

Note taking:

The 47th Session of the Statistical Commission 8-11 March 2016 in New York



Resources:

[TAP Network raw notes from select sessions of the 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission](#)

[TAP Network Position Paper on Global SDGs Indicators: building a Framework that is Fit for Purpose](#)

[Recommended Text Amendments to Global Indicators Draft Resolution](#)

[Documents and statements on PaperSmart](#)

[Access official documentation on UNSD website](#)

Key highlights from 47th Session of the Statistical Commission:

- “Decisions” from the Statistical Commission have been adopted (draft from morning of 11 March [here](#))
- Member States agreed not to adopt a “resolution” on the global indicators and IAEG-SDGs report through the Statistical Commission, and instead negotiate on this via ECOSOC and then the General Assembly.
 - The difference between these two is essentially a separation between technical outputs from the Statistical Commission, and political outputs from Member States.
- Overall, in the opinion of the TAP Secretariat, the “[decisions](#)” from the Statistical Commission were not great, but they were also not bad at all. Additionally, they are viewed as mainly procedural in nature, but there are still positive points to build upon going forward.
 - There were no references to stakeholder engagement in these decisions (nor in the draft resolution that was briefly tabled this week), but with the adoption of the IAEG-SDGs Terms of Reference from its report, stakeholder engagement in the process is outlined explicitly there (see more below).
 - The reference and acknowledgement of other sources of data and methodologies outside of the official statistical systems was a positive development for us (and something we called for in our TAP position paper), particularly including the call for

these data and methodologies to be reviewed by NSOs in a transparent manner if they are to be included in the global indicators compilation.

- [The report of the Praia Group on governance statistics](#) was adopted and the group's work has been praised by many. This will be a key entry point for us going forward in regards to Goal 16 indicators, data and methodologies.
- The separation of the "declaration" from the "decisions" is also a somewhat positive development, as this helps ensure the integrity of the "technical" outcome (decisions) from the Statistical Commission and the "political" outcome (resolution) from Member States, and avoids the risk of mixing the two.

A few takeaways from the [decisions](#) of the Statistical Commission on the Global Indicators and IAEG-SDGs:

- The proposed global indicators were agreed upon via these decisions from the Statistical Commission, as was the new Terms of Reference for the IAEG-SDGs outlined in its report to the Commission, as well as its programme of work. (paragraph c)
- These global indicators are intended for global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, particularly regarding data collection and tracking for the yearly Secretary-General's SDG progress report. (paragraph g)
- As a follow-up to the above point, it is highlighted that national ownership will guide follow-up and review of progress. (paragraph h)
- The decisions also highlighted that while national official statistics will be the main basis for global indicators and data collection, when other sources and methodologies are used from non-official statistics providers, it called for a transparent review of these sources and methodologies through the IAEG-SDGs (paragraph k)
- The decisions also established a working group as a sub-committee of the IAEG-SDGs to work on data disaggregation (paragraph m)

Other reflections:

We saw several political issues injected into the discussions around the IAEG-SDGs report and global indicators. For starters, a controversial injection of discussions around "common but differentiated responsibilities" in regards to varying capacities of NSOs was one of the main reasons why Member States decided to negotiate on the declaration within ECOSOC and not within the Statistical Commission, as this tricky political issue has been very difficult to resolve in the past. We also heard various proposals and discussions in the corridors around the capacities of NSOs to measure and collect data against all of these global indicators currently outlined. This builds on the ever-present discussions around the assertions that planning, implementation and monitoring should be "state-led."

Advocacy this week has been very difficult, as the dynamic between the political side through the UN Missions and the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) has been difficult to navigate. Member States and UN Missions have continuously expressed their desire to keep this process technical and not inject political considerations into this process, however, throughout the discussions on the indicators and

IAEG-SDGs report this week, it was evident that some Missions were significantly impacting the positions of NSOs. This was particularly worrying, because in many ways, this is negotiating in “bad faith,” with many Missions not getting involved with the Statistical Commissions discussions at this stage because they wanted to keep it technical, and others being heavily involved. However, eventually many of the Missions came around to recognize this later on in the week. But instead of engaging in negotiations in the context of the Statistical Commission, the approach by many was to forward these discussions around the declaration to ECOSOC. With the separation now of the “decisions” from the Statistical Commission separate from the “declaration” side of things, it will make things easier for us going forward as we now know precisely who to target for our advocacy – the political side/Missions.

We also had the opportunity to meet with the co-chairs of the IAEG-SDGs on Friday to discuss our proposals outlined in the TAP position paper, and the way forward for the work of the expert group. They remain very committed to improving the stakeholder engagement mechanism for the IAEG-SDGs, and will consider our proposals when they discuss the programme of work in the coming weeks ahead. Additionally, when we raised our concerns about the lack of language on stakeholder engagement in the decisions taken by the Statistical Commission, they re-assured us that since the IAEG-SDGs has already embedded this as a key priority for their work, there is no risk of us losing this space. In a sense, since the Statistical Commission has adopted the Terms of Reference outlined in its report, it’s an endorsement of stakeholder engagement, as this is explicitly outlined in its ToR.

The other discussion that we were also following closely was around the Praia Group on governance statistics. There was high praise from the Statistical Commission on the Praia Group’s work, and the decisions on the report of the Praia Group were passed very easily. We had the opportunity to meet with the President of the Cabo Verde NSO who leads the Praia Group’s work, and he was very positive about the ambition and road map that the group outlined in its report to the Statistical Commission. As the Praia Group is now mandated to continue to work on methodologies, metadata and development of relevant indicators for Goal 16 – amongst many other things – this will be a key entry point for us into this whole process, and one that we cannot take for granted as the group has very open, transparent and participatory means of engagement with stakeholders.

Tuesday, 8 March:

1. Election of officers [item 1]

Chair of UN Statistical Commission: Brazil

Vice Chairs:

- Kenya
- Republic of Korea
- United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Latvia

3. Items for discussion and decision [item 3]

(a) Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1 and E/CN.3/2016/3)

Report of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

Philippines, Lisa Bersales - co-chair of IAEG-SDGs:

- Noted that the group has completed its works on global indicators, as mandated by 2030 Agenda.
- Stated the IAEG-SDGs conducted its work in an open, inclusive and transparent manner in collaboration with stakeholders.
- The group has also agreed on overarching principles of disaggregated data
- Recognizes implementation represents a challenge for NSOs at the national level, and strengthening statistical capacity will be crucial
- IAEG-SDGs working with High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post-2015 monitoring (HLG) for capacity building at the national level
- Recognizes that some of the indicators will need to be completed, as data and methodologies improve
- Global indicators to be complemented by regional and national indicators developed by Member States
- These global indicators are intended for global reviews and not necessarily applicable to all national contexts

USA:

- Does acknowledge IAEG-SDGs was a transparent and inclusive process with the limited timeframe.

- Additional indicators might be needed for some targets, such as 16.1
- Flexibility needed in the framework and IAEG-SDGs as we move forward
- National ownership is critical going forward
- Some indicators will need further work to develop methodologies and data, and testing of data and indicators will be necessary
- Endorse this initial set of indicators and recommend that this set is the basis of action by NSOs and UN System
- Mobilizing national efforts are critical for establishing baseline data and to identify areas of further methodological work going forward
- IAEG must continue to operate in its technical, inclusive and transparent manner
- IAEG must ensure that indicators cover full scope of each target going forward

China:

- Report is good guidance for countries to develop their own SDGs indicators
- Recommend principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) be present in the final report of 47th Session of UNSC:
 - 2030 Agenda reiterates Rio principles, including CBDR - so therefore it is necessary to integrate this into indicators
 - Principles reflect concerns from International Statistical Institutions about different levels of capacity
- IAEG report strikes balance between monitoring requirements with operational restraints
- Some aspects of the indicator framework need to be further improved
- Many countries, mostly developing countries, face challenges in monitoring of the indicators
- General lack of balance in indicators for different goals and targets - too many indicators for Goal 16, but not enough for Goal 17 for example
- Definitions and methodological work is needed on many indicators
- Some indicators are difficult to quantify and measure
 - Suggest that the framework needs further discussion, in line with follow up process of IAEG
- In Follow & Review section of report of 47th Session of UNSC include language noting different levels of statistical capacities
- Monitoring should build on official statistics as much as possible, to ensure authoritativeness of monitoring, and avoid using data from NGOs or other sources that might undermine credibility and introduce controversy in monitoring

Cuba:

- Note it is important to pay attention to the role of NSOs in the lead to provide data / follow-up for the 2030 Agenda
- Regional organizations, CSOs and the private sector should be involved in breaking down data
- Agreement with proposed programme of work of IAEG-SDGs

Germany:

- Adopt the list as a start for IAEG-SDGs indicators work
- Further work needed as we move forward
- Tier system for the indicators a reasonable approach in the way forward for the IAEG-SDGs
- Expert groups, such as the Praia Group, can make particular contributions to various issue areas that their work covers, and that IAEG-SDGs should work with these groups closely going forward
- Political commitment to leave no one behind a key principles of global importance and should be taken in account in our work.

Russia:

- For some of the indicators that were in that “grey” category during IAEG-SDGs discussions, further work will need to be undertaken between now and next Statistical Commission session

Thailand on behalf of G77 and China:

- Reaffirm key principle of CBDR
- Follow-up & Review process should be country led and respect their priorities
- Disaggregated data will be needed to ensure that we leave no one behind
- Key points for data and indicators:
 - Reiterate development of indicators is a technical process, but it has political implications
 - Importance to preserve political balance of the SDGs and targets and the indicators should not reinterpret the targets
- Work of IAEG-SDGs must be accompanied by capacity building efforts
- Work of IAEG-SDGs is a work in progress and should not close its work
- Further methodological work will be required to improve the indicator framework
- MOI targets under first 16 goals focus on the work of national governments, but not other international institutional partners
- Outcome of IAEG-SDGs is provisional, and language should be captured in the 47th Session UNSC report.
- National ownership is key and should be a guiding principle for the indicator framework
- Reiterate the indicator framework is voluntary and country led, respecting country space
- Outcome from national level will be the foundation for review, based on official statistics
- G77 will support the work of the Statistical Commission

Nauru on behalf of PSIDs:

- Associate with statement of G77 and China; Maldives on behalf of AOSIS
- Share view of adoption of report does not conclude our work
- Indicators require additional work that should be open and inclusive
- Report should be adopted without modification
- National ownership is key to the success of the global indicator framework
- Must scale up investment in National Statistical Offices
- Challenges of data collection in PSIDs

- Called for standardized reporting templates and data from existing mechanisms should be used to reduce burden of data collection from NSOs

Bangladesh on behalf of LDCs:

- Align with statement of G77 and China
- Offered full support to UNSC and IAEG-SDGs moving forward
- Stressed need to be innovative and flexible in implementing the 2030 Agenda
- Stressed there is room for improvement in the indicator framework
- Noted indicator 17.8 does not capture the target
- Noted LDCs capacity constraints and need to strengthen NSOs
- Stressed the principle of leaving no one behind

Qatar on behalf of the Gulf Council:

- Support the work of the IAEG-SDGs but acknowledge need for flexibility as we move forward

Netherlands on behalf of EU:

- Welcome report of IAEG-SDGs
- EU stressed importance to keeping this work at the technical level
- To ensure comparability of data, it's crucial to clarify the role of NSOs in the context of international institutions
- Concern for some targets quality requirements might not be meet. Call for a roadmap to be setup to address this issue
- Called for coordination mechanism for NSOs
- Use of existing framework should be used in measuring the SDGs

Zambia on behalf of LLDCs:

- Commend the work of the IAEG-SDGs
- LLDCs note indicator framework is important to leave no one behind
- Request reporting on all goals and indicators should be disaggregated by vulnerable countries where permitted, to track progress of LLDCs

Tanzania on behalf of Africa Group:

- Welcome report of IAEG-SDGs
- Support recommendations with comments:
 - Need adequate time for consultations at national and regional level
 - Need discussions between interaction between IAEG-SDGs and HLG
 - Need discussions on Annual Reporting of SDGs considering what are the minimum reporting requirements.
 - Way forward called for strengthened NSOs
 - Called for new financial framework for resource mobilization

Maldives on behalf of AOSIS:

- Align with statement from G77 and China
- Note report is a living document that will require more work on the development of indicators
- Called for the adoption of the report to begin monitoring the SDGs
- Noted the need to strengthen national capacity for data collection
- Noted data from existing mechanisms should be used to avoid duplication

Italy:

- Welcome and support report of IAEG-SDGs as a good basis to start our work.
- Important to keep work in technical domain with strong coordination at international level coordinated by IAEG-SDGs.
- Collaboration between NSOs at national and regional important to avoid duplication and ensure quality reporting.
- Investment in statistical capacity building important.
- Need clear coordination role for NSOs in monitoring SDGs for quality assurances and governance

Sweden:

- Support and endorses report.
- Noted room for improvement for the indicator framework.
- Emphasized the technical nature for developing the indicator framework.
- Need to consider data from independent organizations such as CSOs
- Would not support inclusion of CBDR into outcome, as it injects political considerations into a technical process.

Barbados:

- Noted dissatisfaction on the selection of members for the expert group within the Caribbean region
- Want IAEG-SDGs to revisit input provided on a dual set of indicators from the Caribbean community.

UK:

- Endorse report as it stands
- Indicator 3.8.2 will likely need improvement
- Proposal forming small expert group on data disaggregation to support the expert group to ensure we don't leave no one behind
- Called for compromise language that notes national ownership is important in this process for the UNSC report.

Japan:

- Support report as-is
- Noted new indicators are presented in final report, with no open consultations with NSOs or stakeholders in final stage of discussions.

- 2.b.1 and 3.8.1 do not support indicator
- Do not support CBDR language in final report of UNSC
- Request report from the IAEG-SDGs on their activities for the next session of UNSC.

Republic of Korea:

- Participation of NSOs should play an important role
- Raised concern about 2.b indicator

New Zealand:

- Endorse ToR, report and work of the IAEG-SDGs
- New Zealand will report on the SDGs based on their national priorities
- Support having a group of experts on disaggregated data proposed by the UK

Mexico:

- Support report of IAEG-SDGs
- Noted modifications will be needed for the global indicator framework going forward, and flexibility is key.
- Support IAEG Terms of Reference and programme of work

India:

- Noted further work will be required for the global indicators
- Concerns some indicators go beyond the scope of the target
- Concerns some indicators do not measure the target fully
- Concerns indicators focus on national action primarily
- Concerns about inclusion and perception data to measure many targets, including 10.3.1
- Perception data might be too subjective to ensure comparability between countries, taking into account various cultural, capacity and political differences
- Propose decisions on indicator framework is provisional in nature and several indicators will still need work.

Kyrgyzstan:

- Noted they do not consider the global indicator list as final, but needs more work

Indonesia:

- Global indicators should relate to targets to the 2030 Agenda in straight forward manner encompassing all 17 goals
- Development of global indicators should take into account national ownership
- Noted national ownership requires an open, inclusive process in these dialogues
- Recognize need to strengthen NSOs with capacity building
- Will continue to support the work of the IAEG-SDGs

Switzerland:

- Noted concern about communicating indicators set going forward
- Noted some indicators do not support the full scope of certain targets
- Noted the need to improve certain indicators, and flexibility needed in work ahead

Canada:

- Support report, ToR and programme of work IAEG
- Oppose inclusion of CBDR in final report
- Noted the need to form partnerships with NSOs and other experts as we move forward

Belarus:

- Support report and extending mandate of IAEG-SDGs
- Noted indicators that don't have any established methodologies should not be included

State of Palestine:

- Support Programme of Work, Action Plan for Indicators and ToR
- Called for disaggregated data and support for capacity building of NSOs
- Enhance partnerships between UN agencies, Stats Bureaus

Iran:

- Align with statement by G77 and China
- Indicators should respect international consensus in the 2030 agenda
- Noted work is still after report is adopted
- National ownership should be guiding principles for the overall framework which is voluntary and country that respect policy space
- Noted Iran ready to cooperate with all countries, esp at the regional level for regional indicators

Norway:

- Underscored need for international comparability
- Suggest IAEG identify need for new statistical definitions to ensure international comparability

France:

- Fully approve report by IAEG
- Noted need to improve indicator framework as needed going forward

Suriname:

- Not satisfied with selection process of NSOs from CARICOM for the IAEG-SDGs
- Asked for the adoption of a dual set of indicators, taking into account the indicators proposed by CARICOM
- Noted some indicators are not "indicators" as not all are quantitative
- Noted many refinements are necessary for the indicator framework

Mongolia:

- Necessary to disaggregate certain indicators further
- Propose replacing and changing certain indicators throughout the report
- Proposed changing indicator for 16.2 on people feeling safe walking alone at night

FAO:

- Noted UN system ready to play active in the collection and monitoring of data to avoid duplication

UN Women:

- Called disaggregated data across the entire indicator set
- Called for migration data to be used for development
- Global Migration Group committed to working with stakeholders

OHCHR:

- 2030 Agenda should be grounded with human rights approach
- Need to strengthen partnerships with CSOs

Chair of UNSC:

- Two documents will be submitted to ECOSOC - short draft resolution and detailed summary and points for decision to be considered on Friday
- Draft resolution language will be provided by end of day

UNSD:

- Emphasized global indicator is for global follow-up and review
- Emphasized national ownership is key
- Agreed proposed PoW for IAEG-SDGs
- Stressed implementation represents a challenge in many countries and capacity building will be needed especially for African Countries, LDCs, LLDCs, SIDs
- Agreed indicators data should comparable and standardized, if using outside data it must agreed upon by NSOs in a transparent manner.
- Agreed improving data disaggregation is important to ensure no one should be left behind

Report of the High Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post 2015 monitoring

Hungary:

- The HLG have been discussing the planning and organization of a world data forum to be held in late 2016

United States:

- Coordination between IAEG and HLG are important to reporting
- Amend ToR to state HLG is focal point to address data gaps in reference to SDGs

Cuba:

- Agree we should hold world data forum approved by UNSC

Japan:

- ToR doesn't mention terms of membership - should change every two years
- Important to use existing frameworks
- Japan willing to support national capacity building

Sweden:

- Concerns about broad mandate of HLG
- Recommend ToR focus on national ownership, capacity building and fostering dialogue between stakeholders

Switzerland:

- Support ToR and organization of world data forum
- Support changes suggested by US

FAO joint statement

- Support HLG in promoting national ownership
- Ready to support global action plan to develop data partnerships
- Reiterate commitment to work with NSOs

UNSD: (Summary)

- Agreed in principle of revised ToR of HLG taking into account comments
- Welcome concept note for World Data Forum
- Approve proposed PoW HLG

Thursday, 10 March:

(I) Governance statistics (E/CN.3/2016/16)

Cabo Verde:

- Roadmap in Report of the Praia Group on governance statistics
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-16-Praia-group-on-governance-statistics-E.pdf>
- 2016 Praia Group will have a particular focus on statistical governance.
- Intend to conduct transparent, inclusive and participatory meetings with all relevant experts
- 4-6 July Next meeting at OECD headquarters in Paris

UK:

- Welcome report of Praia Group
- Pressing need to create international common standards for governance statistics and Goal 16
- 1st priority should rightfully be methodological and technical work
- Welcome group plans to work on national and international indicators

Sweden:

- Welcome report of the Praia Group
- Statistics on governance are of vital importance
- Welcome roadmap on handbook for governance statistics, outlined by roadmap of Praia Group
- Noted handbook does not necessarily have to be focus on NSOs and could take into account other experts
- Noted the sensitive nature of indicators in Goal 16 and should be taken into account in their work
- Some issues might be better collected by independent data collectors for many goal 16 issues

US:

- Underscore importance of participation of all nations in the Praia Group, and commend the openness of group's work
- Support recommendations of report and willing to take on a greater role as necessary

Japan:

- Transparency and fairness should be taken into account when moving forward in their work

Egypt:

- Commend this report and encourage all experts and actors working around these themes to engage in the Praia Group work
- NSOs generally don't lack the will to engage on these issues, they lack expertise and capacities around these issues
- Would like to accelerate the roadmap of the group to ensure that data is robust and collectable as soon as possible

Mexico:

- Welcome work and report, agree with recommendations of report
- Recommendations:
 - mention crime and justice in report - urge Praia Group to adopt previous agreement in 2013 for this issue
 - Add note that the Praia Group must follow-up the roadmap
 - Coordinate with UNODC

Timor-Leste:

- Welcome report of Praia Group
- Agree with recommendations in reports

- Support the creation of the handbook

Côte d'Ivoire:

- Want roadmap for 2018 instead of 2020
- Ask for curriculum for training statistical centers on governance and security

India:

- Welcome report of the group
- Welcome approach to developing handbook
- Maintain spirit of transparency when developing handbook
- Also welcome that the Praia Group references the provisional nature of the current global indicators set

Philippines:

- Welcome and support report

EU:

- Welcome report
- Strongly committed to support and providing technical assistance to regions, including in Africa

Ghana;

- Support roadmap and report of Praia Group

Mongolia:

- Welcome report and will cooperate with Praia Group

Cambodia:

- Welcome and support report
- Good governance key to development to social and political rights without discrimination
- Called on Praia to continue work on handbook
- Suggest national level consultations in addition to regional level

Norway:

- Welcome report and recommend some outside experts contribute to the work of the Praia Group

Portugal:

- Welcome report and support roadmap
- Stressed importance of preparation of handbook

UNODC:

- Express support and commitment to Praia Group

TAP
NETWORK

Transparency, Accountability &
Participation for 2030 Agenda

- There is existing process on crime and justice indicators in UN already, and must avoid duplication
- Express readiness to support Praia Group on developing corruption indicators

OHCHR:

- Welcome report
- Roadmap provide cooperation between NSOs, data users and CSOs

Chief UNSD: (Summary/points for adoption)

- Welcome report, roadmap and stressed importance of identifying best practices
- Suggest Praia maintain commitment to open, inclusive and participatory
- Stressed importance of capacity building and training

