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2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Work for the review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

        The present report, which was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2019/210 and past practices, provides a description of the work carried out by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, in cooperation with other entities of the United Nations system, in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It contains a description of the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Special edition: progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals" (E/2019/68) on the basis of the data and analysis of the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators, as mandated by the General Assembly (see resolution 70/1, para. 83). Also described is the work undertaken to update the database on the global Goal indicators, including the launch of the official Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) data structure definition for the Goal indicators and the SDMX application programming interface. In addition, the launch is presented of the Data for Now initiative, jointly convened by the United Nations, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, the World Bank and the Solutions for Sustainable Development Network, and updates are provided on the progress made in the work on the federated information system of national and global data hubs for the Goals, the common internationalized resource identifiers for the Goals, targets, indicators and related statistical series, the work of the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training, and the work by the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys on data disaggregation for the Goals.

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The Commission is invited to take note of the work carried out and to comment on the progress of the work and the proposed work programme. The action to be taken by the Commission is set out in paragraph 43 of the present report.

I. Introduction

1.   In its decision 50/102, the Statistical Commission welcomed the work by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat carried out in collaboration and cooperation with the United Nations system to support the systematic follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national, regional and global levels. That work was mandated by the General Assembly in paragraphs 4 and 11 of its resolution 71/313. Specifically, the Commission expressed its appreciation for the preparation of *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018* and the updating of the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database. It stressed the importance of national data for the review of progress, welcomed the launch of the electronic handbook as a tool to assist countries in the compilation of indicators at the national level and also welcomed the extensive development cooperation and technical assistance activities undertaken by the Statistics Division and its partners to assist Member States in making Goal data available. Lastly, it endorsed the draft principles and guidelines for national reporting and dissemination platforms and welcomed the progress in the implementation of the federated information system of national and global data hubs and the efforts of the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training.

II. Sustainable Development Goals progress reports for 2019

2.   In 2019, the Statistics Division produced a series of reports and publications reviewing progress towards the Goals, including: (a) the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Special edition: progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals" (E/2019/68); (b) *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*;[1] (c) the *Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart 2019*;[2] and (d) *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2019*.[3]

3.   The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Special edition: progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals" was prepared in cooperation with the United Nations System Task Team on the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The Task Team was created by the Executive Committee of the Secretary-General to support the substantive preparations for the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (Sustainable Development Goals Summit). The report not only contains the mandated progress report on the Goals, based on the global indicator framework, but also addresses the global response to the 2030 Agenda and to the gaps and challenges and efforts for accelerating its implementation. It highlights cross-cutting actions to advance progress on all the Goals, including the ones on which progress is falling short.

4.   *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019* is an illustrated version of the progress report and targets a wider audience interested in progress on the Goals by presenting data and analysis in a user-friendly way with maps and charts. It includes an overview section with infographics highlighting the most important achievements and the most significant gaps and challenges to date for all 17 Goals.

5.   The *Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart 2019* presents a snapshot of progress made towards selected targets under all Goals. It helps the reader to

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[1] Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/.
[2] Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/progress-chart.pdf.
[3] Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/gender-snapshot.pdf.

visualize global and regional progress towards the achievement of the Goals using traffic light colours to indicate the levels of progress, based on some of the indicators and information available as at September 2019. The progress chart was included in a summary edition of *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019* and circulated at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September 2019.

6.   *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2019* was prepared jointly by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Statistics Division. It brings together the latest available evidence on gender equality across all 17 Goals. It highlights areas across all the Goals in which women and girls remain disadvantaged, noting where further efforts are needed to ensure that no one is left behind. It also identifies gender-specific indicators of the global indicator framework used to measure the experiences of women and girls in the fulfilment of the Goals.

III. Database

7.   The reports are accompanied by a comprehensive statistical annex [4] and the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database. [5] The Database contains the data on the global indicators used in the above-mentioned reports and includes both country-level data and regional and global aggregates. It includes data for 166 of the 232 indicators and more than 1.2 million data records. An accompanying metadata repository [6] provides the metadata for the indicators that have internationally established methodology and standards. Access to the country-level data and the metadata ensures full transparency with respect to the data and methodologies used for global reporting.

8.   The Database and metadata repository are maintained by the Statistics Division. The data and metadata are provided by international agencies and entities in accordance with their mandates; they are referred to as custodian agencies. For each value of the indicator, the custodian agency is also requested to indicate whether the national data were adjusted, estimated, modelled or the result of global monitoring. [7] For example, national data may be adjusted for international comparability or, where data are missing, estimated. During 2019, a more frequent Database update cycle was implemented in order to provide users with access to more timely data. In addition to an update in July, new data and data updates were provided in March, October and December.

9.   In June 2019, the Working Group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange for Sustainable Development Goal Indicators of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators published the first official version of the

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[4] Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2019/secretary-general-sdg-report-2019--Statistical-Annex.pdf.

[5] Available at http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/.

[6] Available at http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/.

[7] The nature of the data is determined as follows: (a) country data: produced and disseminated by the country (including data adjusted by the country to meet international standards); (b) adjusted country data: produced and provided by the country, but adjusted by the international agency for international comparability to comply with internationally agreed standards, definitions and classifications; (c) estimated: estimated on the basis of national data, such as surveys or administrative records, or other sources but on the same variable being estimated, produced by the international agency when country data for a year or years are not available, when multiple sources exist or when there are data quality issues; (d) modelled: modelled by the agency on the basis of other covariates when there is a complete lack of data on the variable being estimated; and (e) global monitoring data: produced on a regular basis by the designated agency for global monitoring, based on country data. There is no corresponding figure at the country level.

global data structure definition along with guidelines for its use.[8] The global data structure definition is expected to be adopted by countries and international agencies implementing the data exchange standard for the reporting and/or dissemination of Goal data and metadata. The Division upgraded the Database to align it with the global data structure definition and subsequently made the data available through an SDMX application programming interface,[9] in addition to the previously provided open interface specification.[10]

10. The reports, Database and metadata repository are hosted on the Goal indicators website,[11] which is maintained by the Division. The website also contains information on the work and activities of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the Goal monitoring and reporting toolkit for United Nations country teams.

IV. Work programme of the inter-agency working group on the global Sustainable Development Goals review

11. More than 50 international agencies and organizations contributed data and analysis to the progress reports and to the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database and metadata repository. In order to provide a working mechanism for the United Nations system to prepare the report, as mandated in the 2030 Agenda, the Division has been convening meetings and teleconferences with the agencies that provide data and analysis for the preparation of the annual progress reports and the regular updating of the database. Since 2017, face-to-face meetings have also been organized to allow for easier exchanges and more in-depth technical discussion.

12. The inter-agency working group:

(a) Reviews and discusses plans for the production of the annual Goals progress report of the Secretary-General and the complementary, user-friendly annual report;

(b) Agrees on the structure, scope and coverage of the yearly reports and related contributions by the relevant organizations;

(c) Contributes to the regular updating of the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database, including by providing updates and refinements to the metadata, as needed;

(d) Exchanges information and updates on capacity development activities relating to statistics and indicators for the 2030 Agenda;

(e) Reports annually to the Commission as part of the present report.

V. Development cooperation and technical assistance activities of the Division on Goal indicators

13. The Division, the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes have continued their close collaboration in the area of statistical capacity

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[8] Available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/sdmx-working-group/.

[9] Available at https://data.un.org/SdmxBrowser/start.

[10] Documentation in this regard is available at https://unstats.un.org/SDGAPI/swagger/.

[11] See http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/.

development. The joint $10 million United Nations Development Account programme on statistics and data has been granted a one-year extension by the Development Account Steering Committee, with additional funding of $1.5 million until the end of 2020, based on the excellent rate of implementation of the programme. With the participation of all the regional commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Statistics Division, the programme is being implemented to strengthen national statistical systems for the follow-up and review of the Goals, including by addressing specific data gaps. The programme is structured using four pillars: means of implementation, environment statistics and indicators, social and demographic statistics and indicators, and economic statistics and indicators with specific expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement. Programme activities have taken the form of country advisory missions, national training seminars, development of guidelines, e-learning courses and stocktaking events at the regional or interregional levels to promote the exchange among countries of challenges, good practices and lessons learned, covering 79 target countries, among them 18 of the least developed countries. A total of 378 specific activities had been conducted by December 2019, reaching a very high programme completion rate.

14.   For example, under the first pillar of the programme, support was provided to Benin for the transformation and modernization of the national statistical office and the national statistical system by, among other things, establishing a modern legal framework. In Seychelles, the programme contributed to harnessing the potential of administrative data by conducting a comprehensive assessment of existing data and related processes. In Samoa, the "Every policy is connected" tool for facilitating a dialogue between policymakers and data producers was used to develop a national sustainable development indicator set and a set of recommendations for policymakers to review the coverage of issues for action and target groups in the existing policies. Under the second pillar, over 575 participants of more than 60 countries were trained on the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the compilation of environmentally extended supply and use tables.

15.   Highlights of achievements under the third pillar include the development of e-guidelines on the use of electronic data collection technologies in population and housing censuses, and the production of common methodological guidelines for improving the measurement of poverty in Central America. Similarly, the entities involved in the programme worked together with the countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia to develop a model set of survey questions to establish a common approach to poverty measurement in line with international standards. A further accomplishment was the production of a technical guideline document to implement the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes and to produce data for Goal indicators. Furthermore, over 150 producers and users of gender statistics from around 40 countries convened during the seventh Global Forum on Gender Statistics to review, share and discuss new initiatives and tools related to the collection, production, analysis, dissemination, communication and use of gender statistics. Under the fourth pillar, a total of 640 participants from 119 countries took part in an e-learning course on international trade in services and 750 participants from 110 countries received training on international merchandise trade statistics remotely. In addition, 172 participants from 28 countries benefited from sessions on international merchandise trade statistics, which combined e-learning and face-to-face instructions.

16.   The Division has continued to implement the project funded by the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, agreed in December 2016, to make the Goal indicators available to the

broadest possible audience and to strengthen the capacity of countries in the compilation and use of the indicators. The project covers 20 countries in Africa and Asia, 9 of which participated in a previous project of the Division and the Department on the Millennium Development Goal indicators. The project will run until June 2021, with a potential no-cost extension until the end of 2021.

17. The main project objectives are effective monitoring of the Goals and improved evidence-based policymaking. Improved capacity of the project countries, increased availability of Goal indicators at the national and international levels and improved coordination of national statistical systems around Goal indicators are key elements to achieve those objectives. The creation or upgrading of national data and metadata platforms for Goal indicators, in collaboration with users of the data, is an essential component in those efforts. Such platforms were established in almost half of the project countries in collaboration with partners. Deliverables at the global level include a platform for Goal data and visualization, providing a global indicators database and comparisons between global and national data sets, and the establishment of automated data exchange based on the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) standard.

18. The Division has completed initial assessment missions in all 11 new project countries. Detailed capacity gap assessments have been carried out in all countries. In 2019, workshops on the development of national metadata for the Goal indicators were conducted with members of the national statistical system in 14 project countries. The workshops focused on filling a metadata template with country-specific indicator information, covering sources of data and data collection methods. Nationalized indicators require further elaboration on methodology and definitions. In 2019, the Division also conducted several activities on data modelling and data exchange, using the SDMX standard. As a result, national Goal indicators from seven countries were delivered to the Division's prototype data exchange website, on which comparisons can be made between national and global indicators. This work will continue until data and metadata exchange has been established in all project countries.

19. Another project activity in 2019 was to increase the focus on user engagement around Goal monitoring. The Division ran workshops on user engagement for members of the national statistical system in 14 countries. At the end of each workshop, a draft strategy for user engagement was in place, several of which have now been formally adopted. Awareness of the need to interact with users, and of the skills required to do so, also increased among participants. The Division will seek to respond to pilot countries' requests linked to improving data availability.

20. Overall, the level of activities under the project increased substantially in 2019, meeting critical project milestones. There was a strong emphasis on coordination and collaboration. At the country level, a key area of focus was to work not only with the national statistical office, but with the whole statistical system. The Division also actively sought contact and coordination with the United Nations country teams. At the international level, the Division ran international workshops for the countries to exchange experiences and learn from each other. The Division also established a project website and published two newsletters.[12]

21. Other important efforts of the Division to strengthen the capacity of countries include the production of the electronic handbook on Goal indicators, which is a resource and a reference of compilation guidance for countries;[13] and the principles

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[12] More information about the activities under the project is available at https://unstats.un.org/capacity-building/unsd-dfid.

[13] Available at https://unstats.un.org/wiki/display/SDGeHandbook/Home.

and guidelines for national reporting and dissemination platforms, updated in 2018 and endorsed by the Statistical Commission in 2019, which can be used by countries, international agencies and other actors to evaluate and make decisions on platforms being proposed for implementation.[14] Furthermore, the Division, together with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Children's Fund, co-chairs the task team on data for the strategic results group on integrated Sustainable Development Goal implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. The task team aims to facilitate the provision of coherent support by United Nations country teams to national statistical systems for the localization and monitoring of and reporting on the Goals, including the indicators and targets. As part of these efforts, a toolkit for United Nations country teams on Goal monitoring and reporting is available on the Goal indicators website of the Division.[15]

22.   A comprehensive overview of the Division's activities on technical capacity-building, including those relating to the implementation of the Goal indicators, was provided in last year's report of the Secretary-General on statistical capacity development (E/CN.3/2019/28). In addition, in its report, the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/CN.3/2020/4) provides information about the work on the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data and the third United Nations World Data Forum. In its report, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2020/2) provides information about its work to implement the global indicator framework, such as methodological work on the indicators, and efforts by its three working groups: the Working Group on Interlinkages; the Working Group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange for Sustainable Development Goal Indicators; and the Working Group on Geospatial Information.

VI.   Data for Now initiative

23.   The Data for Now initiative, launched by Deputy Secretary-General on the margins of the General Assembly in September 2019, is jointly led by the Statistics Division, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, the World Bank and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. It aims to increase the use of robust methods and tools that improve the timeliness, coverage and quality of data on the Goals. The initiative involves working closely with national statistical offices and all relevant government agencies to make innovative methods for data production and analysis easily accessible in order to support and monitor progress towards the Goals. National statistical offices identify the priority areas in which they most urgently need to address measurement issues, data availability and timeliness. The core team facilitates matches with partners that can offer innovative data solutions to address those priorities.

24.   The first technical workshop of the Data for Now initiative was hosted by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, in Kigali, on 13 and 14 November 2019. The workshop brought together representatives of the national statistical offices of Bangladesh, Colombia, Ghana, Mongolia, Nepal, Paraguay, Rwanda, Senegal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, along with representatives of international agencies, civil society organizations, academia and donors active in the areas of data innovation and capacity-building. The participants identified solutions

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[14] Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/50th-session/documents/BG-Item3a-Principles-guidelines-SDG-Monitoring-Reporting-Platforms-E.pdf.
[15] See https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/unct-toolkit/.

relating to data, technology and methods with high potential impact for improving the availability of timely and disaggregated data for the Goals, defined specific areas of learning and capacity-building to be pursued and established country-specific road maps to attain priority data outcomes in connection with education, human mobility, poverty and land use. It is expected that the various partnerships initiated during the workshop will be consolidated and expanded over the next year, and that countries will achieve concrete results to be showcased at the next United Nations World Data Forum, to be held in October 2020.

VII. Federated information system for the Sustainable Development Goals

25.   The federated information system for the Goals was launched in March 2017 as a research exercise to explore, utilize and adapt modern frameworks for the integration of geospatial and statistical information in order to strengthen the ability of the national and global statistical systems to manage and share data, knowledge, information and good practices for the dissemination, visualization and use of data and statistics for the Goals. In November 2017, the fifth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management endorsed the concept of a federated system of open Sustainable Development Goal data hubs, and since 2018 the initiative provides access to geospatially enabled statistical data on global Goal indicators, as well as national data shared by participating countries.

26.   In its decision 50/102, the Commission welcomed the progress in the implementation of the federated information system of national and global data hubs to facilitate integration of different data sources, promote data interoperability and foster collaboration among partners from different stakeholder groups and stressed the need to mobilize resources and provide necessary technical support to all countries wishing to join the federated system. Following this decision, the Statistics Division and technology partners are now working to scale up the federated system initiative to include new countries and build capacity at the national level.

27.   The federated information system for the Goals initiative is also being leveraged to support the Development Coordination Office in its efforts to enable new approaches to display country data and visualize country progress towards the Goals, including through an online country-profiles application for the visualization of geospatially enabled statistical data from the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database.[16]

VIII. Common internationalized resource identifiers for Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators

28.   To further support the integration of data and information to monitor and implement the 2030 Agenda, the Division, the secretariat of the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management have developed a system of common internationalized resource identifiers for Goals, targets, indicators and related statistical series. These common identifiers,[17] now hosted by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, will contribute to transforming the current Goal-related documents and data assets into a homogeneously classified information space, and provide the foundation to enhance the automatic retrieval, processing and

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[16] Available at https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/.

[17] Available at http://metadata.un.org/sdg/.

integration of information related to the Goals on the semantic web. In a formal statement of adoption in November 2019, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination urged all United Nations organizations and stakeholders to use these identifiers to map (tag) their Goal-related resources.

29. An initial pilot application was developed under the leadership of the Statistics Division and the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with the support of resources from the European Union grant entitled "SD2015: delivering on the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals". The project had the objective of showcasing the usefulness of adopting semantic web technologies and linked open data principles for extracting Goal-related metadata from documents and establishing the connections among various Goals. The application automatically discovers the semantic links between text documents, relevant Goal entities and statistical data. It is hosted under the infrastructure of the United Nations Global Platform for Official Statistics initiative.[18]

IX. Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training

30. The Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training has continued to foster training in official statistics. At its second meeting, held on 7 March 2019 on the margins of the fiftieth session of the Commission, the founding and advisory group members discussed the way forward and welcomed additional members. There are currently 23 members of the Network, comprising 17 regional and international training institutes and 6 countries whose national statistical offices have statistical training centres that provide training beyond their national borders. In addition to these members, the Network includes members of the stakeholder advisory group. During its first meeting, the current President of the International Statistical Institute was elected as Chair of the Network.

31. At its second meeting, the Network decided to change its focus to a new set of task teams to address the following topics in statistical training: (a) specific demands to meet data needs for the Goals; (b) an e-learning community of practice and an online gateway for training courses; and (c) statistical literacy in the context of the 2030 Agenda. These task teams have met regularly over the telephone throughout the year.

32. The task team on addressing specific demands to meet data needs for the Goals discussed how to follow up on the work conducted by the first round of task teams in 2018, which compiled an inventory of training courses provided by the Network members.[19] The task team agreed to use this inventory, along with other materials, to further assess whether the Network meets the needs of users.

33. The task team on an e-learning community of practice and an online gateway worked on the establishment of a landing page for courses in statistics. A new platform for training courses called "UN SDG: Learn" was launched in July 2019, and the statistics landing page is being linked to this platform. The landing page gives an overview of available e-learning and face-to-face courses in statistics and provides links to the pages of the different agencies that offer the courses. The agencies are responsible for uploading course information and only courses which the various providers decide to upload will be shown. The task team has discussed the layout of this statistics landing page as well as membership and quality concerns. While some members of the Network are full-scale partners of "UN SDG: Learn", others

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[18] Available at www.linkedsdg.org (please click "start").

[19] The inventory was presented to the fiftieth session of the Commission and can be found on the Network's homepage at https://unstats.un.org/gist/resources/courses-inventory/.

contribute courses under the umbrella of the Network. A document on quality requirements guides contributors on what may be uploaded in the different categories of learning courses. The Division, which will act as a custodian of the statistics landing page, will take the lead on quality assessment at a more general level.

34. The task team on statistical literacy discussed various approaches for improving literacy among user groups. A few members are in the process of developing e-learning courses on statistical literacy and are using the input and experience from other members in this development work. In September 2019, the Network organized a joint webinar on statistical literacy as part of the World Data Forum webinar series. The webinar was well attended and subsequently received significant interest and positive feedback. The task team is considering whether more webinars or similar outreach activities should be conducted in the future. Other approaches to support better statistical literacy are also being considered.

35. Information about the current membership, outputs and plans of the Network can be found on the Network's homepage.[20]

X. Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys

36. In 2015, the Statistical Commission, in its decision 46/105, endorsed the establishment of an Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys,[21] under the aegis of the Statistics Division, to foster the coordination and harmonization of household survey activities.

37. Since its establishment, the Working Group has achieved accomplishments in a number of areas. First, it carried out a mapping exercise showing the entire range of global Goal indicators for which data can be derived from household surveys. The latest assessment showed that a total of 80 indicators, distributed across 13 Goals, are being or could be sourced from household surveys.[22]

38. The Working Group has also made steady progress in advancing survey methodologies. In 2017, task forces were established covering the improvement of the measurement of education spending and food consumption, the development and testing of a survey module for indicators under Goal 16, the establishment of standards and best practices for survey data documentation and the promotion of consistent measurement of paid and unpaid working activities. Updates on the activities covered by various task forces are available online.[23]

39. Since 2018, additional task forces have been being established to cover more cross-cutting activities. These include spatial anonymization in public-use household survey data sets, questionnaire design and testing, and survey microdata dissemination. The work of these task forces is led by various members of the Working Group and supported by other members and experts in the specific fields.

40. To address the data needs for monitoring the Goals, the Working Group also established a work stream on data disaggregation. The work stream aims to advance and advocate innovative methodologies, including, for example, special sampling strategies, small area estimates and other data integration methods. Such work will

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[20] Available at https://unstats.un.org/GIST.

[21] Further information is available at the website of the Working Group (at https://unstats.un.org/iswghs).

[22] See the background document prepared by the Working Group for the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/50th-session/documents/BG-Item4c-ISWGHS-E.pdf.

[23] See https://unstats.un.org/iswghs.

provide a solid foundation for countries to produce Goal data that are disaggregated for smaller geographical areas and for vulnerable population groups.

41. Recognizing the importance of an integrated household survey programme within countries, members of the Working Group have been collaborating in harmonizing data collection tools across different survey instruments in countries. For example, in collaboration with the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka, a joint pilot study was carried out by the World Bank and the International Labour Organization Statistics Office to derive harmonized questions on labour force and labour utilization across two different major surveys: the Labour Force Survey and the Living Standard Measurement Survey. The pilot helped in sharing experience and knowledge in the country and generating evidence on good practices in survey design. Such work paves the way for harmonized data collection tools across different survey instruments within the country. Experience gained from the pilot will help to inform similar work in other countries.

42. To intensify the work of the Working Group, a full-time coordinator was hired in September 2019, thanks to the contributions made by member agencies. Advocacy for household surveys and fundraising to advance other elements of the Working Group's work have already started.

XI. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission

43. **The Commission is invited:**

(a) **To take note of the work carried out by the Statistics Division, in cooperation with the United Nations system, and its proposed programme of work, and to comment on the progress of work;**

(b) **To endorse the Data for Now initiative to build capacity in countries to utilize new data sources;**

(c) **To express its views on the scaling-up of the federated information system of national and global data hubs;**

(d) **To take note of the common internationalized resource identifiers for Sustainable Development Goals, targets, indicators and related data series, and express its views on the potential use of the identifiers for the dissemination of statistical data sets in linked-open-data formats;**

(e) **To express its views on the progress of work of the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training;**

(f) **To express its views on the progress of the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys.**

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