Second retreat on

# Migration Indicators for the
# Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda

DC2-1949, United Nations
New York, 17 October 2014

Global Migration Group Working Group on Data and Research
(Co-chairs: DESA and IOM)

*In collaboration with:*

KNOMAD/World Bank and the SRSG for Migration

## REPORT OF THE MEETING

### Introduction

In July 2014, the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals proposed a set of goals and targets to serve as the basis for incorporating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda.[1] The outcome document of the OWG contained several targets which are of direct relevance to international migration, migrants and mobility.

The objective of the one-day technical retreat was to conduct an in-depth analysis of the measurability of the targets proposed by the OWG and to evaluate potential indicators for their monitoring. At the retreat, agency representatives with expertise in each target area, as well as on cross-cutting issues such as human rights, discussed the progress made in developing migration related indicators and presented proposals for measuring migration relevant targets.

The co-chairs recalled that the first GMG indicator retreat, held in January 2014, had emphasized the need to track progress toward a strong global partnership on migration and development; to assess the impact of migration as an enabler of development across several goals; and to include international migrants in disaggregating data on all relevant targets and indicators. There was agreement at the first retreat that indicators for remittance transfer costs were already available and being monitored. Moreover, work was well advanced on measuring progress towards finding durable solutions for refugees and human trafficking. Further, GMG agencies were developing indicators on skills recognition, portability of social security benefits, recruitment costs and diaspora contributions, as well as on disaggregation of other indicators (in education, health,

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[1] Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970), 12 August 2014

gender, etc.) by migratory status. This second retreat would review progress in these and other areas.

**Status of the post-2015 agenda and indicator framework**

The first session of the retreat reviewed the status and timeline of negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, as well as considerations related to indicators. The General Assembly had adopted the outcome document agreed by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in July as the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs would also be considered[2]. Modalities for further negotiations on the post-2015 agenda would be established by the end of 2014.

The Open Working Group document included targets on safe, legal and orderly migration (10.7), reducing remittance transfer costs (10.c), rights of migrant workers (8.8), eliminating trafficking of women and children (5.2 and 16.2), and addressing the "brain drain" through retention and training of health workers (3.c) among other targets of relevance to international migration, migrants and mobility. Currently, the Secretary-General was preparing a synthesis report that was expected to highlight gaps in the goals and targets proposed in the report of the OWG, and to propose a broad framework for the post-2015 development agenda.

The representative of the SRSG for migration observed that a strong technical foundation would enrich advocacy and shore up the retention of migration related indicators in the further negotiations on the post-2015 framework.

IOM noted that the political discussions in the OWG had raised some important questions that need to be answered by migration advocates, including: what is meant by 'orderly, safe and regular migration'? How is that measured? How should forced displacement be reflected in the OWG text? Can migration be included as part of the new global partnership for development?

Regarding future monitoring of the development agenda, the representative of the Statistics Division reported that the United Nations Statistical Commission at its session in March 2015 would discuss and agree on the process and modalities for the development of an indicator framework. In preparation, an expert group meeting would be held in January 2015. The representative invited the GMG to contribute to this expert meeting by presenting the results of this second data retreat. The framework itself, including a set of indicators, would likely be agreed by the Statistical Commission in 2016. One lesson from the MDG monitoring framework was that while new indicators created an additional reporting burden, they could also attract additional funding to enhance national capacities.

Presentations and discussions considered the nature of indicators and the number of indicators that should be proposed. The representative of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) described her organization's efforts to compile a framework of indicators for measuring sustainable development. She reminded the meeting that indicators should be considered as a management tool to help countries implement and monitor strategies and to allocate resources. Indicators could be also be used as a "report card" to measure progress toward a target and

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[2] A/RES/68/309

ensuring accountability of governments and other stakeholders. SDSN believed that the number of global indicators should be tightly limited to a list of about 100 "core" indicators, although a larger number of "tier 2" indicators could be offered for adaptation at regional and country level. The GMG working group on data and research could offer advice on designating core versus tier-2 migration related indicators. While it was desirable for indicators to be consistent with existing data systems, at this stage experts should not shy away from recommending new approaches and methodologies. In her view, the selection of indicators should take into account the likelihood of an annual reporting mechanism, as had been the case for the MDGs. While recognizing the distinction between measuring process, output and impact, SDSN believed that measurement of all three types could be useful and thus did not favour one type of indicator over the others. Lastly, she suggested considering the development of indicator framework as "work-in-progress". Rather than focusing on publishing a "final" list, she suggested to keep any proposed framework flexible in order to respond to the latest developments.

The importance of costing capacity building needs was mentioned by the representative of SDSN as well as other speakers. The July 2015 Conference on Financing for Development would be a major milestone for commitments for means on financing the sustainable development agenda and monitoring. The GMG working group on data and research was invited to provide inputs to the work of SDSN in costing data collection for the post-2015 development agenda in the following three areas: (a) data already captured; (b) data not yet captured; (c) needs of international agencies.

**Indicator review**

*General considerations*

In light of the concise selection of indicators proposed by the SDSN, participants reflected on the issue of how many indicators could realistically be monitored as part of the SDGs. Perhaps there would be only one or two indicator per target, especially as "cross-referenced" indicators could be relevant to more than one target. It was recalled that the scope of the Declaration of the 2013 High-level Dialogue and of the Secretary-General's eight-point agenda on international migration were far broader that the SDGs, and thus development of a broader indicator framework was merited. Only a small subset of indicators would be needed for inclusion in the SDG framework.

Participants also considered whether it was sufficiently "transformative" to include in the SDGs indicators that were already tracked under international conventions and agreements. In this context, it was observed that although some of the migration related data and **indicators** already existed, the **targets** they intended to measure could nevertheless be transformative.

The representative of UNFPA reported that it had developed a set of indicators on international migration within the context of the proposed monitoring framework for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action beyond 2014. These indicators focused on the benefits of migration for development and included measures in the domains of input/structure, effort/process, and outcome/impact. UNFPA stressed the importance of capacity building and

thinking ahead to 2030 when developing indicators for which data might not be available currently.

*Migration of health workers (target 3.c)*

The OECD reported that it had collaborated with the WHO in assessing the implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel.. Starting next year, the OECD would mainstream health workers in its data collection activities.. One indicator for monitoring the migration of health workers was the expatriation rate – that is, the percentage of a source country's trained doctors and nurses that were working abroad. However, there were a number of challenges associated with this measure, including the difference between place of birth and the place where training was obtained; the national impact in a source country could be quite different from the local impact; while it was relatively easy to count health workers in OECD countries, obtaining information on the number of health workers in source countries (the denominator) was more difficult; even in destination countries, it was not always straightforward to count foreign health workers – failing to count residents in training, or doctors whose qualifications were not recognized in host countries, could lead to undercount. Also, the expatriation rate was a stock measure and thus would not capture changes on an annual basis. Moreover, it was unclear was a related target could be.

UNCTAD suggested that together with the outcome measures that were being suggested, consideration of a trade-related measure could permit a more broad and actionable picture on health worker migration. Information on the commitments on trade in services through the movement of natural persons (Mode 4), in particular commitments related to specific categories of health workers, could be an indicator of an enabling environment for better migration.

*Human trafficking (targets 5.2, 16.2)*

UNODC had been collecting information on trafficking for several years. Most data were from administrative sources of Member States, particularly from criminal justice systems, including the courts (the number of prosecutions, the number of convictions) and police registers. Data was available by country of destination, origin, age and sex. The disaggregation by age and sex was highly relevant, given the emphasis on the trafficking of women and children in the OWG document.

While the amount of data had increased, UNODC's trafficking data covered some 130 countries, measurement difficulties remained.  It was not possible to know, for example, whether increased cases reflected increased trafficking or improved detection. The best available indicator was the conviction rate (no. of convicted persons divided by no. of suspected persons). Other potential indicators included the number of trained government officials or information on the protection of and support to victims.

UNICEF suggested to define violence, especially against women and children, more broadly and to include trafficking as one dimension.

*Safe, regular, orderly and responsible migration through planned and well-managed policies (target 10.7)*

Participants noted that while critical and transformative for the post-2015 development agenda, this target was quite complex from conceptual perspective. The IOM representative indicated that, potentially, this target could cover a broad range of policy frameworks, including free movement of persons or migrant workers, bilateral labour agreements, the number of work permits issued, etc. Migrant fatalities, a new area of IOM research, could also be considered here. A representative of the Population Division described the Division's updated inquiry on Population Policies, which now included questions about policies on irregular migration, remittances, diaspora engagement, and circular migration.

Some participants felt that recording policies without accounting for implementation might have limited value. It was felt that incorporating actual migration flows under the target could be politically sensitive. Well- managed migration could also include issues such as durable solutions for refugees; whether the country had refugee status determination procedures in place; and regularisation of migrants in an irregular situation. Cross-referencing indicators from other targets could be relevant.

*Rights of migrant workers (target 8.8)*

The ILO presented work on a number of indicators related to the labour rights of migrant workers, as defined in the Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. The examined indicators were in four areas: ratification of international labour standards; employment, wages and working conditions; portability of social security rights; and recognition of skills and qualifications. Existing data sources in many countries could be used or adapted to produce indicators, although issues such as wages and occupational safety of migrant workers were not covered in existing data sources in most countries. It was noted that ratification of labour standards was insufficient without implementation through enactment and enforcement of labour laws.

Participants suggested to prioritize indicators for the SDG framework.

*Remittance costs (target 10.c)*

Indicators for remittance transfer costs were relatively well established due to earlier commitments by the G8 and G20 on reducing remittance costs and the existence of an observatory within the World Bank (remittanceprices.org). However, there was room for improvement in methodology and coverage.

Some participants called for an indicator on financial inclusion for migrants and their families in order to measure the **impact** of remittances on poverty reduction and development. In this context the 2011 Global Financial Inclusion (Global Findex) Database was mentioned as a possible data source.

*Costs of migration*

ILO was working with KNOMAD support to measure costs of migration, a major element of which was recruitment costs. Surveys had been piloted in a few countries, but the work was at an early stage and could not yet serve as a baseline for an indicator on migration costs. In particular, the surveys had found that bilateral agreements could significantly influence the costs of recruitment. Research and investment in survey methodologies would continue.

*Refugees and internally displaced persons*

A proposed target on durable solutions had been eliminated in the last rounds of the OWG negotiation. Advocacy work was continuing to ensure that displacement was sufficiently considered in the further elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. UNHCR in the meantime was prioritizing indicator disaggregation for refugees and IDPs in a number of areas, including access to education, ending discrimination against women and girls (in nationality laws), access to water, affordable reliable modern energy, and decent work. These indicators were closely linked to the UNHCR mandate provided by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and could be produced from UNHCR data. One limitation was that the much of the operational data was limited to refugee camps, with less coverage of urban refugees.

The number of refugees and displaced persons in protracted situations for whom a durable solution was found was considered a useful indicator for well-managed migration (10.7). Participants noted that indicators on displacement were also relevant to other goal areas such as inequality or sustainable cities.

*Human rights of migrants*

Work from a KNOMAD project on human rights indicators for migrants and their families was presented by the representative of UNICEF. The proposed framework contained a large number of indicators pertaining to migrants' enjoyment of rights to, for example, non-discrimination, education, health, and decent work. A distinction between structural indicators (whether legislation exists), process indicators (e.g. enrollment rates) and outcome indicators (e.g. x% of migrants finishing education). Disaggregating data in a way that protected migrants' confidentiality was a continuing challenge, although good practice examples were available.

*Data disaggregation (target 17.18)*

Participants questioned whether indicators on data disaggregation would apply only to less developed countries, as stated in OWG target 17.18. Disaggregation by migratory status was necessary for all countries and deficient in both developed and developing countries. While disaggregation by migratory status was referenced in the chapeau of the outcome document, participants were concerned that this placement would not mobilize political will for disaggregation.

*Data sources*

Given the paucity of data on migration data and on its impacts and challenges, in particular for development, a representative from DESA's Population Division drew attention to need to improve migration data, especially through household surveys. While adding migration questions/modules to existing household surveys (LFS, MICS, LSMS, DHS, etc.) was a cost-effective means, this approach had important methodological ramifications.

As part of a transformative agenda for the post-2015 era, it was suggested to develop a global migration survey programme.

**Next steps**

Meeting participants were asked to return complete templates for prioritized indicators within the next two weeks. The template addressed issues such as an operational definition, rationale for use of the indicator, method of computation, data sources and references, periodicity of measurement, gender and disaggregation issues, data limitations, and agencies involved in data collection, compilation or dissemination.

Participants were also asked to consider the costs of capacity building needed to support collection of the indicators. Links should be maintained with the SDSNs larger costing exercise.

DESA and IOM would draft a fact sheet on migration indicators for post-2015, prepare a proposal for a longer technical report, and liaise with UNSD and SDSN for follow-up action.


*IOM/Geneva*
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*3 November 2014*