



Measuring Sustainable Development, Review and Reporting on Post-2015 Agenda

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The last two decades have seen a proliferation of methods and indicators to measure sustainable development. Therefore, a few years ago the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), jointly with Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), embarked on conceptual work to develop Recommendations on Measuring Sustainable Development including a measurement framework and a set of indicators that can be used for international comparison. These Recommendations were a step towards harmonising the various approaches and indicators used by countries and international organisations to measure sustainable development. The Recommendations were endorsed by more than 60 Chief statisticians, members of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and published in the beginning of 2014. The CES Recommendations were used as an important input to the work of the Open Working Group in designing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A dedicated UN expert group on measuring progress recommended the framework and its indicators to the global statistical community. Eight countries pilot tested the CES recommended set of indicators and further methodological work is on the way. Convergence of the approaches developed to measure societal progress is important in moving forward.

In 2015, the UN Member States are expected to adopt a new development framework. The post-2015 development agenda will be universal and transformative and will be centred around a set of Sustainable Development Goals which are currently being negotiated by governments – 17 new goals and over 160 targets are proposed.

The breadth and depth of the proposed SDGs is unprecedented. Effective measurement and reporting at the global, regional and national levels will be crucial. The future goals will require close review and monitoring through a suitable set of targets and indicators to assess both short-term and long-term impacts on sustainable development. High quality data are needed to inform on the status of progress under the new agenda, but also to improve decision-making, hold policy-makers accountable and help identify effective policies. In this regard there is call for a “data revolution”. Data should be publicly available, timely, coherent and relevant and should be created through the collaboration of statisticians, international organisations, civil society, academia and the private sector.

Keywords: Sustainable development; SDGs; measuring; reporting