

RESULTS FROM THE 2017 DATA FLOW PILOT STUDY

PREPARED BY THE TASK TEAM ON DATA FLOWS
OF THE
UNECE CES STEERING GROUP ON STATISTICS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

At the April 2017 UNECE CES Expert Meeting on Statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals, countries, custodian agencies and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) agreed to examine more closely extant and emerging data flows for providing statistics on global SDG indicators and thereby better understand and support coordination among main actors across national and international statistical systems. Accordingly, the Steering Group established a task team to design, implement, and analyse results from an observational study of data flows for a subset of global SDG indicators.

Volunteers from countries, custodian agencies, and UNSD were asked to describe their current practices in SDG monitoring. These actual experiences were examined to identify best practices and recommendations for practical solutions to common challenges. The overarching question posed is “What information is needed to be able to complete your assigned task regarding the SDGs global indicator reporting?”

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I. PURPOSE, APPROACH, AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Monitoring progress of the Sustainable Development Goals requires unprecedented collaboration and coordination across the international statistical system. The scope of Agenda 2030, the inclusion of all UN member countries in its goals, and reporting requirements at both global and national levels call for a deeper understanding of existing and emerging data flows between national and international data providers to enable accountable, annual reporting of progress to the UN General Assembly and the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). Through initial consultations among main actors, it became clear that navigating the coordination necessary would benefit from a closer look.

2. In response, a pilot was undertaken to test in practice the data flows for providing data on global SDG indicators. The aim of the pilot is to collect experiences so that the data provision could be done in a transparent and efficient way, and to inform the deliberations of the IAEG-SDGs charged by the UN Statistical Commission in 2017 with developing guidelines on SDG data flows. This report describes the design, implementation, and findings of the pilot study, including practical suggestions for facilitating data flows based on the observations found.

A. Background

1. The 2030 Agenda calls for UN Member States and UN agencies to examine and strengthen the timeliness, accuracy, transparency and coordination of their existing statistical reporting processes. This need was recognized at the 48th session of the UN Statistical Commission (March 2017), and reflected in a resolution to ECOSOC which requested the Secretary General to continue to facilitate collaboration between national statistical systems and the relevant international and regional organizations to enhance data reporting channels and ensure the harmonization and consistency of data and statistics for the indicators used to follow up and review the SDGs and target.

2. The same resolution also urged international organizations to base the global SDG follow-up and review on data produced by national statistical systems. If specific country data are not available for reliable estimation, international organizations should consult with concerned countries to produce and validate modeled estimates, before publication. Communication and coordination among international organizations should be enhanced to avoid duplicate reports, ensure consistency of data and reduce response burden on countries. Further, international organizations should make public the methodologies used to harmonize country data for international comparability and produce estimates through transparent mechanisms.

3. Therefore, a continuous and transparent dialogue within countries, among agencies, between countries and agencies is highlighted as key. Communication and sharing of information are essential to build trust and ensure effective working relationships between national statistical systems and international organizations.

4. UNSC called for the Inter-Agency Expert Group for SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to prepare guidance on SDG data flows between countries, custodian agencies and UNSD, and to present that guidance at the 49th UN Statistical Commission Meeting (March 2018). At the March 2017 IAEG-SDGs meeting, initial preparations to develop data flow guidance were discussed. The meeting welcomed a pilot study to examine the steps involved and the needs of reporting countries, custodian agencies and UNSD, and to inform the work of the IAEG-SDGs in preparing its guidance.

5. At the April 2017 UNECE Expert Meeting on SDGs, countries, custodian agencies, and UNSD presented and discussed the challenges and opportunities of managing data flows for the SDGs. It was agreed that a pilot study of such data flows would be of interest of CES members. It was decided to undertake such a pilot in Summer 2017 so that the resulting analysis would be most useful to the IAEG-SDGs when developing their guidance. France and Turkey agreed to design and co-chair this pilot.

6. The Steering Group is aware that a similar exercise on piloting and documenting data flows was conducted by the IAEG-SDGs.¹ The two exercises are complementary and aim to inform future work of both the Steering Group and the IAEG-SDGs drafting group on Guidelines on data flows.

B. Objectives

7. The objective of the pilot is to describe the experiences, needs, and resources of the main actors involved in producing global SDG statistics for the purposes of follow-up and review by the HLPF. The input of the pilot study would be transmitted to the IAEG-SDG to be discussed during its November 2017 meeting to inform its deliberation of data flow guidance and, subsequently, considered during the December 2017 UNECE CES Steering Group Meeting.

8. The number of participants in the pilot was limited purposefully in order to manage the level of effort within the time frame provided. The participating countries and organizations were selected with the goal of representing the diversity of international arrangements, considering the degree of statistical system centralization, lead of NSO on national SDG data provision or elaboration role, and represent different regions.

9. It was also agreed that pilot participants should include the main actors in the SDG data flow process: UN member countries (in this case, CES members), custodian agencies (particularly those already reporting Tier 1 indicators at the global level), and UNSD. Volunteers were selected from Steering Group member countries; custodian agencies were invited to participate based on the indicators selected for the pilot. Participating countries were: France, Russian Federation, Turkey, United States, and United Kingdom. Participating agencies were: FAO, IMF, OECD, UNEP, and UNODC.² Participants were invited to join the observational study (described in Chapter 2) and the self-analysis (described in Chapter 3), as they preferred (as noted).

10. In reviewing this report, is important to note that it was expected that national and global statistics will often differ, as global statistics are the result of aggregation and harmonization for comparability across nations. Differences between national and global estimates may also differ due to differences in metadata, such as the target population, the data source/instrument, and the calculation process. The intent of the pilot's review between national and global statistics, then, was not to ensure that such statistics were exactly the same. Rather, it was to ensure that differences observed are understood and accepted by both countries and custodian agencies. Therefore, the pilot's focus was to understand and thereby identify ways to better support effective communication of data flows.

C. Scope

11. To describe these experiences and needs, a small set of global SDG indicators was selected to represent the different statistical domains (economic, social, and environment). In addition, indicators were selected to include both statistical indicators and non-statistical indicators; and among statistical indicators, indicators produced by NSOs, indicators not produced by NSOs, and indicators intended to follow-up on national strategies. See Table 1.1.

12. Countries participating in the pilot were requested to provide national statistics for these indicators to the custodian agencies listed above using the process they had planned. (As this was an observational study of current practices, a procedure for data flows was not suggested to pilot

¹<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-06/> and then select "Document" and then select "IAEG case studies or data flows for selected indicators in chapter "Background documents". These case studies, as requested by IAEG-SDGs, have been prepared by international/custodian agencies with countries on 7 representative global SDG indicator.

² UNSD, ILO, UNESCO-UIS were not participants to the pilot as they pull their data from intermediary international bases. As for WHO, the agency sent written comments to explain these indicators are a part a more wider data collection and validation process for the World Health Statistics reports. Moreover, a lot of information is available on WHO website.

participants.) The custodian agencies for these indicators were requested to review the national statistics received, harmonize them for global comparison, and request verification of the harmonized statistics from reporting countries. Custodian agencies would then report the harmonized statistics to UNSD for the global indicator database according to existing practice, where they would subsequently be used in preparation of the annual progress report to the UN General Assembly. See Table 1. 2.

Table 1.1 List of Indicators and Agencies Selected for the Pilot Study

Indicator	Custodian Agency	Statistical Indicator?	Domain
<i>A. Pilot will examine data flow between countries and custodian agencies</i>			
2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	FAO	Yes	Health
4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flow for scholarships by sector and type of study	OECD	No	Governance
12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement	UNEP	No	Environment
15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area	FAO	Yes	Environment
16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	UNODC	Yes	Social
17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes	IMF	Yes	Economic
<i>B. Pilot will analyse transmission from country to intermediary (e.g., Eurostat)</i>			
8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	UNSD	Yes	Economic
8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training	ILO	Yes	Education
9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP	UNESCO-UIS	Yes	Economic
<i>C. Pilot will assess countries' perspectives on validation processes</i>			
3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio	WHO	Yes	Health
3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries	WHO	Yes	Health

13. Participant countries were free to select from this list the indicators they would like to pilot. Countries were encouraged to pilot as many indicators as possible (ideally all 11 indicators from the above list).

D. Method

14. The pilot is an observational study of participating countries and custodian agencies actual experiences using their planned monitoring processes. The overarching question asked is: “What information is needed to be able to complete your assigned task regarding the SDG global indicator reporting?” It is expected that there may be challenges to an orderly and robust data flow; the intent of the pilot is to record experiences and identify best practices rather than anticipate a single, best approach.

15. To assist participants' responses, guidelines and a template questionnaire were provided. Countries were asked to record experiences at each data flow stage: initial reporting, receipt, harmonization, verification and delivery of the estimate for the global SDG indicator. Countries and custodian agencies were also asked for their operational experiences, issues identified and solutions found.

16. Information collection occurred between August-October 2017. Table 1.2 presents the initial schedule. Delays are attributed to coordination with the UNSD data flow pilot, which had not been expected but was much welcomed.

Table 1.2 Initial Schedule for UNECE CES Data Flow Pilot

Step	Details	Observations	Deadline
Establish focal points for the pilot in countries and custodian agencies			12 July
Co-chairs prepare templates for recording			14 July
	Contact information and schedules		
	Operations of data flows and transactions		
	Self-analysis from each participant (what did/did not work)		
Launch of pilot study			4 August
	NSOs produce data on the selected indicators, acquire them from the agencies producing them, or verify data in global SDG database if already posted.	NSOs and custodian agencies exchange data on the select indicators and record their approach and experiences. Recording should be done on the template provided by the pilot co-chairs. There are two templates—contact information and operations, and self-analysis—for countries and agencies, separately. Countries and agencies send templates as they are completed to facilitate analysis. Anticipated data provision mechanisms and schedules from both countries and agencies are provided and circulated among pilot participants.	August/ September
	Countries send data to the contacts in custodian agencies or inform them that data are available on NRPs (if not already posted on global SDG database)		
	Countries validate data in global SDG database (if already posted)		
	Custodian agencies check the data and, if needed, adjust for international comparability		
	Custodian agencies send back the adjusted data to the NSOs		
	Communications between country (NSO or data provider) on validation the data, including further clarification of the data provider (where the custodian agency obtained the data if not the NSO)		
	Final validation of data by the country (NSO or other producer)		
	Custodian agencies send data to UNSD to be included in the global SDG database		
Co-chairs prepare draft paper of the pilot design			29 August
Co-chairs prepare draft paper of data collection and analysis			20 September
Co-chairs circulate draft paper of main outcomes with pilot members			29 September
Co-chairs draft recommendations to IAEG-SDG			29 September
Co-chairs finalize documents			4 October
Co-chairs submit draft report to CES Steering Group for review			14 October

E. Results

17. The questionnaire responses were evaluated as described in Table 1.3, below. Common challenges and potential solutions (often offered by pilot participants) were identified for consideration.

18. Chapters 2 and 3 document the experience and needs of each of the main actors in the data flow process. Early drafts of this report were shared with the IAEG-SDG for their consideration in developing SDG data flow guidance in November 2017. Subsequently, the draft results from this pilot and the complementary pilot engaged by the UNSD, coupled by the recommendations of the IAEG-SDG (see Chapter 4), are considered in the context of the UNECE CES as presented in Chapter 5.

Table 1.3 Evaluation Approach

Aspect	Scope of Evaluation
Timeliness	Reporting and production times
Adherence to standards	Concordance with global methodological standards and availability of metadata
Transparency	Verification process and resolution of discrepancies. How transparent and accessible are the methods of adjustments and estimations; transparent mechanisms of communication
Collaboration, partnership and coordination	Who are the involved players at all levels: the national level between the national system, regional level, and the international system
Overall process	Clarify needs for each actor and identify possible best practices
Communication, effective working relationships	Best practices in countries-agencies communication and transmission of data (NRP, data flows, SDMX data flows, others)

19. The draft results were shared with the pilot participants and the UNECE CES SDG Steering Group for comment prior to presentation at the IAEG-SDG meeting in November 2017. An updated draft was circulated prior to the UNECE CES SDG meeting in December 2017; a final draft is expected before March 2017.

F. Limitations

20. To complete an informative data flow pilot within the available timeframe, the design was limited in scope to only a few actors and only a few of all available SDGs indicators. Furthermore, some inconsistencies uncovered between national official statistics and globally published data were unresolved; therefore, some necessary discussions on how to eliminate these inconsistencies were not initiated.

21. A first limitation is that selected countries have, in many ways similar, data production processes. Therefore, the pilot results do not describe circumstances for countries where variations in the process (e.g., diverse data sources) can affect the data flows and the comparability of data. All the countries involved in the pilot study, except Russian Federation, are members of the OECD. Three of them participate in Eurostat data collection, another indicator of strong similarities across national statistical systems. They all have a rather mature statistical system and less need of capacity building than in other parts of the world.

22. A second limitation of the pilot resulted from the selection of indicators, which included only Tier 1 indicators (except one in Tier 2). These would be most likely subject to near term official data transmission of national statistical authorities. Data flows for Tier 1 indicators describe a “best case scenario” because the tier designation indicates the indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards, and is produced regularly for at least 50 percent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant.

23. A third limitation is that the inconsistencies observed for some specific indicators could not be resolved because of lack of time or confirmed focal points (i.e., 3.1.1, 3.6.1, 8.1.1, 8.6.1, 9.5.1). Further discussion is needed to resolve inconsistencies and establish strong data transmission relationships.

24. This pilot study should be viewed a first step to identify challenges and to make practical suggestions to improve the efficiency and consistency of data flows. The results of pilot study should be reviewed further to resolve discrepancies between national and global data and to work on indicators recently re-classified as Tier 1. Despite these challenges, we are encouraged by the very supportive discussions we have observed through this pilot, and recognize a strongly felt commitment to robust data flow relationships for successful global reporting on the SDGs.

G. Acknowledgements

25. The Unece Steering group (SG) is grateful to all the countries and agencies who were involved in the pilot data flows study which were rather demanding. The SG would especially like to thank the agencies involved in which, on the selected indicators, took the time to answer all the questions of the countries in a very short time during the summer holiday. Without their involvement, this pilot study could not have been implemented. Thanks to these strong and positive relationships with countries, keeping in mind the different responsibilities and constraints of each others, the challenge remains huge but we already see ways to go forward.

France and Turkey co chaired the task team. Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United State of America were other member countries members of this task team; FAO, IMF, OECD, UNEP, UNODC IMF were agencies’members of this task force.

II. SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

26. The pilot comprised two parts. The first pertained to data flow observations from the point of view of countries and custodian agencies, respectively, which is presented here. Both general observations and indicator-specific experiences were recorded by participants. Participants were invited to describe contact focal points; current data flows, if any; national and global data availability; and consistency/comparability across national and global metadata and data. The second part of the pilot comprised self-analysis by countries and custodian agencies, which is presented in Chapter 3.

27. In reviewing Chapters 2 and 3, it is important to note that it was expected that national and global statistics will often differ, as global statistics are the result of aggregation and harmonization for comparability across nations. Differences between national and global estimates may also differ due to differences in metadata, such as the target population, the data source/instrument, and the calculation process. The intent of the pilot’s review between national and global statistics, then, was not to ensure that such statistics were exactly the same. Rather, it was to ensure that differences observed are understood and accepted by both countries and custodian agencies. Therefore, the pilot’s focus was to understand and thereby identify ways to better support effective communication of data flows.

A. Approach

28. This chapter provides a general overview of data flow observations organized by observation theme. Recommendations are noted throughout. A detailed analysis of observations from countries and custodian agencies, which is organized by indicator, is presented in Annex 2.

B. Participants

29. Pilot study participants could choose to participate in either the data flow observation or the self-analysis, or both components. Countries providing specific information on the data flows component included France, Russian Federation, Turkey, United Kingdom and USA. Agencies providing specific information on data flows included FAO, OECD, IMF, UNODC, and UNEP.³ As Table 2.1 describes, participants could also choose to report their observations on all 11 indicators selected for the pilot, or a subset.

Table 2.1. Participation in Data Flows Component, by Indicator

Indicator	France	Russian Federation	Turkey	United Kingdom	United States	Custodian Agency
<i>A. Examination of data flow between countries and custodian agencies</i>						
2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	X				X	X
4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flow for scholarships by sector and type of study	NC	NC	X	NC	NC	
12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as	X	X	X		X	

³ WHO doesn’t answer the Pilot study’s questionnaire but transmitted written comments and links towards their website to provide clarification to countries of that pilot. As for IUCN? Information was shared with one country of that pilot in the framework of the IAEG-SDGs data flow pilot.

Table 2.1. Participation in Data Flows Component, by Indicator

Indicator	France	Russian Federation	Turkey	United Kingdom	United States	Custodian Agency
required by each relevant agreement						
15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area	X	X	X			X
16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	X	X			X	X
17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes	X	X	X		X	X*
<i>B. Analysis of transmission from country to intermediary (e.g., Eurostat)</i>						
8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	X	X	X	X	X	NA
8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training	X	X	X		X	NA
9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP	X	X	X		X	NA
<i>C. Assessment of countries' perspectives on validation processes</i>						
3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio	X	X	X		X	NA
3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries	X	X	X		X	NA

NOTE: NA: Not applicable. NC: Not concerned. *: Provided for one country.

C. General analysis

30. Among the global indicators selected for the pilot study, national statistics for participating countries were available in the SDG global database hosted by UNSD, with the exception of 17.1.2. This finding was anticipated as all pilot study indicators were selected from the “tier 1” designation (with the exception of 17.1.2), and therefore would be more likely to be readily produced compared to indicators designated as “tier 2” or “tier 3.”

31. However, participating countries reported that prior to the launch of the pilot study, they had received no specific request from custodian agencies for transmitting their national data or metadata, nor any such request or notification for validation or publication of globally harmonized data. Further, several countries and agencies noted requests for clarification of both global and national data and metadata. In this way, the pilot study provided an additional venue for countries and agencies involved to communicate effectively and resolve specific issues together in practical ways. Their experiences have been generalized in the recommendations presented here to thereby improve the overall process.

1. Role of NSO and points of contact

32. An important step in understanding data flows is to understand communication flows. As we learned when preparing the UNECE CES Roadmap on Statistics for SDGs, the role of NSOs in coordinating and providing national statistics for SDGs varies within the UNECE region. Accordingly, it was necessary the role of participating NSOs with regard to data flows between countries and agencies. Second, it was necessary to identify the country and custodian agency focal points for each indicator included in the pilot study (from the perspective of both countries and custodian agencies).

33. *The role of the NSO in coordinating national data flows for SDGs varies, as does their familiarity with extant national data flows to custodian agencies.* Overall, most countries participating in the pilot reported that their NSO coordinates data transmission and validation for all global SDG indicators. However, this varies. For example, the Russian Federation reported that its NSO will calculate and transmit data only for those SDG indicators within its competence.

34. Even among countries where the NSO coordinates transmission and validation of data for SDGs, the country focal points for particular indicators may be employed by offices outside of the NSO or national (principal) statistical agencies, even for statistical indicators. For example, the country focal point for official statistics for indicator 16.1.1 (homicide) is outside of the NSO in France, USA, and Russian Federation. Additionally, the country focal point for official statistics for 15.1.1 (forest area) and 3.6.1 (road traffic deaths) is outside of the NSO in France.

35. The national SDG coordinator often does not choose national focal points for SDG indicators. Instead, these decisions are made outside of their purview as a matter of ministerial, rather than statistical, policy. In fact, a given SDGs indicator often is one of several indicators for which statistics are transmitted routinely to agencies on a given theme (e.g., road accidents, forest).

36. *In some cases, custodian agencies did not provide country focal points, but for different reasons.* Among the indicators selected for examination of data flows in this pilot, custodian agencies were able to provide agency points of contact in all cases. However, custodian agencies did not provide country focal points for several of the indicators under this review⁴. In one case, this is because only one country in the pilot provided statistics for this indicator (2.1.2). In another case, statistics were transmitted to UNSD according to a well-established procedure (4.b.1, 12.4.1).

37. When country focal points were identified by custodian agencies, they were often out of date (including retirement)⁵. This may be a worst case scenario, in that the custodian agency believes that it is communicating effectively and mistakenly believes that the country is not responsive due either to passive agreement or disinterest. There is a strong and immediate need to update this information through an easily managed process.

Table 2.2 Focal Points Provided by Custodian Agencies, By Indicator

Indicator	Custodian Agency	Custodian Agency Identified...	
		Agency Focal Point	Country Focal Point
<i>A. Examination of data flow between countries and custodian agencies</i>			
2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	FAO	X	X*
4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flow for scholarships by sector and type of study	OECD	X	
12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement	UNEP	X	
15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area	FAO	X	X
16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	UNODC	X	X

⁴ The custodian agency confirms that all the focal points are available online

⁵ In the case of 12.4.1, the Custodian agency explain there is an established official procedure of nominating focal points (through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), so it is the responsibility of the member states to update their contacts. The custodian agency cant do that much to improve it.

Table 2.2 Focal Points Provided by Custodian Agencies, By Indicator

Indicator	Custodian Agency	Custodian Agency Identified...	
		Agency Focal Point	Country Focal Point
17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes	IMF	X	X
<i>B. Analysis of transmission from country to intermediary (e.g., Eurostat)</i>			
8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita			
8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training			
9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP			
<i>C. Assessment of countries' perspectives on validation processes</i>			
3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio			
3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries			

NOTE: * For one country only (USA). Other countries in the pilot do not produce these data.

38. In sum, the SDG data flow does not begin “from scratch,” but it does require broader coordination at the national and international levels. Arrangements for SDG data flows should be made at the country level in a way that aligns with national governance and established data flows. However, even where established processes are in place that can be repurposed and extended to support SDG monitoring, these arrangements cannot be taken fully into account if the entities coordinating SDG monitoring at the national level are not aware of them. NSOs need assistance to become aware of these data flows, particularly those that have not traditionally engaged the NSO, so that national level coordination can occur. This will require patience and education from custodian agencies.

39. There are several ways in which an NSO can be informed about existing and emerging data flows relevant to SDG monitoring. The NSO could become the new country focal point for a given indicator, or may be added to communications as needed for a new or an existing data transmission. The exact method used should be discussed and decided on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the custodian agency.

40. Regardless of its form, it seems important for a country focal point to be identified for each indicator, even if that focal point is the overall NSO coordinator for SDGs. At minimum, NSOs need to be aware of existing data flows that relate to SDG monitoring to coordinate effectively. Even existing data flows used for the additional purpose of the SDGs may benefit from a careful metadata review. Further, establishing a country focal point may be important even when data are not produced yet by the country, as this would aid preparations for doing so. This approach is consistent with UNSC 48/10/1, which provides that data reporting may come from non-official sources (with the consent of the country).

2. Data reporting mechanisms

41. A second objective of the pilot was to better understand NSOs' planned data transmission and dissemination approaches for SDG indicators. It is important to emphasize that the countries participating in the data flow pilot are not representative of all UNECE CES country experiences and realities; they were selected based on self-nomination. Therefore, their processes for SDG data flows may be more similar (perhaps more mature) than processes in place among countries that did not volunteer for the pilot. Nonetheless, among pilot participants, we observed a range of plans at differing levels of maturation. The type of indicator and existing data flow arrangements also influenced the planned data reporting process.

42. *Data transmission and/or dissemination plans are developing.* At the time of the pilot, the US was using a national reporting platform for data transmission purposes (for global monitoring) and for data dissemination purposes (for public communication and accountability). For the UK, an SDGs database⁶ with time series, metadata and link towards more economic analysis of data was already available. However, currently, this NRP is planned only for data dissemination purposes; a decision was not yet made regarding using the NRP for data transmission purposes. For two countries, discussions were ongoing regarding on the best way to transmit data to custodian agencies (for instance, how to best leverage use of SDMX). For these countries, an NRP might be implemented, but only for the part of the data transmission under the responsibility of NSO.

43. *Indicator types differ, with implications for national transmission practices.* The nature of the SDG indicator can influence NSO plans regarding its role in transmitting and disseminating national SDG data. Most SDG indicators are statistical in nature, but others are non-statistical (such as 12.4.1), and are outside the scope of official statisticians for production and validation. Some NSOs choose to coordinate transmission and dissemination of data for statistical and non-statistical indicators, but for the latter abstain from validating the data's quality (instead noting the responsible agency for follow-up). Some NSOs decline coordination of SDG indicators that are not produced by their office, or are not statistical in nature.

44. Even among statistical indicators, the role of NSOs in production and transmission varies. Some NSOs transmit some indicators routinely to custodian agencies, and these statistics are available in agencies' intermediary databases (e.g., 8.1.1, 8.6.1, 9.5.1). Data for some indicators are transmitted through well-established data flows with custodian agencies with a national focal point who, in some cases, may be a policy expert rather than a statistician (e.g., 3.1.1., 3.6.1, 15.1.1, 16.1.1, 17.1.2). In other cases, national data for indicators may not be available from the country, but custodian agencies may propose to use data from an international survey to address this gap (e.g., 2.1.1 and Gallup survey).

45. In sum, unprecedented coordination of data flows for the SDGs is necessary to avoid double reporting and inconsistencies. Looking ahead, online platforms for transmission of statistics (rather than paper surveys, such as FRA with FAO, or excel tables) could be used to support this coordination. However, the degree to which a national reporting platform hosted by the NSO would be useful for either data transmission or data dissemination purposes likely depends on the role of the NSO in national SDG coordination (which may vary by indicator type and data source).

3. Examination of metadata

46. A third objective of the pilot was to assess the availability and transparency of global and national metadata for the selected indicators. Clear and accessible metadata are necessary for the production of comparable national and global statistics for indicators.

47. *Overall, metadata were available.* Most global metadata were posted on the UN SDGs website⁷ at the time of the pilot, with the exception of 17.1.2.^{8, 9}

48. *However, some metadata were incomplete.* We observed that in some cases, the definition of the indicator was not provided, and the calculation method for the aggregation of national statistics into global statistics was missing (e.g., 17.1.2). In other cases, information on the data source, the data collection and release calendar, and date of "harvest" from online sources was incomplete, especially when indicators were pulled from an international intermediary database (for instance 8.1.1, 8.6.1).

⁶ This database contains only statistical data produced by the statistical system. It is not planned to add non-statistical data, this data/observation being outside the mandate of National Statistical System.

⁷ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>.

⁸ Metadata are available only in the archive.

⁹ Through involvement in the pilot study, UNEP realized metadata they had transmitted to UNSD for 12.4.1 were not posted on the UN SDG website and asked UNSD to update the website.

Information is needed on current data availability and the treatment of missing values in the calculation of regional and global estimates (such as 8.6.1).¹⁰ This information is needed for countries and custodian agencies alike to understand sources of differences between global and national data so that errors, if any, can be addressed, legitimate differences can be noted, and the global statistic can be affirmed.

49. *Some metadata may need to be refined.* We observed that indicator 12.4.1 was classified as tier 1 (meaning established methodology, routinely collected), though the methodology was difficult to establish, the weight of different items was not justified, and the relevance of the definition was unclear.¹¹ Similarly, the tier classification for 17.1.2 should be reviewed since the definition of the indicator is not precise enough and the methods of aggregation of national statistics to produce global statistics was not provided. Refinement of these indicators would allocate support where further methodological work is needed before the statistics can be robustly and routinely produced).

50. In sum, metadata play an essential role to establish data flows with agencies in a country led process. To facilitate calculation and validation of national and global statistics by countries and custodian agencies alike, national and global metadata should be provided for each indicator, according to the format defined by IAEG-SDGs. This requires each description field to be completed, including the indicator's definition and calculation method, with a special attention to the harvesting process, collection and release calendars. This information will assist countries and custodian agencies in reconciling differences between national and global data—which may be (and often are) legitimate but require review and understanding before a country can verify. A review of the availability and completeness of metadata for Tier 1 and 2 indicators before the March UNSC meetings (or minimally, before the Spring 2018 IAEG-SDG meeting) may be helpful to both countries and custodian agencies. Further, a tool for updating metadata content on the UNSD site more easily (rather than uploading a series of PDF files) should be provided. Countries should be able to ask IAEG-SDGs to re-examine metadata delivered by agencies if a problem is identified, and request a reclassification of tier if necessary.

4. Process for data validation

51. Ultimately, the purpose of the pilot was to describe the current process of country validation of agency-produced global statistics for selected indicators. As anticipated, this stage of the process seemed the least well established. It reflects the central challenge and perhaps greatest contribution in the production of statistics for SDGs monitoring: coordination and collaboration of the international statistical system.

52. *Most countries had difficulty validating globally harmonized national statistics.* Most countries reported not knowing the process by which globally harmonized country data are provided and released on the UN SDGs website (e.g., 3.1.1, 12.4.1, 15.1.1, 16.1.1). In some cases, countries reported that it was not clear why national data in the global database were not fully aligned with data they provided in an intermediary database (e.g., 8.1.1, 8.6.1, 9.5.1).

53. *In some cases, countries were not able to validate the globally harmonized statistic.* Two countries indicated that they were unable to validate data for 2.1.1 because they do not collect the underlying data or produce the resulting statistics. In other cases, countries did not respond to the custodian agency's to validate data for 2.1.2. In all these cases, it is unclear how values for non-responding countries should be treated in the calculation of globally harmonized statistics.

¹⁰ Method of aggregation, national data needed which may differ from the transmission of national indicators.

¹¹ See the following paragraph concerning indicator 12.4.1 in detailed analysis (Annex 2). UNEP tried to propose an indicator, but the definition was very difficult to establish. The IAEG-SDGs was not consulted, the indicator being classified Tier 1 directly.

54. In sum, the data validation process for SDG monitoring purposes is still maturing. To be able to produce globally harmonized statistics, custodian agencies need to understand national statistics—which may or may not be collected or estimated by the custodian agency. To be accountable for the statistics published, countries need a way of understanding and affirming the globally harmonized statistics produced by custodian agencies. This level of coordination is new, but necessary. There are ways in which data validation can be supported to meet the needs of both custodian agencies and countries. With focal points identified at both agencies and countries, it is possible to reach agreement on the process, to clarify data and metadata needs, and to request further explanation of the adjustment process.

55. Specifically, we recommend an interactive table of focal points to be updated by custodian agencies and countries on a flow basis, be hosted on the UNSD SDG website. It should not be static (i.e., a series of PDFs) but in a form that allows updates easily with login authority. The table should be specific to each indicator. This may be the single most helpful way to support coordination of SDG statistics, and would present very little burden to UNSD—the responsibility for updating the table would lie with the countries and the custodian agencies.

56. Looking ahead, it is clear that data validation for the SDGs cannot be practically implemented as a yes/no outcome. Instead, data validation should be regarded as a process, and progress along that process is the intermediary goal. We recommend that a tool be developed in the SDGs database to indicate the status of validation. This is described in greater detail in Chapter 3.

III. PARTICIPANT SELF-ANALYSES

57. The pilot comprised two parts. The first, presented in Chapter 2, pertained to data flow observations from the point of view of countries and custodian agencies, respectively, which is presented here. Both general observations and indicator-specific experiences¹² were recorded by participants. Participants were invited to describe contact focal points; current data flows, if any; national and global data availability; and consistency/comparability across national and global metadata and data. The second part of the pilot comprised self-analysis by countries and custodian agencies, which is presented in this chapter.

58. In reviewing Chapters 2 and 3, it is important to note that it was expected that national and global statistics will often differ, as global statistics are the result of aggregation and harmonization for comparability across nations. Differences between national and global estimates may also differ due to differences in metadata, such as the target population, the data source/instrument, and the calculation process. The intent of the pilot's review between national and global statistics, then, was not to ensure that such statistics were exactly the same. Rather, it was to ensure that differences observed are understood and accepted by both countries and custodian agencies. Therefore, the pilot's focus was to understand and thereby identify ways to better support effective communication of data flows.

A. Approach

59. This chapter summarizes country and custodian agency feedback regarding their experiences in the data flow process for SDG monitoring. The goal of the self-analysis was to describe actual collaborations and resolution to challenges. These are presented here according to theme. Suggestions to support data flows going forward are then provided, followed by practical, specific tools that could be used to implement the suggestions. A summary list of issues, suggestions, and tools described in Chapters 2 and 3 is presented in Annex 1.

B. Participants

60. Pilot study participants could choose to participate in either the data flow observation or the self-analysis, or both components. Countries that completed the self-analysis component included France, Russian Federation, Turkey, United Kingdom, and USA. Custodian agencies that completed the self-analysis component included FAO, OECD, UNEP, and CCSSA also provided a self-analysis on data flows to IAEG-SDGs.¹³

C. Findings

61. Issues identified through the detailed observational study of data flows were also described in self-analyses provided by countries and custodian agencies. Further, the issues identified by countries and custodian agencies were not distinct; the same concerns were raised by both.

1. Delayed and/or impaired communication due to unclear points of contact.

62. At the time of the pilot's launch, focal points were unclear to both parties. All countries indicated that they did not know the custodian agency focal points for the pilot indicators. Further, all countries noted that some of the country focal points identified by custodian agencies were out of date or incorrect.

¹² See Annex 2.

¹³ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-06/> go to document and "CCSA input" in the "background documents"

63. Difficulty with determining focal points was also a challenge for custodian agencies. UNEP (12.4.1) indicated they did not know country focal points for their pilot indicator.¹⁴ UNODC (16.1.1) reported a requirement to adhere to guidance established by its principal bodies, such as determining appropriate country contacts, which may not be consistent with the focal points identified by countries' NSOs.

64. *Suggestion:* Identify focal points for countries and custodian agencies. This should take into account that the focal points identified by countries may not be the same as the focal points identified by custodian agencies, and that discussion and agreement may be required. Focal points are needed for each indicator, given the scope of expertise involved. Custodian agencies often support several SDG indicators, and focal points may differ within these agencies depending on the particular indicator. In addition, we recommend naming a central point of contact for each country, preferably at the national statistical office, and each custodian agency for a given indicator to assist with coordination.

65. If data flows for a particular indicator have occurred through a process for other reporting purposes,¹⁵ the SDG data transmission process should take this into account to avoid duplication of effort/improve communication. For these flows to be taken into account, however, it is necessary for country NSOs to learn about these existing arrangements and the focal points involved. Custodian agencies are asked to provide this information in their discussions with NSOs. Further, countries and custodian agencies should examine global metadata for SDG reporting and the metadata for reporting for other purposes with a view to harmonize reported statistics and reduce burden, if possible.

66. *Tool:* Post an online dashboard of focal points for countries and custodian agencies. This dashboard should be posted on the UNSD SDG website. It would be updated through secure login by the central focal points at each country and custodian agency. Countries would be responsible for maintaining the list of country focal points per indicator, and custodian agencies would be responsible for maintaining the list of custodian agency contacts per indicator. If there are questions or disagreements about a particular focal point for a given indicator, central focal points at countries and custodian agencies would resolve this through discussion.

67. We also recommend this dashboard include links to national reporting platforms or other reporting methods, if any, for ease of reference.

2. Custodian agency monitoring schedules are unclear to countries, resulting in delays

68. Data collection and release calendars were emphasized as important, but found incomplete or unclear. Most countries noted that this made it difficult to validate globally harmonized national statistics. Custodian agencies (e.g., UNODC) also the importance of well established reporting schedules to facilitate good reporting and validation by countries.

69. *Suggestion:* Provide a schedule for custodian agency SDG data requests and updates. This would support sufficient time be given for countries to examine specific data to be published on the UN SDG website, and allow sufficient time for custodian agencies to meet their publication deadlines for the SDG Annual Report.

70. *Tool:* Provide a master schedule for updates of data and metadata for each indicator on the SDGs website. This schedule could be maintained by custodian agencies using secure access/password. The schedule should provide sufficient notice for countries to submit and verify data

3. Metadata for requested statistics are unclear, resulting in delays.

¹⁴ UNEP precises there are official focal points for each MEAs to which the indicator is referring. A country focal point for all chemicals and waste MEAs don't exist – as it depends on whether a country is a Party to a particular convention

¹⁵ For example, national statistics requested for a given SDG indicator may be a part of a previously existing and broader transmission of data and indicators to the custodian agency

71. Metadata were missing, incomplete, or unclear for pilot indicators. Global metadata for certain tier 1 (12.4.1 indicator) and 2 (17. 1.2) indicators were not posted on the UNSD SDG website at the time the pilot was launched. In addition, metadata that had been provided for pilot study indicators posted were not sufficient to explain observed discrepancies between national statistics from countries and national statistics pulled from an international intermediary database. Since all of the indicators selected for the pilot were tier 1 (with the exception of 17.1.2, designated as tier 2), complete metadata should have been available. However, in some cases, the metadata appear to be under development (e.g., UNEP’s proposal to review its metadata for 12.4.1; metadata proposals for IMF’s indicator, 17.1.2). The need for national metadata was also emphasized. Two agencies noted the importance of national metadata accompanying the national data transmitted for accurate adjustment.

72. Looking more broadly, countries noted they were unaware of working groups established by custodian agencies to develop and refine methodology for certain tier 3 indicators. For all countries to benefit, it would be helpful to make the proceedings of these workgroups available online.

73. *Suggestion:* Improve communication of global and national metadata. Global metadata should be provided by custodian agencies according to the format agreed by the IAEG-SDGs. Global metadata provide information on data sources, the data collection process, methods of calculation, and methods of aggregation at the regional and global level. Reference to international standards of classification and methods should be mentioned. Information about working groups engaged in tier 3 methodology development should be made accessible. National metadata should always be provided with national data (using NRPs or any other method of reporting). National metadata should also be provided by countries to custodian agencies according to a format agreed by the IAEG-SDGs.

74. *Tool:* Post an interactive metadata page to allow easier updates of metadata. Currently, the UNSD metadata pages are static (in pdf format). These pages could be displayed in a way that allows for easy updating by custodian agencies via secure login. For Tier 3 indicators, information on the development of methodology should be provided on the metadata web site, with links to ongoing work and contacts for relevant working groups.

4. Data transmission processes should be made more efficient

75. Monitoring requirements for the SDGs require efficiencies and flexibilities in reporting for both countries and custodian agencies. At the time of the pilot, USA had developed a national reporting platform for SDGs; UK was in process of doing the same. France had developed an SDGs database. Russian Federation and Turkey were considering ways to ensure efficient data transmission, perhaps using an NRP and/or SDMX format. Two agencies were planning to develop an agency reporting platform to receive statistics (e.g., FAO’s FRA Online Platform for Forest Reporting; and UNODC’s platform to receive statistics for the UN Crime Trend Survey). In addition, FAO reported using web scraping to receive statistics for 2.1.2 (USA).

76. *Suggestion:* Both countries and custodian agencies should discuss existing and emerging transmission needs and opportunities. Potential solutions could be discussed at the November IAEG meeting, the January UNSD meeting on reporting platforms, and the March 2018 UNSC side meetings on data flows. Included in this discussion could be (custodian agency) systems to gather information from different (national) sources to reduce the compilation process, such as use of an agency reporting platform that reads from national reporting platforms or other electronic sites. It may also be useful to consider including a functionality in agency reporting platforms that allows comparison of statistics reported for other purposes (such as for conventions) and those reported for the SDGs. Ideas for a federated reporting platform (hosted by UNSD) that could receive inputs from other reporting platforms (countries and custodians alike) could be explored.

77. *Tool:* Arrange workshops to explore existing and potential transmission options. A workshop discussing national reporting platforms (and considerations for agency reporting platforms) was hosted prior to the 2017 UNECE CES Expert Meeting on SDGs; another such workshop is planned in 2018, with particular focus on data flows and possible “federated” platforms. After the completion of the

pilot, UNSD hosted a national reporting platform workshop in January 2018 to explore needs of developing countries in this area.

5. *The validation process is unclear*

78. To produce globally harmonized national statistics that are recognized by and accountable to countries, it is necessary to develop a transparent procedure by which countries are able to review and verify them. However, this procedure is not yet well established. All countries participating in the pilot expressed concern that they were not requested to validate the statistics reported by a custodian agency for their country before publication.

79. Some custodian agencies noted methods in place to facilitate countries' understanding of the global harmonization process in advance (such as UNODC's annual or biennial meetings). In some cases, custodian agencies noted that different harmonization methods are used for the same indicator by different custodian agencies (since the statistics are collected for different, extant purposes—as in the case for the indicator on intentional homicide as managed by UNODC and WHO); this shared responsibility can also complicate the validation process.

80. Some custodian agencies, such as UNODC and UNEP, reported preference for using an agency questionnaire or its secretariat for receipting national statistics and producing global statistics. This would ensure that the national metadata and data received were in suitable form and of sufficient quality to produce robust global statistics.

81. With regard to 2.1.2, FAO reported that some countries declined to validate the global estimate with the rationale that only national official data could be used for SDG reporting. If this is the case, there is a concern that reporting on SDGs will be severely limited and potentially not take full advantage of other available data sources that would otherwise meet acceptable standards of statistical quality. Further, FAO reported that it is unclear how to treat non-responding countries—if their national statistics should then be removed from globally harmonized estimates or aggregate statistics. Standard practice has been to treat these as tacit approval. However, recently some countries have voiced disagreement with that practice. Thus, FAO requested IAEG opinion for a way forward.

82. Suggestion: A transparent (and flexible) validation process that allows maturation is needed. This will take time to implement, as it represents a change from standard practice of tacit approval. Therefore, patience is needed from both countries and custodian agencies as the process is established.

83. Minimally, the validation status must be transparent to countries and custodian agencies. Country-level statistics published in the SDG global data base should always be published with the status of validation by country. Countries should have the discretion to approve the use of non-official national statistics for SDG reporting purposes, consistent with UNSC 48/101/1. The validation negotiation process between countries and custodian agencies may be sensitive, and such deliberative discussions should be protected. A method is needed that allows flexibility in country approval. If data are taken from international databases, the citation and date of that harvest should be cited in the global database. Discussions between custodian agencies sharing custody to determine a common approach and single estimates should be encouraged and reported to the IAEG.

84. Tool: Include on the UNSD SDG dashboard a mechanism to facilitate the validation negotiation process. Allow countries to indicate through secure access the status of validation in a manner that protects the sensitivity of deliberations and using a format that allows for progression of validation and does not unduly impede publication of statistics. This moves beyond an (overly simple) approval/disapproval status, allows progression in verification over time, can help target additional support, and supports custodian agency reporting needs (as this could allow publication to occur with caveats specified by the country).

85. Three status variables are proposed; the values for the first two variables would be limited to viewing by identified points of contact at countries and custodian agencies. The third variable would be viewable by all. Countries would be notified to validate indicator data according to the master schedule (described above).

Variable 1: For each indicator in the global SDGs data base, the country should be able to select among these labels (*viewable only by points of contact*). See example below.

2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	
	Review Status (select one):
▼	Not reviewed by country (default)
✓	Country reviewing
	Country reviewed

Variable 2: The level of validation could then be indicated with a second variable (*viewable only by points of contact*). See example below.

2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	
	Validation Progress (select all that apply):
▼	Not reviewed by country (default)
✓	Data source confirmed by country
✓	Method of calculation confirmed by country
	Method of comparability (adjustments) confirmed by country
	Data values confirmed (assumes the other previous items are confirmed)

Variable 3: Then, the country could signal its approval status (*viewable by all*). See example below.

2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	
	Approval Status (select one):
▼	Pending input from country (<i>default; country unable to validate these data</i>)
✓	Country approves data
	Country does not approve data

86. Additional Suggestions: Request the IAEG-SDGs to consider a policy scenario whereby global statistics would not need to undergo country validation, such as when global statistics are produced using a previously approved methodology/classification.

6. A negotiation and resolution process should be established.

87. Navigating the SDG monitoring process would not be possible without the strong, positive relationships long-established in the international statistical system. With the extraordinary challenge of providing statistics for SDGs comes great responsibility and pressures to maintain high professional standards while making progress—together--in a field largely unknown. All participants in the pilot study countries expressed strong and positive relationships support and willingness to continue discussions with those involved. These participants provided extraordinary examples of the patience, flexibility, and ingenuity needed for effective monitoring to succeed.

88. Making progress required detailed discussions. At times, this revealed differences of opinion or expectation on the part of countries and custodian agencies alike. Yet, common understanding could not be reached without identifying these differences and resolving them. Deeply-felt professional respect and shared values of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics provided a strong basis for finding a way forward.

89. Suggestion: Countries and custodian agencies should establish early the collaboration style that works best for them allowing variation by indicator, country, and custodian agency. In some

countries, the role of the national validator and the national coordinator may differ. Establishing this process and relationship early will inform the precise content of the data transmitted by the country and the adjustments proposed by the agency, especially when initiating dataflows or modifying data sources or metadata. Clarifying the specific methodological requirements of the indicators through this dialogue may reduce the need for adjustments to official national statistics or estimations by non-country sources. NSOs should establish a dialogue with custodian agencies regarding their statistical capacity development efforts. Automatic exchanges could be pursued based on current experiences (e.g., SDMX flows).

ANNEX 1: TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS (AND STATUS)

	Issue	Suggestion	Tool	Status
1	Delayed and/or impaired communication due to unclear points of contact.	Identify focal points for countries and custodian agencies.	Post an online dashboard of focal points for countries and custodian agencies.	UNSD added prototype in late 2017.
2	Custodian agency monitoring schedules are unclear to countries, resulting in delays	Provide a schedule for custodian agency SDG data requests and updates.	Provide a master schedule for updates of data and metadata for each indicator on the SDGs website	April 2018, UNSD provided a webpage with data collection information
3	Metadata for requested statistics are unclear, resulting in delays.	Improve communication of global and national metadata	Post an interactive metadata page to allow easier updates of metadata.	September 2018, UNSD created a E-Handbook
4	Data transmission processes should be made more efficient	Both countries and custodian agencies should discuss existing and emerging transmission needs and opportunities	Arrange workshops to explore existing and potential transmission options	January 2018 UNSD Workshop April 2018 UNECE Workshop
5	The validation process is unclear	A transparent (and flexible) validation process that allows maturation is needed	Include on the UNSD SDG dashboard a mechanism to facilitate the validation negotiation process.	[update?]
6	A negotiation and resolution process should be established.	Countries and custodian agencies should establish early the collaboration style that works best for them	Arrange workshops and pilots to facilitate country and custodian agency collaboration on data flows	[update?]

ANNEX 2: DETAILED ANALYSIS BY INDICATOR

1. 2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population

Overall assessment: Data availability is low in developed countries. Data are not yet published in the global database, although FAO could provide its own data based on Gallup data when national data are not available. The challenge is to find an agreement with FAO to be able to calculate the indicator, at least at the regional level for developed countries

- Since July 2017, data are no longer released in the global database for pilot study countries (apart from USA).
- FAO has provided metadata that are complete and clear. FAO has proposed a national survey with a FIES-SM module. As an alternative if countries don't implement such a survey, data may be provided through a Gallup survey with FIES module implemented by FAO of 1000 individuals.

Information provided by countries: One country has a national survey which is not fully aligned with the FAO/FIES data primary because different thresholds (higher) are used to determine food insecurity. Therefore, country's data are not comparable with FAO/FIES data and an adjustment is necessary to make data comparable at the global level. The country has not validated FAO's adjustment because of a lack of transparency of the adjustment. The country would like to be more closely involved in the adjustment and requests FAO to use their NRP and not another international database to pull their data.

Two other countries have no data and have been invited to validate FAO estimates based on Gallup surveys.¹⁶ One of this country has recognized the importance of having the indicator at the global level. Without data, and with a low probability of having such indicator in a near future, the country proposed to mention clearly the FAO data source for their national data with metadata (sample definition, sample size, raw or adjusted data). It could be added that the country is unable to validate them. Another solution could be the publication of data only at the regional level for developed countries, with national data estimated for the calculation of the aggregate but not released. In any case, the country validation is necessary.

Finally, two countries have not answered to the FAO's request.

Information provided by custodian agency: FAO regrets that two of the five countries in this case study did not validate the data FAO proposed, based on the notion that they were not derived by national official surveys. Taken to its logical conclusion, this position would imply that only national official data can ever be used for SDG reporting, which in FAO's view, is not the proper meaning of UNSC 48/101/1. This would imply that non-official sources (private sources, "big data", new data sources generate by the "data revolution") cannot be used by virtue of their very nature, irrespective of an validation procedure carried out by the NSO. It seems that currently many NSOs are not in a position to validate data which are not produced by them (or by other national institutions).

FAO underlines the treatment of non- responding countries. Could be interpreted as a tacit approval?

Proposal from pilot study:

- A transparent and flexible validation process that allows maturation (for instance status of validation by country and status of the validation negotiation process between countries and custodian agency). (*See part 3 point 5 on country self assessment*)
- A conflict resolution process, especially to deal the treatment of non responses
 - National focal point reliable for Agencies negotiations
 - A calendar for validation and for release

¹⁶ When data are not produced at the National level, it might be challenging finding the potential producer in the country

- Possibility to ask an arbitration of IAEG-SDGs

2. 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio

Overall assessment: A dialogue with WHO would be useful to analyse discrepancies between national and global data estimated by WHO.

- Data are released in the global database for all countries of that pilot study.
- Metadata are provided by WHO. However, the explanations are not sufficiently developed on differences between global and national figures. Why adjustments are necessary when countries have data fully aligned with metadata?

Information provided by countries: National data are now available for three countries. One country is currently doing some data quality assessment before starting to release its own data. National data are transmitted to the European Health database by countries of that pilot study. One country has noted countries' data in the European Data base differ from those of the Global Data base. Clarification is needed.

Information provided by custodian agency: WHO has been reporting on Maternal mortality rate regularly since early 2000s for MMR. The MMR work is overseen by the Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (MMEIG) and an independent external technical advisory group. The latest report, with estimates for years 1990 to 2015 by country, is available at

<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/>

For this indicator, WHO carries out a consultation with Member States prior to publication of final results. In line with Executive Board resolution (EB107.R8), public release of estimates at country level must be preceded by consultation with WHO Member States. Consultation with Member States is carried out in coordination and consultation with WHO Regional Offices and Country Offices. This consultation is intended to provide Member States with an opportunity to comment on methods and data sources, and where relevant, to provide updated input data. It also aims to promote strengthening of country health information systems and country estimation capacity. The consultation also gives Member States advance notice of estimates that will be published for their country.

Note that country consultation does not require that WHO and an individual Member State reach consensus on the final results. This is often not possible, as Member States may use a range of methods and assumptions, and differing approaches to bias adjustment. Where Member States produce official estimates that differ, either because of different but generally valid methods, or because of differences in approach to definitions and bias adjustment, WHO may include a statement such as the following with the results: "Figures have been computed by WHO to ensure comparability, thus they are not necessarily the official statistics of Member States, which may use alternative rigorous methods".

The data inputs and methods for MMR estimates are fully in the public domain and available at the publication link given above.

Proposal from pilot study:

- A meeting with WHO is necessary to clarify why national data, even if they are fully aligned with metadata, can't be used.

3. 3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries

Overall assessment: A dialogue with WHO would be useful to clarify focal points and to analyse discrepancies between national and global data estimated by WHO.

- Data are released in the global data base for all countries of that pilot study (last data available 2013)

- Metadata are available in the global database. May be metadata could be complemented with information on re treatment of missing values, data sources, data collection and data release calendar and sources of differences in national and global level.

Information provided by countries: Four countries have data fully aligned with metadata. However, national data for three countries differ from those published in the national database. They ask for clarification.

For one country, global data are fully aligned with their national data. The national focal point with WHO for this indicator is a member of the Interdepartmental Ministerial Road Observatory, designated by the French government. He has to transmit data on road traffic, included the SDGs data, in order to produce a report on road security. NSO does not wish to change this organization¹⁷ which works well. But as it is a statistical indicator, NSO would like to be informed when national data and indicator on death traffic are transmitted, and would like to be involved in any negotiation with the agency concerning the adjustments of data if needed. The death rate but also the absolute level of road death should be transmitted to calculate the aggregate. The country also noted that data are already published in the OECD data base and are better updated than those of the UN global database.

Information provided by custodian agency: WHO has been reporting regularly biennially from 2009 for the road traffic accident (RTA) . The RTA surveillance work is carried out by WHO with financial support from Bloomberg Philanthropies and involves a biennial survey of WHO Member States requesting a range of data related to road injury, including available time series for road injury deaths from surveillance systems. WHO also routinely collects relevant data as part of its overall collection of cause of death statistics from vital registration systems in Member States. The latest report, with statistics and estimates for year 2013 is available at http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/. WHO carries out a consultation with Member States prior to publication of final results. In line with Executive Board resolution (EB107.R8), public release of estimates at country level must be preceded by consultation with WHO Member States. Consultation with Member States is carried out in coordination and consultation with WHO Regional Offices and Country Offices. This consultation is intended to provide Member States with an opportunity to comment on methods and data sources, and where relevant, to provide updated input data. It also aims to promote strengthening of country health information systems and country estimation capacity. The consultation also gives Member States advance notice of estimates that will be published for their country.

Note that country consultation does not require that WHO and an individual Member State reach consensus on the final results. This is often not possible, as Member States may use a range of methods and assumptions, and differing approaches to bias adjustment. Where Member States produce official estimates that differ, either because of different but generally valid methods, or because of differences in approach to definitions and bias adjustment, WHO may include a statement such as the following with the results: “Figures have been computed by WHO to ensure comparability, thus they are not necessarily the official statistics of Member States, which may use alternative rigorous methods”.

The biennial survey of Member States also collects available RTA mortality statistics from national road injury surveillance systems, often run separately from the death registration system. These data are also used in the analysis, although they do not represent a gold standard as they usually collect information on deaths within a restricted time frame (at the scene, within 1 day, within 1 week, or within 1 month for example). The most recent data reported from surveillance systems is also reported in the Global status report on road safety. The surveillance data is the primary source for some countries where surveillance data (adjusted to take account of under-reporting from time frame) systematically have higher numbers of deaths across the time period than does the death registration data. All your pilot study countries participate in the WHO survey and country consultation.

¹⁷ And the focal point is officially nominated

Proposal from pilot study:

- Complete metadata with treatment of missing values, sources, data collection and data release calendar and sources of differences in national and global level
- WHO should provide more information on its national data contact, and the adjustments made on National data in a transparent manner

4. *4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance for scholarships by sector and type of study*

Overall assessment: No difficulties reported (exception: Turkey). Data are directly transmitted by the OECD.

- Turkey is concerned by this indicator as receiver of ODA from donors, Data for Turkey are available on Global SDGs website (last data available 2014)
- Metadata, complete and clear, are available on the SDGs website. Data are collected by OECD for all DAC members and many non-DAC providers that report to the DAC on aid for scholarship. Data are collected according to a procedure well established and data are not adjusted. OECD transmit to UNSD data on disbursements.

Information provided by countries: These data are not provided to UNSD by Turkey. These donations are not followed in Turkey. Clarification is requested.

5. *8.1.1 Growth of GDP per capita*

Overall assessment: Data are pulled from intermediary base. Global data are more or less aligned with National data. Countries request clarification and the possibility to validate data released.

- Since this indicator is widely available in international intermediary database, no agencies focal points have been requested for that pilot study.
- Metadata are available in the global database and are complete. May be it should be mention more clearly which national data are necessary to aggregate data and calculate the global data (here, real GDP in 2005 \$ and Population, providing the national growth of real GDP per capita is not sufficient)
- Data are provided in the global database for each country of that pilot study

Information provided by countries: Every country in the pilot has national data available, which are annually updated. Data are provided by NSO. These data are transmitted to international intermediary base (Eurostat, OECD). Nevertheless, global data are not aligned with national data, maybe because of delay in updating. Countries agree with the process of pulling data from international database to avoid double reporting, but they request clarification on discrepancies if any. They would like to be invited to validate data.

Proposal from pilot study:

- For each indicator, a focal point should be provided in the agencies to get clarification if needed
- Metadata should provide more precise information on data updating
- Countries should be able to validate data provided in the global data base

6. *8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training*

Overall assessment: Metadata should be updated to include data collection and data release calendars. For one country, late updating of data. Country validation could reduce discrepancies with national ones.

- Since this indicator is widely available in international intermediary database (Eurostat, OECD .) , no agencies focal points have been requested for that pilot study

- Metadata are available in the global database. But no information is provided on data collection and data release calendar, on current data availability and treatment of missing values, regional and global estimates, sources of differences between global and national figure.
- Data are released in the global database for each country of that pilot study, last data available is 2015 except for USA 2012.

Information provided by countries: Every country of the pilot has national data available, which are annually updated. Data are produced by NSO. Based on the EU Labour survey, for EU countries (included Turkey), the indicator is calculated by Eurostat and published in Eurostat database. For USA and Russian Federation, data are directly transmitted to ILO.

National data are aligned with global data except for two data (2009 and 2010) for Russian Federation. As for USA, data are transmitted to ILO but data are not released after 2012 in the global data base for an unknown reason. Data are available on US NRP.

Data transmitted by USA are not exactly aligned with global data because of time period (16-24 years rather than 15-24 years). Data transmitted by Russian Federation don't take into account people acquiring professional skills (training) but it will be improved in 2018. The custodian agencies is informed but global data are not adjusted.

Proposal from pilot study:

- An agency focal point should be provided to get clarification if needed
- Metadata should be complemented, especially with data collection and data release calendar, collection process, treatment of missing values and methods of aggregation
- Countries should be able to validate data provided in the global data base to prevent any discrepancy

7. 9.5.1 *Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP*

Overall assessment: No difficulties identified. Works rather well.

- Since this indicator is widely available in international intermediary database (Eurostat, OECD), no agencies focal points have been requested for that pilot study
- Metadata are available in the global data base with all items requested, especially detailed data collection process (what is welcome by countries)

Information provided by countries: Data are released in the global database for each country of that pilot study, last data available is 2014. Data are pulled from the OECD data base. Every country in the pilot has national data available, which are annually updated and produced by NSO or by the statistical department of the Ministry of Science and Technology. Note that national NRP (USA) or national database might provide earlier updated data.

National data are aligned with global data except for Russian Federation between 2011 to 2014 because of a revision in the calculation of GDP. Countries agree with the process of pulling data from international database to avoid double reporting, but they request clarification on discrepancies if any.

Proposal from pilot study:

- An agency focal point should be provided to get clarification if any discrepancies
- Validation of data before Global release

8. 12.4.1 *Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreement on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement*

Overall assessment: Metadata for this non-statistical indicator should be refined.

- Data are released in the global database for each country of that pilot study, last data available is 2015
- It is a non-statistical indicator. Therefore, it is out of the scope of the National Statistical System (NSS). The NSS could be only a national coordinator for this indicator, but not data provider. The National focal point which provide information should be designated among the national government agencies, lines of Ministries¹⁸.
- Metadata have been posted on the UN SDGs website only since July 2007 following the request of the pilot study.¹⁹
- Data are posted on the UN SDGs website without being validated by countries, according to the method described in the metadata. ²⁰
- No focal point at the country level has been yet identified by UNEP.

Information provided by countries: No countries (on the 4) in that pilot study have identified a national focal point for that indicator. It is true it is more challenging because statisticians have to find the right person in the line of ministries or National government agencies²¹.

One country has asked for a national focal point for each convention that scores this indicator. This country would like to be able to verify data in advance of being posted and would like to know the source of the information on which the response is based

A country notes such a non statistical indicator has no vocation to be posted on its NSO website, since it is not statistic data and therefore can't be examined through the lens of FPOS.

Information provided by custodian agency: The UNEP itself is very critical with the metadata it proposed. The UNEP explained it was very challenging to develop a methodology which would be flexible enough but also comprehensive. The complexity is linked to the fact that each of the convention has a set of specific requirements for the submission of information with different schedules and triggers (e.g. in some cases it is a one –time off submission, in other cases the trigger is a specific data or an amendment of the convention). Also it was difficult to determine whether all parameters should be an equal weight as the efforts for data collection/provision under each parameters on the national level can significantly differ. Another challenge was related to the fact that, for example, in the BRS Secretariat, although there are databases for the national reports other data had to be checked manually and therefore, putting the data together required quite significant staff time. As for the difficulties of data submissions by Parties, there is a divers number of reasons behind why Parties do not submit information/data as required, starting with the lack of human resources allocated to these tasks, weak or absence of national data collection systems, challenges in coordination between government agencies (e.g. ministries of environment, customs, ministries of trade, etc..), lack of involvement of the national statistical offices, lack of funding, delay in accesing the GEF funding (in the case of the submission of the National Implemntaion Plans under the Stockholm Cencention etc..)

¹⁸ As mentioned above, each Party to the each agreement is represented by the focal point, who was nominated by the Ministry of Foreigh Affairs. The focal points have specific responsibilities, including the submission of the national reports (under the Basel and Stockholm Conventions) to the Secretariat. For different conventions focal points can be placed within different departments of the Ministry of Environment, or different Ministries.

¹⁹ It was just a problem of correct updating the UN SDGs website with all information transmitted by agencies

²⁰ Data is collected by the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions from Focal Points for the Basel Conventions, Official contact points for the Rotterdam Convention, official contact points for the Stockholm Convention, by the Ozone Secretariat from national focal points for the Montreal Protocol, and by the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention from national focal points for the Minamata Convention.

²¹ UNEP explains that the list of focal points at least for the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions are publicly available on the website. Not sure what would be the role of a national focal point. There are various parametres for this indicator and it is actually the Secretariat who receives and repors this information further to UNEP as the custodian agency. E. g. if the country has submitted a National Implemnetaiotn Plan under the Stockholm Convention, the Secretariat reports whether the Plan has been received or not

The UNEP also proposes an automatization of a system which would take information from different sources, such as the Electronic system for national reporting to reduce the workload for putting the information from different sources together.

The UNEP also requires capacity development of national institutions responsible for the implementation of the MEAs on chemicals and waste. A better coordination at the national level between different agencies, cooperation between the ministries of environment and national statistical offices should be enhanced, including identifying data gaps

Proposal from pilot study:

- IAEG-SDGs examination of the current metadata to make a decision on an eventual reclassification and refinement of methods if necessary

9. *15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area)*

Overall assessment: Contact should be facilitated between SDGs national statisticians and the officially nominated national FRA focal point. Follow as an interesting prototype for data coordination the new FRA online platform development whose goal is to facilitate interaction and communication between FAO and different stakeholders.

- Data are published in the UN SDGs data base. These data are aligned with national data for 2 of the 3 pilot countries which examined this indicator. For Russian Federation, data are not aligned.
- Metadata are available and complete and very precise. The five-year reporting to FAO on forest area has been part of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) for several decades. But FAO also notes that NSO's have not been much involved in the official forestry statistics.

Information provided by countries: In France, the focal point for FRA reporting is officially nominated by government and is outside the National Statistical system (he belongs to National Geographical Information (IGN)). It was decided not to change what organisation but to ask the official national contact to inform and associate the person responsible of SDGs indicator in the National statistical system. In Turkey, the FRA indicator is only one of the two national indicators produced to follow forest area. Russian Federation states two series: the FRA series and the Rosstat series, which differs. Clarification is needed

Information provided by custodian agency: The five-year reporting to FAO on forest area has been part of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) for several decades. All five pilot countries have the information readily available and have been able to submit their reports in a timely manner. Communications and interactions with the officially nominated national focal points ("FRA National Correspondents") has worked smoothly.

However, it is worth noting that data countries submit to FAO/FRA are processed by the countries to comply to the global definition of forest and the reference reporting years. They may therefore be slightly different to data managed by forest authorities and statistical offices based on national categories and definitions, as well as those reported to UNFCCC according to definitions specific for that purpose.

To facilitate the exchanges, FAO mentions the new FRA online platform will include functionality to facilitate interaction and communication between FAO and national focal points. It will also include functionality to compare reporting to FAO and SDGs with national reporting to other processes, such as the Climate Convention.

The new FRA online platform will include functionality to facilitate interaction and communication between FAO and national focal points. It will also include functionality to compare reporting to FAO and SDGs with national reporting to other processes, such as the Climate Convention.

FAO foresees involving more the NSOs in the reporting and capacity building for the coming Forest reporting.

Proposal from pilot study:

- Contacts need to be taken by SDGs statisticians with the officially nominated national FRA focal point, in order to be more involved in the validation of data
- Follow closely the new FRA online platform development planned to facilitate consistency with different reporting to international agencies. It opens new interesting perspective, more efficient and less significant staff time

10. 16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100 000 population, by sex and age

Overall assessment: Contact should be facilitated between SDGs national statisticians and the officially nominated national UN-CTS focal point. Follow if any, the implementation of an on-line interface to collect data to take into account the National Reporting Platform.

- Data are released in the UN global data base for all countries of that pilot (2010-2015)
- Metadata are available and complete. Data are collected via the UN-Crime Trend Survey (CTS) through the national UN-CTS Focal points. But no information on “gaps” between National data and global definitions.
- National focal points transmitted to countries of that pilot are not always statisticians; sometimes they are correspondent from the UN National Permanent mission in Vienna

Information provided by countries: Two of three countries providing input on this indicator would like to change the focal point. USA requests UNODC takes its preferred focal point. The second country is working on a national arrangement to solve the question. Two countries mention the process of validation is not enough transparent. One country would like UNODC pulls its data from its NRP.

Data are not necessarily fully aligned with UNODC metadata. For one country, national data are not fully aligned with UNODC metadata because of current differences between the UN-CTS classification and the national law.

Information provided by custodian agency:

Focal points. UNODC promotes the role of NSOs in the collection of crime and criminal justice from various relevant institutions (police, prosecution, courts, prisons). The establishment of a national mechanism under the lead of the NSO is a good practice, in particular with a view to SDG data collection and the implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS). Having a stronger and visible role of NSO in the data collection, standardisation and dissemination process is a way to strengthen the annual data collection. However, UNODC Secretariat needs to follow decisions taken by its principle bodies, such as the Commission for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as for example to establish UN-CTS Focal Points. In many countries, especially in Europe, the Focal Point is the NSO though this is a choice made by Governments.

Data collection. The data collection is done through the UN-Crime Trend Survey (UN-CTS). The new UN-CTS collects detailed and comprehensive metadata on the data provided by countries. The framework is the one described by the ICCS and collected metadata assess compliance with the ICCS definitions of international homicide, geographical and institutional coverage of data, counting unit, counting rules.

In countries covered by Eurostat data collection (EU+ other EU-Partner countries), UNODC carries out its annual data collection (UN Crime Trend Survey, UN-CTS) jointly with Eurostat, which is in charge of collecting the data and transmitting them to UNODC. Data validation is done jointly by UNODC and Eurostat through the network of joint UNODC-Eurostat Focal Points. This has worked well over the past year and is planned to continue.

A calendar for data collection and data transmission. Because the UN-CTS needs inputs from several agencies within each country a strong coordination body is needed. To facilitate the coordination, a calendar for data collection (usually 3rd quarter each year) and for data validation (1st quarter of following year) has been followed in recent year. The time plan for data collection, validation and publication is set by UNODC in coordination with Eurostat and other partner agencies.

National Validation. UNODC sends a Note Verbale to the country and the Focal Point and publish the data on a closed website with password so that the country /focal point can answer UNODC potential changes in data (passive validation).

The revision process of the UN-CTS has produced an instrument more responsive to new and emerging data collection needs, particularly on SDG 16 indicators, including the indicator 16.1.1. The revision process included successive drafts and extensive consultations with UN Member States. The UN-CTS is translated in the 6 official UN languages. The UN-CTS is sent to and received from countries through a secure data portal. Possible options to improve data collection in the future include the development of a on-line interface data input/or the provision of standard data files, as for example SDMX format. Though latter options are heavily dependant on the availability of additional resources for UNODC, while their acceptability /feasibility by Member States need to be assessed.

Proposals to solve conflicts. Technical consultations for clarifications through the Focal Point are part of the validation process, mostly through email and telephone. Annual meeting of Eurostat focal points and biennial Global meetings of UN-CTS Focal Points are important for technical and strategic discussions on data collection process and contents, including SDG indicators. Importantly, SDG data for this indicator are jointly published with WHO on developing a common approach to produce a single figure on intentional homicide for each country at international level.

Proposal from pilot study:

- Contacts need to be taken by SDGs statisticians with the officially nominated national UN-CTS focal point
- Follow closely the possible implementation of a on-line interface to collect data and the link with National Reporting Platform (NRP)

11. 17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes

Overall assessment: Metadata should be refined to clarify the definition of the indicator, the methods of calculation of a global indicator. May be an examination of metadata by IAEG-SDGs for confirmation or revision of the Tier classification.

- Data have not yet been released in the global database though the indicator is Tier 1
- Metadata are not available with the SDGs global database. Metadata are only available in the archive repository of the UN IAEG-SDGs website.
- Metadata should be complemented with the methods used to aggregate the national data provided in order to calculate the global indicator, which is indeed the aim of the national data collection by IMF. No information are given on the planned collection and release calendar.
- IMF has provided focal points for this indicator: NSO focal points for 3 countries of that pilot, but also 2 focal points in lines of Ministry of Finance for the two other countries.

Information provided by countries: Russian Federation planned to have data April 2018 USA Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) planned to have data in the coming years (1 or 2 years).

Nevertheless, for one country, some question raises on the precision of metadata and on the need of clarification on the definition of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes (Budgetary Central Government with or without extra-budgetary funds, Consolidated General Government). Moreover, data availability with comparable data should be evaluated for each region in the world. Finally, information should be given on the methods of aggregation of national data to get a global or regional

indicator. Maybe a revision of the classification is needed with a re examination of this indicator by the IAEG-SDGs.

Information provided by custodian agency: “Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes” is understood to mean the proportion of overall budgetary central government revenue derived exclusively from domestic tax revenues (where domestic refers to taxes that are domestically legislated and levied on companies doing business and individuals living in a specific country). For reporting this indicator budgetary central government is considered the most appropriate level of institutional coverage as it will encompass virtually all countries. This is because, for most developing and emerging market economies compiling data for the consolidated general government and its sub sectors is problematic owing to limitations in the availability and/or timeliness of source data.

In the case of France (and many other EU member states), IMF explains data are not separately reported to Eurostat for Budgetary Central Government. Rather, Budgetary Central Government is reported together with Extra-budgetary Funds, where they exist. As such, for France (and many other EU member states), Central Government (excluding Social Security) would be more comparable with those countries that are only able to report Budgetary Central Government series, since 1) this SDG seeks to assess domestic resource mobilization and improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection, and 2) for most developing and emerging market economies tax and revenue collection tends to occur at the budgetary central government level, this seems to be the most logical approach.

Nonetheless, for advanced economies (G20 and perhaps a select group of others), we can see the merit in also making comparisons at the consolidated general government level. This is because for cross-country comparability purposes the ideal comparator is the consolidated general government as described in GFSM 2014 Chapter 2. The GFS database allows for this for countries that report general government and its subsectors, as relevant. “

These comments raise the question of comparability of data transmitted at the global level.

France notes that data are not separately reported to Eurostat for Budgetary Central Government distinguishing budgetary and extra budgetary funds, but this piece of information is available at least in some European countries. The feasibility of adapting Eurostat ESA table transmission with a data transmission which provides budgetary central government series separately might be examined

Proposal from pilot study:

- Complete metadata with a more precise definition of the indicator, the methods of aggregation to calculate a global indicator
- Examination of the metadata by IAEG-SDGs for confirmation or revision of the Tier classification