

Chapter III

Data monitoring and follow-up

1. Introduction

The final chapter of the Addis Agenda considers how the international community should monitor implementation of the agreed actions. It emphasizes the importance of high quality disaggregated data for policy making and monitoring the progress of implementation of the Addis Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and prioritizes capacity building in this area.

The Addis Agenda marks the first time that data issues have received such comprehensive treatment in the Financing for Development (FfD) conferences and follow-up processes. This reflects a deeper appreciation of the importance of statistical systems and data administration and their role in strengthening domestic capacity in all areas, as well as promoting transparency and accountability. Yet data also needs to be turned into useful, actionable information.

This section follows up on the commitments on data completeness, data quality, disaggregation and availability. It also addresses the development of specific measures and tools; transparency and needs assessment; and capacity building efforts in this context.

2. Data availability, adequacy and standardisation

2.1. Availability (including disaggregation) and adequacy

The Addis Agenda commits to increase the availability and use of high-quality, timely and reliable disaggregated data. Specifically, the Addis Agenda:

- *Seeks to increase and use high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by sex, age, geography, income, race, ethnicity, migratory*

status, disability, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts (126, MoI 17.18)

- *Requests the Statistical Commission, working with relevant international statistical services and forums, to regularly assess and report on the adequacy of international statistics related to implementing the sustainable development agenda (126)*
- *Calls on relevant public and private actors to put forward proposals to achieve a significant increase in global data literacy, accessibility and use, in support of the 2030 Agenda (128)*

The commitment to increase and use disaggregated data is also contained in SDG means of implementation target 17.18, with indicators 17.18.1 (*proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*), 17.18.2 (*number of countries that have national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*) and 17.18.3 (*number of countries with a National Statistical Plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding*).

The first indicator will allow the monitoring of data availability, including the level of disaggregation. Furthermore, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) proposed to include an overarching principle of data disaggregation to accompany the list of SDG indicators in its report to the 47th session of the Statistical Commission: “Sustainable Development Goal indicators should be disaggregated where relevant by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.” The Statistical Commission is expected to regularly assess

data availability for the SDG indicators, and their adequacy, as part of its regular work, also from the perspective of assessing the need for building the necessary monitoring capacity in Member States. When considering data availability, it should be taken into account that the available data may be of a different nature, and that some data may be estimated.

Data accessibility to users is a major concern for statistical agencies. There is a need to create efficient online platforms in countries to allow easy data access to users. Measures of usage of those databases are usually available and could be utilized to assess accessibility and use. Furthermore, providers of official data at the national, regional and global levels often actively strive to increase data literacy and actual data use, and individual efforts to measure those are being undertaken.

Although statistical agencies have a long standing interest in making their products accessible, government data more generally are becoming available through the “open data” movement. The concept of open data, which is derived from the “open” licensing environment, originated from the belief that the enormous amount of information routinely collected by government entities should be available to all citizens. In the late 2000s, governments and official entities began to allow a greater number of users to access these resources. When data are made widely available and easy to use, the benefits can be significant: they can help streamline government services, stimulate economic opportunities, encourage innovation, improve public safety, strengthen accountability in public life and reduce poverty. On the other hand, this must be balanced with ensuring privacy and data protection. It will take time to fully understand the complexity and broad potential of open data. As it is still in its early stages, best practices and communities are just beginning to emerge.

The World Bank Group will work with others to report on the number of member states that are undergoing open data readiness assessments, as well as the number that are implementing open data programmes. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been partnering with the African Development Bank to support African countries to create and use open data platforms (ODP) for the dissemination of relevant data. While at pre-

sent the focus is mainly on macroeconomic and financial data, the coverage could be expanded at each country’s choosing to bring other data into the public domain, such as SDG indicators. Many international organizations, including some United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have already established ODPs to ensure the transparency of their own information, expenditure and programmatic activities. The Global AIDS Response Progress Reporting provides another example that can inform approaches to monitoring progress on other health and development challenges. Countries report on progress against commitments made to their AIDS responses, engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, including non-state actors, in the collection and validation of data.

The Task Force’s reporting on data transparency will also draw on the IMF’s enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS), which is part of its Data Standards Initiatives aimed at promoting data transparency globally. Data is to be published through a national summary data page. At the regional level, the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific was revamped and provides a benchmark for SDG monitoring in the region.

2.2. Standardization of data

Statistical products maximise their impact when they measure things the same way across time and across geographic locations. In this context, the Addis Agenda:

- *Commits to support efforts to make data standards interoperable (128)*

This involves using comparable questions in surveys and following common concepts, classifications and methods—that is, following a common standard. For key socio-economic indicators, standards have been developed and endorsed by a majority of member states. For example, all countries strive to measure gross domestic product (GDP) the same way conceptually, recognizing that data limitations in low-capacity countries limit the quality, frequency and timeliness of GDP publication.

Standards that describe data have also been developed. Better descriptions of data (referred to as “metadata”) facilitate communication between organizations and software systems to improve the quality of statistical documentation provided to users. The Statistical Commission and the seven sponsor organizations (Bank for International Settlements, the European Central Bank, Eurostat, the IMF, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Statistical Division and the World Bank Group) are working towards the implementation of the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX), which aims to develop and use more efficient processes for the exchange and sharing of statistical time series data and metadata among international organizations and their member countries. Progress and recent activities, also with respect to the implementation of SDMX for the SDG indicators, can be reported on.

Metadata for detailed cross-sectional data, such as the data collected by household surveys, are also guided by international standards. The Data Documentation Initiative metadata standard has been developed especially for this purpose and is used for documenting surveys in statistical agencies and academia. The World Bank Group will work with other partners to assess progress in countries adopting these standards.

Besides standards for data documentation and transfer, there are efforts to describe production processes for data such as the adoption of a Common Statistical Production Architecture and the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, which helps to produce statistics that are coherent across information domains.

Interoperability of statistical data requires compliance with international classification, standards and recommendations prescribed by the United Nations Statistical Commission. Specialized agencies such as UNIDO not only contribute to the development of those standards but also monitor the compliance of member states, and standardize data to ensure international comparability. UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics also contributes to supporting efforts to make data standards interoperable in terms of its work on the International Standard Classification of Education.

2.3. Data on specific issues, in particular resource mobilization

The Addis Agenda aims to improve data availability on specific issues. Specifically, the Addis Agenda:

- *Calls on relevant institutions to strengthen and standardize data on domestic and international resource mobilization and spending, as well as data on other means of implementation (126)*
- *Requests the Statistical Commission, working with relevant international statistical services and forums, to facilitate enhanced tracking of data on all cross-border financing and other economically relevant financial flows that brings together existing databases (126)*

The World Bank Group, the IMF, the OECD and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development have considerable experience in the compilation of data on domestic resource mobilization, foreign direct investment, remittances and other private flows, official development assistance and other international public finance. They will report on these flows in the Task Force report chapters on domestic public resources, domestic and international private finance, and international development cooperation. As discussed in chapter II.A, there are also a number of multi-stakeholder partnerships—such as the International Budget Partnership, Open Contracting Partnership and Government Spending Watch—which focus on data standards and data collection related to public expenditure.

There are also a range of SDG targets that will also require data on domestic and international resource mobilization and cross-border financial flows. It is expected that as part of the SDG monitoring and the work on the annual SDG Progress Report, efforts will be undertaken to compile standardized data for relevant indicators, which have been referenced throughout this report.

3. Development of specific measures and tools

The Addis Agenda aims to develop specific measures and tools. Specifically, the Addis Agenda:

- *Calls on the UN system, in consultation with the international financial institutions, to develop transparent measurements of progress on sustainable development that go beyond per capita income; these should recognize poverty in all of its forms and dimensions, and the social, economic and environmental dimensions of domestic output and structural gaps at all levels (129, MoI 17.19)*
- *Commits to seek to develop and implement tools to mainstream sustainable development, as well as to monitor sustainable development impacts for different economic activities, including for sustainable tourism (129, MoI 12.b)*

Many countries and several international and regional organizations have discussed and developed measures of progress and sustainable development. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) and UNDP's Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index are some of the relevant measures here. Some academics have also done work in this area, including the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, which was established in 2008 by then President of the French Republic, Nicholas Sarkozy. Work has also been carried out by the Statistical Commission to report on and survey such measures, on which the Task Force can report.¹ SDG indicator 1.2.2 (*proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions*) should also be useful since it incorporates non-economic dimensions of poverty. The full set of SDG indicators can also be understood to provide a measure of progress on sustainable development.

Regarding tools to mainstream sustainable development, the Task Force can draw on SDG indicator 12.1.1 (*number of countries with Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) national action plans or SCP mainstreamed as a priority or target into national policies*), and there are several other targets and related indicators that refer to the existence of laws, policy frameworks, plans or measures to imple-

ment (or mainstream) certain aspects of sustainable development such as, for example, targets 1.b, 6.5, 6.b and 8.b. More broadly, the chapters of this report speak to mainstreaming sustainable development across different areas. The Task Force's monitoring of sustainable tourism can draw on data collected for indicators 8.9.1 (*tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate*), and 8.9.2 (*number of jobs in tourism industries as a proportion of total jobs and growth rate of jobs, by sex*).

4. Transparency and needs assessment

On data and transparency, the Addis Agenda:

- *Recognizes that greater transparency is essential and can be provided by publishing timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on development activities in a common, open, electronic format; takes note of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (127)*
- *Stresses the importance of preparing country needs assessments for the different priority areas to allow for greater transparency and efficiency by linking needs and support, in particular in developing countries (127)*

Transparency of data includes that information must be publicly available, on time, and in an accessible language and format, taking into account, where relevant, considerations such as literacy levels, age, disability, language and cultural background. Transparency need not relate only to the publication of data, but can apply throughout the data collection process.

The IATI Standard is based on publication of data at the level of individual activities—projects and programmes—and it can help in monitoring of FfD commitments and SDG targets, especially at the national level (see chapter II.C). The Task Force can report on progress in implementing the IATI standard.

International and regional organizations are expected to conduct national needs assessments for the priority areas. In the area of statistics, the United

¹ For details please see respective background documents to the 45th and 46th session of the Statistical Commission available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/>.

Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics state that official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honour citizens' entitlement to public information.

5. Efforts to strengthen statistical capacities

To strengthen statistical capacities, the Addis Agenda:

- *Commits to enhance capacity building support to developing countries, including LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS [to increase and use high-quality, timely and reliable disaggregated data] (126, MoI 17.18, MoI 17.19)*
- *Commits to provide international cooperation, including through financial and technical support, to further strengthen the capacity of national statistical authorities and bureaux (126)*

The Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) presents

data on technical and financial support to statistical development and the implementation of national statistical plans worldwide. Contributors to the PRESS can also present additional data in the Task Force report, for example the IMF can report on its Statistics Department's enhanced provision of such technical assistance and training to developing countries. The Task Force will also be able to draw on the indicators for SDG targets 17.18 and 17.19, including in particular 17.18.3 (*number of countries with a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding*) and 17.19.1 (*dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries*). International organizations and others are conducting or are expected to conduct country needs assessments for statistical capacity building. Some regions have already engaged in national needs assessments and those efforts can be reported on. For additional details on the monitoring of commitments to capacity building more broadly see also chapter II.G on science, technology, innovation and capacity building.

