



**Summary Note**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the IDWG on Statistics sub-group on FAO related SDG indicators**  
**October 21<sup>st</sup> 2016**

Pietro Gennari opened the meeting recalling the recent decision by the Director General to allocate USD 2.3 million to the corporate capacity development activities related to the SDG indicators under FAO custodianship. Two types of activities are envisaged: training workshops at FAO Headquarters, which should involve a selected number of country officials, and e-learning courses. Whereas the suggested funding proportion was 60/40, there is flexibility in this, provided that the total does not exceed the foreseen amount. He recognized that these activities would ideally be complemented by workshops at regional and national level but that this required funds of a different magnitude, which could be sought through other means, including through a more general donor proposal for SDG implementation.

He invited all focal points to prepare a **one-page action-plan** describing in more detail the way these two activities would be rolled out for each indicator, complete with a budget breakdown and suggested calendar through to the end of 2017. This is not to be confused with the Tier III indicators work-plans, which follow a standard format as provided by UNSD. While there is no set template for the action-plan, it was agreed that a suitable sample would be circulated. He urged focal points to begin carrying out activities as soon as possible, bearing in mind the high degree of attention that this work has received at corporate level.

Recognizing the particular situation of Tier III indicators, focal points were informed that funds could also be used for preliminary activities leading to the training workshop or e-learning course, for instance for organizing expert consultations or hiring consultants to prepare methodological guidelines. Nonetheless, it was clarified that in cases where the Tier III status was due to the absence of international recognition, focal points should seek acceptance by countries first in an appropriate forum, before proceeding with capacity development activities. In this line, focal points were informed that the next IAEG-SDG (Geneva, 17-18<sup>th</sup> November) is expected to agree on the mechanism for upgrading the Tier classification of SDG indicators.

In terms of the transfer of funds, focal points were advised that there would be one single budget code, and that budget holder responsibility would be conferred to the Divisions to which each focal point belongs to. This means that certain Divisions such as FIA, FOA and AGL would be entrusted with the funds corresponding to multiple indicators. In any case, focal points were requested to keep track of expenditures and report accordingly at the end of 2016 and 2017.

The training workshops are expected to help create a pool of experts that could subsequently assist even more countries in their respective regions through South-South cooperation. It would thus be important to ensure the participation of a certain number of countries (at least 15-20), and it is also advisable to involve the FAO regional statisticians. It was agreed that synergies should be explored between focal points for the organization of joint workshops, with a view to efficiency savings, and that the action-plan calendars could be used for this purpose. It was clarified that funds should in principle not be used for staff travel, staff secondment, or for funding the participation of international organizations.

On a similar note, it was agreed that cost savings could be explored in the preparation of e-learning courses, for instance in the translation phase. Focal points were informed of the upcoming meeting between the Chief Statistician and the Director of OPC on November 3<sup>rd</sup> with a view to agreeing on a more comprehensive strategy for the e-learning development process.

Furthermore, focal points were informed about the corporate coordination of SDGs as decided by the EMMT and validated by the CPMB. The decision was taken to deliver FAO support on SDGs through the strategic programme of work, particularly to support implementation of SDGs at regional and country level. Further integration of SDGs in FAO's work is ensured by the incorporation of over 50 SDG indicators to measure the impact of the Strategic Framework, as reflected in the following Council document (esp. Annex 1) <http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/pwb/2016/MR830e.pdf>. In line with this decision, RSPCs will act as SDG focal points in the regional offices, which have also been allocated a funding package for SDG implementation (USD 200,000 each), and are now engaged in consolidating a work-plan on SDG related work at country level so as to receive the funds. In addition, regional offices are encouraged to use TCPs to initiate the work at regional level, for which they may require guidance from the sub-group.