

# Efforts Towards the Harmonization of Development Indicators

United Nations Statistics Division  
Department of Economic and Social  
Affairs  
UNSD/DESA

# ECOSOC Resolution 2000/27

Requested the Statistical Commission to:

- Provide leadership in the field of conference indicators;
- Conduct an in-depth analysis of conference indicators;
- Make recommendations regarding a limited list of conference indicators;
- Develop and recommend a mechanism of statistical review for future proposed indicators.

# Friends of the Chair Group (FOC)

- The Statistical Commission set up a Friends of the Chair Group of country experts to carry out a technical assessment on more than 280 statistical indicators derived from United Nations summits and major conferences held during the 1990s.
- The assessment was based on policy relevance and technical criteria.

# Policy relevance:

- The indicator must be relevant to the policy requirement
- The indicator should measure the real policy objective or should provide a proxy measure
- The indicator should have global policy relevance
- The indicator should be straightforward to interpret

# Technical criteria:

- The indicator should show change over time
- The indicator should have sufficient coverage of the target population
- The indicator should have simplified alternatives for countries without well developed statistical infrastructure
- The indicator should be robust to institutional and cultural differences between countries and over time
- The indicator should be available at sufficient frequency and timeliness
- The indicator should conform international standards if they exist.

# Domains, sub-domains

- The indicators were allocated to seven domains
  - Economic/Poverty
  - Labour/Employment
  - Demographic
  - Health/Nutrition
  - Education
  - Other Social
  - Environment/Energy
  - Human Rights/Good Governance
- Sub-domains were set up within the domains

# Tiers: a layered approach instead of a new list

Three tiers were set up indicating priority levels. Priority level was determined by policy needs and technical soundness/availability of the indicator. On this basis 123 indicators out of the 280 were selected for inclusion in the three tiers.

# The tiers:

- Tier 1: a small number of indicators essential for broad monitoring; primary support for monitoring policies of the highest national/global importance. All countries are encouraged to compile these indicators (38).
- Tier 2: Indicators in the sub domains that add to the information in Tier 1 and help to convey a fuller picture. These indicators are vital for national monitoring and international comparison (42).
- Tier 3: Indicators that support a more comprehensive understanding of the situation in any domain (depending on national circumstances) (43)

Cross-cutting indicators and indicators that support several policy goals were given special attention.



# Indicators of sustainable energy development (ISED) that match indicators in the three tiers

## Tier 1:

- Emission of Greenhouse Gases (ISED: emission of GHGs from the production and use of energy)
- Share of forest area in total land area (ISED: deforestation attributable to energy use)
- Energy use per unit of GDP (ISED: same)
- Proportion of households with electricity (ISED: same)

# Indicators of sustainable energy development (ISED) that match indicators in the three tiers

## Tier 2:

- Ambient concentration of air pollutants in urban areas (ISED: same)
- Share of renewables in energy use (ISED: same)
- Intensity of energy use by industries and sectors (ISED: same)

## Tier 3:

- Energy use per capita (ISED: same)

# Millennium Development Goals Indicators

- 8 goals
- 18 targets
- 48 indicators

Three energy related indicators in Goal 7 (Ensure environmental sustainability):

- Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Energy use in TOE per unit of GDP (PPP)
- Households relying on solid fuels

# **Inter-agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators**

The Inter-agency and Expert Group on the Millennium Development Goal Indicators is responsible for data development and analysis for the assessment of trends in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The group includes the United Nations Secretariat, a number of UN agencies, IMF, OECD and the World Bank, national experts from statistical offices, and representatives from other organizations concerned with the development of data for the MDGs at national and international levels—such as Paris 21 and IDB.

The annual report prepared by the group is used to inform the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The group is also concerned with the development and application of standard statistical concepts and methods for national and international uses in compiling data for the MDG indicators and includes thematic sub-groups that work on specific areas identified among those needing more urgent attention.

This group meets at least once a year to review methods, standards and available data for the agreed indicators and reviews and analyses trends for each of the quantifiable goals and targets. It also reviews and discusses international and national initiatives for the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation with countries to improve their ongoing statistical programmes to provide basic data for the Millennium Development Goal indicators.

# 2005 MDG report

- Comprehensive review of the first 5 years of the MDG process
- Recommendations for the improvement of the MDG indicators
- Further development of indicators relevant to ISED is considered in the thematic task forces and subgroups, mainly in the area of Poverty and Environmental sustainability.

# Useful websites:

- <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>
- <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>
- [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi\\_goals.asp](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_goals.asp)
- <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission.htm>
- <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/indicatorfoc/>