



First Meeting of the IDWG on Statistics Sub-group on SDG indicators relevant to FAO

29th February 2016

Summary

Following the release of the final list of SDG indicators by the IAEG-SDG, the Chief Statistician convened the first meeting of the IDWG on Statistics sub-group on SDG indicators. The Chief Statistician summarized the main steps in the IAEG process thus far, and congratulated the entire group for the results obtained: about 25 SDG indicators out of a total of 231 are expected to be monitored by FAO (individually or in collaboration with other agencies), covering targets under Goals 1, 2, 5, 6, 12, 14, and 15.

In order to successfully tackle the new phase of implementation, a more formal internal coordination arrangement was necessary to refine the methodology of the indicators, identify data sources, organize the data collection and reporting, and interact with the IAEG-SDG and individual countries. The establishment of this sub-group responded to this need. Moreover, he concentrated on the immediate challenges ahead, beginning with the next IAEG-SDG meeting at the end of March, and the three main items on the agenda: the categorization of indicators into three Tiers; the division of responsibilities for global monitoring among international agencies; and the global reporting mechanism.

- On the Tier system, he emphasized the need to focus on Tier III indicators (neither methodology clear nor data available), and invited focal points to complete the related questionnaire distributed by the UN Statistical Division in Word version and return it to the coordination team.
- On the division of responsibilities, he emphasized the need for partnerships and collaboration with other international agencies. In order to support the internal coordination, he invited focal points to answer a few additional questions beyond the UNSD questionnaire, including on what potential partnerships could be envisaged in the implementation of each indicator.
- On the question of reporting, he mentioned the need to reconceive the FAO flagship publications (SOFI, SOFIA, SOFO etc.) in order to report the relevant SDG indicators on an annual basis. There is an ongoing discussion with senior management on the best way to do this, and a meeting would soon be convened under DDN and ES-ADG in order to decide. The resource implications of monitoring up to 25 SDG indicators are also being discussed, including with OSP.

In responding to questions by the different focal points, the Chief Statistician clarified the distinction between global, national, and thematic indicators; the need for annual reporting at global level although different units may decide on their own reporting cycle; the ongoing effort to align SO

output indicators with SDG indicators; and the need to coordinate with CIO on the data management systems. He emphasized the overarching principle of using data supplied by countries for all SDG indicators, and, while acknowledging that this may be difficult for many indicators under FAO's responsibility, pointed to the need for capacity development in data collection and analysis, potentially in coordination with TCS as well as other international development agencies.