

Briefing note on Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG) and High-Level Group (HLG)

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Background

Although the Goals and Targets of the post-2015 framework are not yet fully agreed, the Zero Draft of the outcome document on the post-2015 development agenda has been released. This is titled 'Transforming our World by 2030 – a New Agenda for Global Action', and is available for download [here](#). This will be formalised at the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

An overlapping process to agree the global and national indicators for these targets has begun, and was formally acknowledged by member states in March.

A roadmap for the agreement of the post-2015 indicators was set at the 46th session of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) between 3 and 6 March. This included the formation of:

- An Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG)
- A new High Level Group (HLG) to foster capacity building, partnership and coordination for post-2015 monitoring

It has been broadly agreed that National Statistical Offices should have a leading role in developing an indicator framework, and existing regional and international mechanisms should be used to ensure equitable regional representation and technical expertise.

This document outlines the key bodies involved in the development process. It is intended to ensure that all country programme and member country advocacy colleagues are empowered to understand the global processes, so they can begin work with national statistical authorities.

What is the UN Statistical Commission?

The UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) is the highest body of the global statistical system. It brings together the Chief Statisticians from member states from around the world. The UNSC oversees the work of the UN Statistics Division (UNSD), and is a Functional Commission of the [UN Economic and Social Council](#) (ECOSOC).

The UNSC assists the UN ECOSOC in:

- Promotion of the development of national statistics, and in the improvement of their comparability
- Coordination of the statistical work of specialised agencies
- Development of the central statistical services of the Secretariat
- Advising the organs of the UN on general questions relating to the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information
- Promotion of the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally

Who is on the UNSC?

The Commission consists of [24 member countries](#) of the United Nations elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution according to the following pattern:

Region	Countries						
African states	Angola	Libya	Cameroon	Niger	United Republic of Tanzania		
Asian states	China	Japan	Mongolia	Oman			
Eastern European states	Bulgaria	Czech republic	Hungary	Russian Federation			
Latin American and Caribbean states	Brazil	Cuba	Dominican Republic	Barbados			
Western Europe and other states	Italy	Germany	New Zealand	Sweden	Netherlands	UK	USA

The term of office of members is four years.

Officers of the Commission

The officers are the Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur; collectively the Officers are also referred to as 'the Bureau'. Between sessions of the Commission, members of the Commission, the Bureau and the Secretariat consult on the election of the Bureau for the upcoming session. A Bureau is elected for one year with the expectation that they will be re-elected to a second one year term if available. Nominations are made by members of the Commission. Elections are held at the beginning of a session.

What is the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators?

The Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDG) was created at the start of the 46th UNSC meeting in March 2015. It has been charged with developing an indicator framework (and a list of indicators) for the global monitoring of the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda. The framework should take into account existing efforts by different groups of countries and organisations. The IAEG-SDG will then make recommendations to be considered by the HLG on post-2015 monitoring, the UNSC and the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA).

The group will also review, monitor and report on progress towards the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda at global and regional levels.

The IAEG will act as successor to a similar group (IAEG-MDG) set up to work on the Millennium Development Goals, which finish at the end of 2015. The key difference is that the IAEG-MDG was much more heavily led by UN agency staff and was limited to a human development agenda.

The First Meeting of the IAEG-SDGs took place on 1-2 June 2015 in New York. More information on the first meeting can be found here:

<http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/first-iaeg-sdgs-meeting/>

It was noted, during the meeting, that some indicators, such as 5.3 and the health targets, may need more than one indicator in order to be true to the targets as established.

Who is on the IAEG-SDG?

The UK is Chair of the UNSC and will be a member of the IAEG-SDGs ex-officio. Italy and the Philippines have been elected as co-chairs.

The IAEG-SDG is likely to consist of international agencies (which also represent existing monitoring groups) that are willing to support monitoring efforts in their area of expertise, the UN Regional Commissions and ten to 15 representatives of national statistical systems (with at least a few of them being on a rotating basis). The Statistics Division will be the secretariat of the group. The existing global monitoring groups will contribute to the work of the IAEG-SDGs.

As of 27 May 2015, the following member states are members of the IAEG-SDGs.
Taken from <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/2015/05/14/iaeg-sdg-membership/>

Region	Countries			
Eastern Africa	Uganda	Tanzania		
Middle and Southern Africa	Botswana,	Cameroon		
Western Africa	Cabo Verde	Senegal		
Northern Africa	Algeria			
Western Asia	Armenia	Egypt	...	
Central, Eastern, Southern, and Southeastern Asia	China	India	The Philippines	...
Oceania	Fiji	Samoa		
The Caribbean	Cuba	Jamaica		
Central and South America	Brazil	Columbia	Mexico	
Eastern Europe	Russian Federation			
Southern Europe	Italy			
North America and Northern and Western Europe	Canada	The Netherlands	Sweden	France

What is the High Level Group?

The High Level Group (HLG) will provide strategic leadership for the SDG implementation process. The intention of the group is to promote national ownership of the post-2015 monitoring system and foster capacity building, partnership and coordination for post-2015 monitoring. It will work in parallel to the IAEG-SDG to provide strategic leadership for the SDG implementation process. Member states will be consulted on the terms of reference for the HLG, and the Bureau of the Commission will approve them.

It is expected that the HLG will take over the advisory and capacity-building role that the Friends of the Chair on Broader Measures of Progress group has played since 2013. This group has played a key part in furthering thinking on post-2015 indicators within the member states system.

Who will be on the HLG?

- National statistical offices
- Regional organisations, as observers under the Statistical Commission

Proposed indicator timetable put forward by the Commission:

The following timetable has been broadly accepted by member states. NB: The development of the SDGs (a political process) and the SDGIs (a more scientific/technical process) will proceed in parallel.

March 2015 – At the 46th session of the Statistical Commission, commission members reviewed and accepted a proposal of indicative global indicators for the draft targets for the post-2015 framework. These were prepared by UN agencies and specialised entities. The proposal was presented to member states at the third Inter-Governmental Negotiation meeting on post-2015, where it was agreed that, although the indicators were a useful input, further discussion was required and that the IAEG would take forward this discussion.

1-2 June 2015 – IAEG-SDGs first meeting. Work will continue electronically between now and September because they do not have the budget to meet more frequently.

UNSD will pull together a background document that comprises of various inputs on indicators. This will be the basis of the discussions moving forward. They are not expecting to discuss specific indicators until August/September 2015.

July 2015 – A first note will be developed on possible global and universal indicators and development of an indicator framework. To include proposed criteria for a selection of indicators for global monitoring. Even though the indicator process will continue into 2016, the aim is for the SDGs to be in as complete a form as possible when the heads of state sign off on them at the UN General Assembly in September.

December 2015 – The IAEG-SDG will provide a proposal of global and universal indicators and an indicator framework for consideration by the Statistical Commission at the 47th Session.

February 2016 – The final proposal on the global indicator framework is to be ready, and presented to the UNSC in March.

8-11 March 2016 – Endorsement of the indicator framework at the 47th session of the UNSC.

By September 2016 – Agreement in the General Assembly of the indicator framework, and full adoption.

Ongoing – The IAEG-SDG will report back to the Statistical Commission and is expected to review any required updates of the global indicator framework based on guidance received by the intergovernmental process and relevant technical developments.

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