statistical functions that are a minimum requirement for any performing economy, improving national capacities to produce time series data as opposed to one-off data collection exercises.

- **Leave No One Behind:** The 2030 Agenda has enshrined the fundamental principle of ensuring targeting the most vulnerable and reaching those furthest behind first. In data terms, it implies ensuring that data collection instruments and analytical tools are at sufficient level of granularity to identify those left behind, target policy interventions, and assess their impact on vulnerable populations. The 2030 Agenda further provides indications of possible criteria for data disaggregation, such as income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location.
- **Innovation and partnership with non-traditional data stakeholders:** Innovation is critical to find effective solutions to SDG data gaps and analytical challenges. Innovative partnerships are essential to leverage the respective strengths and complementarity of various stakeholders. The private sector and civil society have greater capacity to innovate and are years ahead of governments and the UN System in exploiting the opportunities afforded by new technologies and data innovations. They provide new data sources such as big data and citizen-generated data that can contribute to plugging SDG data gaps. Similarly, academia and think-tanks can help in developing new analytical frameworks and tools required to harness the complexity of the sustainable development agenda.

Suggested Guidance for Country Offices on Supporting Data and Statistical Development

- A. **Availability of SDG data:** A starting point for supporting SDG monitoring is to evaluate already available statistics in the country that could contribute to the SDG indicator framework. The assessment must be led by the national statistical office, and may consist of a review of existing data production instruments across the entire national statistical system, including data sources, their comparability and frequencies. Ideally, this should be done in consultation with data producers, as well as data users and other stakeholders in the national statistical system, in order to ensure completeness of the mapping of existing data sources and sensitize them to the requirements of SDG monitoring. The assessment should focus on reviewing the availability of indicators in Tier 1 and Tier 2. Tier 3 indicators may not be considered, since their methodologies are yet to be developed or agreed. Indicators deemed not relevant to national context may also be excluded, such as ocean-related indicators in land-locked countries for example. With regard to SDG17 (Means of implementation), although most targets focus on global processes not measurable at national level, a few relate to policy recommendations actionable at national level and should be included as relevant.

A simple nomenclature is proposed to categorize national SDG data availability:

- **Readily available:** indicators already collected at national level according to established methodology and metadata.
- **Available with efforts** indicators not directly available but which may be calculated from existing data.
- **Not available:** indicators not collected at national level and for which no proxy data exist.

Table 3: Area of potential UNDP support: SDG data availability

Indicative Activities	Lead agency	Partners
Review of national statistical system Mapping of existing data sources	National statistical office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government departments and agencies • Development agencies supporting data collection instruments such as census, DHS, MICS and other surveys • UNDESA Statistics Division • PARIS21
Consultations with official data producers, and validation with data users	National statistical office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government department and agencies • International development organizations
Report on data availability and gaps	National statistical office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National data producers • Planning unit • M&E unit • Development agencies supporting data collection instruments

Assessments of SDG data availability indicate that **Colombia** already tracks 54% of SDG indicators. **Jamaica**, a country with high statistical capacity tracks about 30% of SDG indicators and can potentially produce an additional 31% from existing data sources.

15. Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS 2016), PARIS21, <http://www.paris21.org/PRESS2016>

B. Prioritization of SDG indicators for data production: Early gap assessments indicate that even the better resourced countries would not be able to produce data for about half of nationally relevant SDG indicators at most. Given the low and stagnating level of allocation of development resources to statistics¹⁵, it will be impossible in practice for countries to report on all indicators. The question of prioritization of indicators, while vexing for the indivisibility principle of the 2030 Agenda (“no tar-

16. Inter-governmental group of countries in conflict or post-conflict situations. <http://g7plus.org/>

get left behind”), may not be avoidable altogether. Some country groupings such as Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and g7+¹⁶, acknowledging the challenges and their resources limitations, have taken steps to identify a more manageable smaller set of indicators they can commit to report on. In this regard, the prioritization of SDG indicators for data production may also be considered as a matter of sequencing the production over time, in order to gradually expand data coverage of the 2030 Agenda more comprehensively, as resources and capacities improve.

Box 2: The Rapid Integrated Assessment

RIA is a tool developed by the Sustainable Development cluster in the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, to help countries assess their readiness for SDG implementation. It aims to assist governments in assessing the degree of alignment and gaps between the national development framework and the 2030 Agenda. The analysis helps identify linkages across targets, relevant indicators, and national institutions responsible for specific targets.

On policy and technical levels, some criteria may be considered for prioritization of indicators development:

- **Focus on local needs and gaps:** National development plans already define issues of national priorities and identify indicators required to monitor them. The National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS), where applicable, provides a framework for targeted support for strengthening the national statistical system and improving data collection in areas identified by governments. Section C below explores the alignment of national monitoring frameworks and the global SDG indicator framework.

Applications of the UNDP Rapid Integrated Assessment tool [RIA] during MAPS support missions have helped highlight discrepancies between national development priorities and data availability. For example, in **Jamaica** climate change mitigation is a high priority, yet capacities for environmental indicators are among the weakest.

- **Focus on Tiers 1 and 2:** Countries are called upon to increase data collection efforts for indicators in Tiers 1 and 2, which are the ones that required by the global reporting platform. As custodians and partners for specific indicators, international agencies are expected to support such efforts. Depending on resources availability and national priorities, some countries can lead the way in the development of Tier 3 indicators.

The Development Impact Group in UNDP provides data into the global SDG indicators database for Tier 2 indicators **17.15.1** and **17.15.2**, through its joint support with OECD to the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

The Oslo Governance Center supports the methodological development of Tier 3 indicators **16.6.2**, **16.7.1** and **16.7.2** for which UNDP is interim custodian¹⁷.

17. See Annex 1 for an overview of UNDP's engagement on specific global SDG indicators

— **Critical data for SDG acceleration:** As countries develop roadmaps for SDG implementation, a key focus is to help identify “accelerators”, policy areas where targeted interventions can have multiplier effects and can reap dividends across many of the SDGs (the “Acceleration” pillar of MAPS). In addition to measuring such policy areas, due consideration must be given to the availability and quality of data required for informing integrated analytical tools and frameworks needed to identify those accelerators in the first place.

Box 3: Age and Ageing Statistics

In collaboration with DFID, the UK Office of National Statistics, UN-DESA, UNFPA, UN-Women, WHO and HelpAge International, UNDP is co-leading an initiative to establish a working group at the UN Statistical Commission to develop standard guidance for producing statistics about older persons, advocate for the removal of age caps in existing data collection instruments and for age-disaggregation of SDG indicators.

— **Leave No One Behind:** In addition to the strong affirmation of the overarching principle of Leaving No One Behind and its anchoring in international human rights frameworks, the 2030 Agenda specifically includes goals and related targets and indicators directly aiming at fostering equitable education (SDG 4) and reducing gender inequality (SDG 5) and inequalities within and between countries (SDG 10). Numerous targets in other goals expressly mandate equal access to the benefits of sustainable development. Prioritizing indicators related to such goals and targets, and making greater investment in data disaggregation across the board are essential to ensure that the 2030 Agenda targets the most vulnerable and reaches those left furthest behind first.

SDG Target 17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by **income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location** and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR] has developed a Guidance Note on **“A Human Rights-based Approach to Data – Leaving No One Behind in the 2030 Development Agenda”**, which provides guidelines and recommendations on participation, data disaggregation, self-identification, transparency, privacy and accountability.

Table 4: Area of potential UNDP support: Data production for SDG Indicators

Indicative Activities	Lead agency	Partners
Data needs assessment for the SDGs	Planning unit or coordination body for SDG implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National statistical office Relevant government institutions UNDESA Statistics Division PARIS21
Identify data requirements for SDG accelerators	Relevant government agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National statistical office
Support data collection, through censuses, administrative data, and other surveys	National statistical office and other official data producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning unit Main agencies deploying data collection instruments (World Bank, UNICEF, ILO, UN-Women, UNESCO, WHO)
Support Multi-dimensional measure of poverty	National statistical office, planning unit or other national development agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Bank, UNICEF, HDRO
Invest in data disaggregation	National statistical office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant government institutions in charge of social protection or social inclusion, OHCHR, UN-Women

- C. Integrated M&E frameworks:** The 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda call for leveraging existing mechanisms in order to minimize the reporting burden on countries. As many countries undertake national planning processes with accompanying monitoring and evaluation platforms, it is recommended to align and integrate such national M&E systems with the SDG indicator framework. It would enable the countries to meet their global reporting requirements while focusing on implementing and monitoring their national priorities. Moreover, many countries are party to numerous treaties, conventions and regional integration processes which also mandate their own reporting requirements. Such commitments can be leveraged to contribute to the SDG follow up and review.

Box 4: UNDG Guidelines for SDG Country Reports

The UNDG has developed SDG Country Reporting Guidelines to provide UN Country Teams with a blueprint for supporting regular progress overviews to inform national SDG implementation and monitoring, Voluntary National Reports by countries at the High-Level Political Forum, and linkages with reporting processes of other UN major conferences and functional commissions, at the global, regional and national levels. These guidelines build on extensive experience in supporting national MDG reports. They provide guidance on defining national SDG indicators, setting baselines, engaging stakeholders and disseminating findings.

Table 5: Area of potential UNDP support: Integrated frameworks for follow-up and review

Indicative Activities	Lead agency	Partners
Integrated M&E framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning unit • M&E unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National statistical office
Mapping of existing reporting commitments	Planning unit or coordination body for SDG implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International development agencies
Voluntary national review at HLPF	Planning unit or coordination body for SDG implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Foreign Affairs • UN-DESA
National SDG progress report	Planning unit or coordination body for SDG implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN country teams
National consultations with civil society and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning unit • M&E unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society organizations • Private sector • Academia

The MAPS mission to **Djibouti** recommended the development of an integrated M&E framework for the national development plan [Strategy of Accelerated Growth and Promotion of Employment] and the 2030 Agenda, to improve coherence of development monitoring, avoid duplication of efforts and use limited development resources more efficiently.

- D. Strengthen national statistical offices and data ecosystems:** National statistical offices are the primary entity mandated at national level to produce, compile and report data for SDG monitoring. The greater data needs of the SDGs will significantly increase the burden on already over-stretched and under-resourced NSOs in many countries. NSOs are now being called upon to assume even greater responsibility in the SDG era as coordinators of broader data ecosystems including official as well as non-official stakeholders. NSOs need to acquire the skills to engage with stakeholders beyond the technical statistical community, including civil society, private sector, and development stakeholders now paying greater attention to the importance of data. On the other hand, such stakeholders require support to acquire the data literacy skills needed to use statistics and to produce data to meet their specific needs, in compliance with international statistical norms and standards.

Box 5: The Data Ecosystems Mapping Project

Piloted by UNDP in 6 countries (Bangladesh, Moldova, Mongolia, Senegal, Swaziland, Trinidad and Tobago), the Data Ecosystem Mapping project assessed key areas of support for NSOs, including capacity building, infrastructure development, modernization of legislative frameworks, data collection, dissemination and use. Key recommendations from the project include opening up national statistical systems to non-official stakeholders and innovative data approaches, providing incentives for government institutions to share untapped existing administrative data that might be useful for the SDGs (same for the private sector), paying attention to infrastructure requirements such as ICT, and coordinating donors' assistance on data and statistics, and strengthening collaborative partnerships.

The Data Ecosystem Mapping project in **Swaziland** focused on strengthening the Central Statistics Office through the development of a new National Strategy for the Development of Statistics [NSDS] and identifying entry points for non-official data stakeholders.

Table 6: Area of potential UNDP support: National statistical systems

Indicative Activities	Lead agency	Partners
Data ecosystem mapping	National statistical office	• UNDP
National Strategy for Development of Statistics	National statistical office or authority	• PARIS21
Statistical capacity building programmes for data producers and users	National statistical office or authority	• UN agencies, UN regional Economic Commissions, Regional development banks, World Bank, PARIS21
Statistical information systems and infrastructure	National statistical office or authority	• Government agency in charge of ICT infrastructure
Open Data and Data dissemination platforms	National statistical office	• World Bank, Regional development banks, ODECA, Arab Development Portal, Open Government Partnership

UNDP collaborated with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the Open Data for Development Network and the World Wide Web Foundation to produce the **Africa Data Revolution Report 2016**, capturing the baseline state of data ecosystems for sustainable development in the region in the first year of the SDGs era. Based on UNDP-led data ecosystems assessments in 10 countries, the report notes that the fundamental building blocks for harnessing the data revolution already exist in Africa. It notably recommends undertaking capacity needs assessments of data communities early in the SDGs implementation processes, supporting national statistical offices as cornerstones of national data ecosystems, significantly investing in data technologies and human resources, improving coordination between data communities to fill SDG data gaps, reforming the legal and legislative enabling environments to embrace innovation and accelerate the data revolution for sustainable development.

Box 6: The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)

UNDP works to promote awareness of detailed activity level data and results on development projects worth more than US\$146 billion through its leadership of the Secretariat for the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). While the data published and regularly updated by more than 530 organizations is open and can be accessed for multiple purposes, UNDP works actively with developers and users of Aid Information Management Systems to ensure this data provided by bilateral and multilateral donors, development banks, foundations, NGOs and private sector publishers can be accessed at national level and used for policy development, planning and monitoring.

Full IATI registry: <https://www.iatiregistry.org> | Simple IATI data viewer: <http://www.d-portal.org>

- E. Coordination, partnerships and innovation:** A defining feature of the data revolution is the complementary contributions that various stakeholders bring to improving overall statistical capacity. With an expansive set of indicators, multiple data sources, data disaggregation requirements across multiple dimensions and highly complex and inter-connected goals and targets, the 2030 Agenda will require greater coordination of efforts across the broader ecosystem of data stakeholders, in order to leverage technological innovations and new data sources, ensure interoperability of data systems, minimize duplication of efforts, and improve coherence of development implementation and reporting initiatives. International development agencies and partners must join forces to mobilize resources, ensure complementarity of their efforts, predictability of resource allocations for statistics, and sustainability of capacity development initiatives. As the lead development agency in most programme countries, UNDP advocates for integrated approaches to supporting implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda, and is uniquely positioned to support, convene or lead multi-stakeholder partnerships on data for development. At the level of UN Country Teams, SDG working groups or task forces may provide an opportunity to strengthen inter-agency coordination and collaboration on data for development.

Box 7: Data Innovation in UNDP

The UNDP Innovation Facility, jointly with the UN Global Pulse, has published “A Guide to Data Innovation for Development - From idea to proof-of-concept”, which provides practical guidance for integrating data innovation in development projects. The Guide provides concrete tools and a step-by-step approach to designing data innovation projects.

Table 7: Area of potential UNDP support: Coordination, partnerships and innovation

Indicative Activities	Lead agency	Partners
UNCT task team on data and statistics	UN Resident Coordinator office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">UN Resident agencies
Coordination mechanism for national data producers	National statistical office or authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ministerial departments and agencies
Donor coordination platform for data and statistics	Aid coordination unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">National statistical office or authority
Explore innovative data approaches	National statistical office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">UN Global Pulse, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, Private sector, Civil society, Academia
Stakeholder consultations and data advocacy	National statistical office or authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

As part of the **CEB Programme of Work on the Data Revolution**, UNDP and sister agencies jointly facilitated a **UN Data Innovation Lab**¹⁸ series to explore how to advance from smaller scale experiments towards a more systematic mainstreaming of data-driven solutions and innovation – such as behavioral insights, big data, machine learning and artificial intelligence – into development policy and programme support, as key resources for the measurement and the achievement of the SDGs.

With support of the UN Country Team, the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics [CAPMAS] of Egypt has established an **SDG Coordination Unit** to contextualize and define the national indicator framework for monitoring the 2030 Agenda in Egypt, and undertake a comprehensive assessment of its capacities and data systems.

18. The UN Data Innovation Lab consisted in a series of six workshops aiming to build capacity within the UN System to investigate, develop and deploy applications of cutting-edge data innovations in support of achieving sustainable development. <http://undatainnovationlabworkshop.wikispaces.com/>

Available resources

The Bureau for Policy and Programme Support provides policy advice and technical assistance on data and statistics for SDG implementation and monitoring, liaison with data partners and stakeholders. Dedicated resources are allocated for activities such as custodianship of SDG indicators, voluntary national reviews at HLPF, national SDG reports, integrated MAPS support missions, and data innovations and partnerships.

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Additionally, the 2030 Agenda team solicits and welcomes feedback as well as exchange of information through dedicated knowledge management channels:

- SDG Implementation Intranet:
<https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bpps/sdgs/SitePages/intranet.aspx>
- Data for Development on Yammer:
https://www.yammer.com/undp.org/#/threads/inGroup?type=in_group&feedId=6441184&view=all

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Further Reading

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- A World that Counts: Mobilising The Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, Report of the United Nations Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, November 2014, <http://www.undatarevolution.org/report/>
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- Guidelines to Support Country Reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDG, 2017, <https://undg.org/document/guidelines-to-support-country-reporting-on-the-sustainable-development-goals/>
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- A Guide to Data Innovation for Development - From idea to proof-of-concept, UN Global Pulse and UNDP, December 2016. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/development-impact/a-guide-to-data-innovation-for-development--from-idea-to-proof-/>
- Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, A/RES/70/1, September 2015, <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>
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- Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, Report of the Secretary General, A/70/684, January 2016, <http://undocs.org/A/70/684>
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/70/299, Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level, August 2016, <http://undocs.org/A/70/299>
- A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development, Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Agenda, May 2013, <http://www.post2015hlp.org/the-report/>
- Indicators for Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals, UNDG, 2003, http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/poverty-reduction/poverty-website/indicators-for-monitoring-the-mdgs/Indicators_for_Monitoring_the_MDGs.pdf

Annexes

Annex 1: UNDP's involvement on specific SDG indicators

Target	Indicator	Tier	Custodians	Partners
Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere				
1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	Tier II	National governments	UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank
Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls				
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	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	Tier II	UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC	UNSD, UNDP
	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	Tier II	UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC	UNSD, UNDP
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels				
16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	16.6.2 Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services	Tier III	UNDP	
16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions	Tier III	UNDP	UN-Women
	16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	Tier III	UNDP	
Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development				
17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development	17.15.1 Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation	Tier II	OECD, UNDP	
17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multistakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries	17.16.1 Number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the sustainable development goals	Tier II	OECD, UNDP	UNEP

Annex 2: Standard Template for Integrated MAPS missions

A background note on data and statistics prepared prior can usefully inform integrated missions to support SDGs implementation and monitoring (“MAPS missions”), when the mission’s terms of reference include a request for statistical support. The outline suggested below is based on the findings and recommendations from the Data Ecosystems Mapping project, and lessons learned from the application of the template to numerous MAPS missions in 2016 and 2017. It is indicative and adjustable depending on specific country context.

1. The National Statistical System

Background and overview of the national statistical system

1.1 Legal Framework for Statistics and Data

Legislative instruments providing mandate for official statistics, regulating statistical production, data dissemination

1.2 The National Statistical Office

Overview of the NSO, its structure, governance, independence, and staffing and resources

1.2.1 Main statistical products

Censuses, surveys and other instruments, their periodicity and most recent exercises

1.3 Other national data producers

Other mandated producers of official statistics, such as line ministries, central banks, etc.

1.4 National Strategy for Development of Statistics

Overview of current NSDS if any, and/or planned NSDS and related reviews of the NSS

1.5 Statistical capacity

Summary assessment of statistical capacity (Useful resource: World Bank’s Statistical Capacity Index)

1.6 Open data

Data dissemination and accessibility, data portals

Open Data Readiness Assessment if any (from World Bank)

1.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Alignment/overlap between SDG indicator framework and M&E framework for national development plan, if any

Linkage with Rapid Integrated Assessment

1.8 International support for statistical development

Current and previous noteworthy initiatives related to statistical support from development partners

2. SDG monitoring

2.1 SDG data gap analysis

Assessment of SDG indicator availability from national data sources

3. Challenges

Potential areas on consideration

3.1 Statistical capacity

3.2 Data quality

3.3 Coordination

3.4 ICT infrastructure

3.5 Funding

4. Recommendations

