

CHAPTER-45

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL AND ASSOCIATED STATISTICAL CHALLENGES

45.1 On 25 September 2015, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives meeting at United Nations Headquarters in New York adopted the document titled *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* adopting a new set of global Sustainable Development Goals which will transform the world in the next 15 years. It is accepted by all countries and is applicable to all, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. These are universal goals and targets which involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development viz; Economic, Social and Environmental.

45.2 Background: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an inter-governmentally agreed set of targets relating to international development. They will follow on from the Millennium Development Goals which had the target year as 2015. The SDGs were first formally discussed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 (Rio+20). On 19 July 2014, the UN General Assembly's Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) forwarded a proposal for the SDGs to the Assembly. The 17 goals with 169 targets are covering a broad range of sustainable development issues. These included ending poverty and hunger, improving health and education, making cities more sustainable, combating climate change, and protecting oceans and forests. The Goals and targets are the result of over two years of intensive public consultation and engagement with civil society and other stakeholders around the world, which paid particular attention to the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable.

45.3 These Goals and targets set out are supremely ambitious and transformational vision. Through this the global community envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive; These envisage a world free of fear and violence; A world with universal literacy; A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured; A world with commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and where there is improved hygiene; and where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious; A world where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.

45.4 The SDG document envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity; A world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation; A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been

removed; A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

45.5 The new development agenda, thus envisage a world in which every country enjoys sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. A world in which consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources —from air to land, from rivers, lakes and aquifers to oceans and seas —are sustainable; One in which democracy, good governance and the rule of law, as well as an enabling environment at national and international levels, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger; One in which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient; One in which humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected.

45.6 Continuing the development momentum of MDGs: The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) experience provides compelling evidence that the international community can be mobilized to confront such complex challenges. Governments, civil society and a wide range of international actors conjoined behind the MDGs in a multi front battle against poverty and disease. They generated innovative approaches, vital new data, new resources, and new tools and technology for this struggle. Transparency was enhanced, multilateral approaches were strengthened, and a results-based approach to public policy was fostered. Sound public policies inspired by the MDGs, enhanced by collective action and international cooperation, led to remarkable successes.

45.7 In two decades since 1990, the world has halved extreme poverty, lifting 700 million out of extreme poverty. Between 2000 and 2010, an estimated 3.3 million deaths from malaria were averted, and 22 million lives were saved from fighting tuberculosis. Access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV-infected people has saved 6.6 million lives since 1995. Gender parity in primary school enrolment, access to child and maternal health care, and in women's political participation improved steadily.

45.8 The Post 2015 development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

In the quest to shape a global sustainable development agenda for the years beyond 2015, the international community has embarked upon an unprecedented process. The cornerstone for the current global process of renewal was established in Rio de Janeiro in June of 2012, with the adoption of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development “**The Future We Want.**”The document described the lessons learned from two decades of development experience, and provided an extensive assessment of the progress and gaps in the implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

45.9 The outcome document set out a mandate to establish an open working group to develop a set of sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session. It also provided the basis for their conceptualization. The

document gave the mandate that the sustainable development goals should be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. Poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. In the outcome document, the commitment to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency was reiterated.

45.10 The Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals Constituted by the UNGA has after extensive consultations with member countries, International Organisations, Civil Society and all other stakeholders submitted a Report which was adopted by UNGA as the main document for deciding the post 2015 development agenda. The SDGs, encompassing the three dimensions of sustainable development in terms of economic, social and environmental aspects, are envisaged to be wider than the MDGs which basically reflected the **social** pillar.

45.11 The OWG has proposed 17 Goals and associated 169 targets. These encompass the whole range of interests and concerns among the international community. During 2015 after an extensive intergovernmental negotiating process with involvement of other stakeholders the Goals and Targets were finalised. The UN Summit on Sustainable Development Goals held during 25-27 September 2015 adopted the Goals and Targets as the development agenda for Post 2015.

45.12 The 17 Goals adopted by United Nations are as given below.

Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

45.13 There are 169 targets under the 17 Goals. The Goals and corresponding Targets are given at **Appendix**.

45.14 The Post 2015 Development Agenda with SDGs at its core would be expected to shape national policies and guide the international development cooperation narratives. They would form an important overarching framework of the governance agenda and come under close scrutiny from the parliamentary processes and civil society.

45.15 Monitoring of SDGs, Development of Indicator Framework and Statistical Challenges in Monitoring the SDGs: All Governments have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels, in relation to the progress made in implementing the Goals and targets over the coming 15 years. The high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council will have the central role in overseeing follow-up and review at the global level.

45.16 Indicators are being developed to assist this work. Quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind. Such data is key to decision-making. Data and information from existing reporting mechanisms should be used where possible. There is requirement to intensify the efforts to strengthen statistical capacities towards this. There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets. Monitoring the progress achieved on a regular basis is the challenge to official statisticians.

45.17 Indicator Framework for SDGs: Indicators will be the backbone of monitoring the SDGs at local, national, regional, and global levels. They will serve as a **management tool** to help countries develop implementation strategies and allocate resources accordingly, and as a **report card** to measure progress towards achieving a target and to ensure the accountability of governments and other stakeholders for achieving the SDGs. The monitoring framework and indicators for the SDGs should reflect the lessons from the MDGs.

45.18 For each targets we need to identify indicators focused on measurable outcomes. They are to be action oriented, global in nature and universally applicable. They need to take into

account our national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities. They build on the foundation laid by the Millennium Development Goals, seek to complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals and respond to new challenges. They constitute an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development. Targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each Government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognize their inter-linkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions.

45.19 Quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress. Such data is key to decision-making. There is a requirement to intensify our efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in the country to address the challenge.

45.20 As per the monitoring mechanism envisaged for SDGs, each country will choose the indicators that are best suited to track its own progress towards sustainable development. National ownership at all levels of the SDG framework is critical, and national reporting must respond to national priorities and needs. For this reason, each country may pursue its own set of national indicators. Such a set of indicators may consist of the Global Reporting Indicators used to support the global monitoring framework and Complementary National Indicators that address each country's specific challenges, priorities, and preferences.

45.21 Principles for Indicator selection: The UN Statistical Commission in its 46th Session in March 2015 stressed the following points:

- The development of a robust and high-quality indicator framework is a technical process which requires time and needs to be conducted in stages, including the possibility of future refinements as knowledge evolves.
- Given the possibility of measurement and capacity constraints of Member States, the global indicator framework should contain only a limited number of indicators;
- Strike a balance between reducing the number of indicators and policy relevance; build on the experiences of the Millennium Development Goals; and take into account conceptual indicator frameworks that have already been developed.
- National Statistical Offices are to play the leading role in the development of the indicator framework to ensure national ownership.

Indicators should flow naturally from goals and targets and be directly relevant to a sound and relevant monitoring system for the new development framework. The national statistical development strategies should govern the work on indicators. The cost-benefit of data collection for indicators needs to be carefully considered.

45.22 Global SDG Indicator Framework : The UN Statistical Commission in its 46th Session in March 2015 has endorsed a roadmap for the development and implementation of the global indicator framework which included formation of an **Inter-Agency and Expert Group on**

Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG) and a High Level Group (HLG).

IAEG-SDG has since been constituted by UN Statistical Division (UNSD) with the representation of 28 countries as Members and the Regional, International organizations and agencies as observers tasked with developing global indicator framework. India is a member of the IAEG-SDG. The first meeting of the IAEG-SDG was held during 1-2 June in New York and the second meeting in Bangkok during 26-28 October 2015. The HLG is to provide overall guidance for the implementation of global indicator framework.

45.23 The principles of adoption of Indicators for SDGs: The principles set by the Inter Government Negotiations (IGN) in March 2015 are as under:

- i. Indicators must directly respond to the goals and targets
- ii. Must cover all targets, including targets on means of implementation and give equal weight to all targets;
- iii. Must maintain the balance achieved, and should not introduce any new or contentious issues;
- iv. The number of indicators should be limited and should include multi-purpose indicators that address several targets at the same time.

In addition the following selection criteria for global indicators were suggested by the IAEG-SDG in the June 2015 meeting:

- i. **Relevancy** with the target
- ii. **Feasibility** in relation with official data and estimation
- iii. **Measurability** in terms of statistical measurement
- iv. **Accessibility** in terms of easy communication and easy understanding
- v. **Transparency** consultation with stakeholders in developing global indicators

45.24 The progress so far in development of Global Indicators and India's Efforts:

Taking inputs from the first meeting of IAEG-SDG in June 2015, the UNSD shared first set of global indicators on 7th July 2015 with the member countries and also with the observers of the IAEG-SDG. MoSPI sought comments on this list of proposed global indicators from the 41 Ministries/Departments directly related with the subject of the target. The Ministries were requested to examine the list of proposed global indicators from the point of view of its relevancy (i.e indicators must directly respond to the proposed Goals and Targets and should not introduce any new or contentious issues), measurability and availability of official data. There have three meetings of the IAEG-SDG since then. MoSPI has consulted the nodal ministries of SDG Goals according to NITI Aayog mapping from time to time to provide comments to UNSD on the global indicator list. IAEG-SDG has submitted a report to the UNSD for consideration in the 48th session of the Un statistical Commission to be held in March 2017.

45.25 Regional Monitoring of the SDGs: For monitoring SDGs at Regional level, UNESCAP has convened a meeting of countries in Asia Pacific Region during 21-23 September 2015. A set of Regional Indicators is being developed for Regional monitoring of SDGs.

45.26 National Monitoring of SDGs: In India, National Institute of Transforming India (NITI) Aayog has been assigned the role of overseeing the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and identification of National Targets under the SDGs and assigning them to the Ministries/Departments concerned for implementation. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has been assigned with the responsibility of developing statistical indicators for measuring the SDGs.

45.27 NITI Aayog has also constituted a Working Group (WG) to deal with the matters relating to SDGs such as, examining data sheet prepared by DMEO on mapping of Central schemes and other initiatives that correspond to the SDGs on the basis of which national level indicators for the SDGs will be framed. Various schemes at the State level which are aligned with SDGs are also being implemented by the States. There are no separate Budgetary allocations for the implementation of SDGs. As such, funds are allocated in the Union Budget for various schemes and programmes of the Government to meet the corresponding goals and targets of the SDGs. A draft mapping of Goals and Targets in respect of the Central Ministries, various flagship initiatives of the Government and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) has been carried out by NITI Aayog, circulated to the Ministries and uploaded on NITI Aayog's website to facilitate better awareness and faster implementation of the SDGs and targets. NITI Aayog has also requested all States/UTs to carry out similar mapping of the SDGs and related targets through their respective departments to faster implementation.

45.28 For development of National Indicator Framework for SDGs, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has initiated dialogues with the Central Ministries and the State Governments towards this. The issue related with the development of national indicator framework was discussed as a central theme in the Conference of Central and State Statistical Organizations (COCSSO) held in November 2015. MoSPI had also organized a National Workshop on developing a monitoring framework for the SDGs with the Central Ministries / Departments and State Governments in September 2016. As per the outcome of the workshop, the nodal Ministries will define / prioritize the targets in the national context in partnership with the other related Ministries which are responsible for implementing various SDGs targets as per NITI Aayog mapping. The Ministries / Departments will also examine the programmes and schemes to align with SDG targets and to define / identify suitable indicators for the nationally define SDG targets MoSPI is also providing the technical supports to the Ministries in the exercise. The process for finalization of indicators is under progress.

45.29 To monitor the implementation of the sustainable development goals, it will be important to improve the availability of and access to data and statistics disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national/state contexts.

45.30 The role of national statistical agencies (in collecting nationally specific data) is most important in this endeavor. National statistical office and State DES's need to work together towards the achievement of reliable and cross-nationally comparable data and in determining the

priorities to strengthen national capacities towards building evidence-based data collection systems.

References:

Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation