United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Sub-regional workshop on integration of administrative data, big data and geospatial information for the compilation of SDG indicators for English-speaking African countries

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 23-25 April 2018

Concept note

The UN Development Account 10th tranche brings together the collective efforts of ten implementing[1] entities into a comprehensive programme of action cantered around strengthening national statistical systems to measure, monitor and report on the sustainable development goals. Through four main pillars, the programme will support national capacity to measure and report on the 2030 Agenda. The Pillar I of the programme namely 'means of implementation', focuses on enhancing capacity of developing countries to strengthen statistical institutional environments and production processes across multiple statistical domains to measure, monitor and report on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data recognizes the need to facilitate the application of modern technologies and new data sources in mainstream statistical activities to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as tracking progress of the SDGs. In particular, it calls for the identification and removal of barriers to the use of new data sources, including registries and administrative data, geospatial information systems, and other innovative data sources. To this end, the action plan stresses the need to build confidence, trust and capacity through coordinated measures, legal reforms and better funding, as well as through the development of principles and guidelines, so as to support the integration of data from traditional and non-traditional data sources.

This workshop on administrative data, big data, and geospatial information for the compilation of SDG indicators is organized under expectation accomplishment EA1 of the programme "*Enhanced capacity of target countries to launch or improve institutional mechanisms and procedures, at national and local level, for the production and utilization of SDG indicators*". The workshop is organized jointly by the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nation Statistics Division and UN Environment.

Expected Purpose

The workshop will allow experts from national statistical systems, which includes programme target countries, academic institutions in the region, and international organizations to discuss issues and challenges with regard to the use of administrative records and non-traditional data sources for timely decision making and service delivery at the local level, and the integration of

[1] The 10 implementing entities are UNSD, UNCTAD, UN Environment, UN-Habitat, UN-ODC and the 5 Regional Commissions – ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA

geospatial information and statistics for effective and efficient implementation of SDGs. The workshop will also help facilitate countries and other relevant institutions to share best practices in use of technology and innovative approaches, including the aera of geospatial information systems, to enhance the production of data and statistics.

In preparation for the workshop, countries will be asked to assess potential data sources available to produce data and statistics for the SDG indicators and to identify good practices as examples to share in the workshop. So, a short questionnaire will be developed and sent to all countries. The results of the assessments will be used to guide the workshop.

Expected Outcome

This workshop will help participants achieve a common and improved understanding of the technical issues and challenges involved in using non-traditional and administrative data sources in the production of statistics for the implementation and follow up and review of Agenda 2030. The workshop, through sharing of good practices, will help clarify how these new and non-traditional data sources can be integrated and mainstreamed into the national data and statistical systems for timely evidence-based decision making at all levels. A summary note including main challenges, case examples, and suggestions on how to integrate data sources in the production of data will be prepared. In addition, the discussions of the workshop will inform subsequent technical advisory missions to the project countries and the development and refinement of national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDSs).

Participants and registration

The target groups of this workshop are experts of national statistical systems, academic institutions and international organizations. It is expected that participants will actively contribute to the workshop where considerable time will be devoted to group discussions and plenary interventions.

Date and venue

The workshop will be held at the United Nations Conference Centre, CR6, UNECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 23 to 25 April 2018.

Working language

This workshop is for English speaking countries. Therefore, English will be the main working language.

Structure of the Workshop

The 3-day workshop will consist of four main sessions.

The first substantive session will focus on setting the stage through presentations from various institutions and other stakeholders at the regional and global level. The stakeholders currently working or planning initiatives on individual basis or in collaboration with other partner in the area of non-traditional data sources, administrative data and geospatial information systems will be invited to contribute presentations. Some countries that have successfully implemented statistical

projects in these areas will also present in this session particularly highlighting the challenges of mainstreaming them into the national statistical systems. This session will allow the participants from countries to assess the extent to which their current national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDS) already incorporate as a priority the use of non-traditional data sources for producing timely and sufficiently disaggregated SDG data and statistics and discuss ways to include them.

In the second session, participants will identify and assess in detail the content and structure of available sets of administrative data that are potentially relevant for the production of data and statistics on sustainable development at different levels of aggregation. They will also discuss challenges and share national experiences and lessons learned in the use of administrative records in the fields of civil registration, health, education, justice, social security, public finance, etc. for the production and analysis of domain-specific SDG indicators and statistics.

The third session will allow participants to explore big data and other innovative sources of data, such as citizen-generated data, that could be used in the production of data and statistics on sustainable development. They will share challenges, experiences and lessons learnt in the use of large volumes of data from social media, remote sensing, mobile operators, satellite imagery, etc. for the production and analysis of national Agendas, regional 2063 Agenda and global SDG indicators and statistics. There will also be discussions on the application of the fundamental principles of official statistics and the African Charter on Statistics to data from other sources.

The last session will focus on geospatial information system. The integration of modern geospatial information management systems within mainstream statistical production programmes is a powerful means to enhance data inter-operability and usability for policy-decision making at different levels of aggregation. This session will allow participants to discuss progress, challenges, and opportunities in the integration of geo-spatial information systems to improve the production, analysis and use of SDG Indicators at the local, national, regional, and global levels, particularly as it relates to environmental data and indicators and their interlinkages with the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.

Provisional Agenda

I. Opening
II. Session 1: Scanning the environment
III. Session 2: Use of administrative data for implementing and tracking the progress of Agenda 2030
IV. Session 3: Use of big data and other non-traditional data sources of data in SDG implementation and monitoring
V. Session 4: Geospatial information systems
VI. Closing

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