**Nineteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC**

Virtual meeting, Chile - 25-27 August 2020

**Session III.  A decade of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals.**

**Concept note**

(version as of August 07, 2020)

The political declaration, known as the **Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals**, was launched by heads of state and governments at the Summit on Sustainable Development Goals in September 2019[1] to accelerate sustainable solutions to the world's major challenges, from poverty and gender equality to climate change, inequality and closing the financial gap. In the document, states committed to work during this decade in ten priority areas, including investing in data and statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to filling the data gap and adequately measuring progress towards the targets.

Knowing where we stand in terms of meeting the goals at the beginning of this decade, and being able to estimate whether or not the goals can be met by 2030, is a fundamental part of the actions of the next ten years and a topic that is attracting increasing interest in the international community. Various initiatives have emerged from international organizations, study centres and national bodies to develop and/or use different approaches and methodologies that will make it possible, on the one hand, to assess the current state of compliance with the goals and, on the other, to predict, considering the road travelled and what remains to be done, whether the goals will be achieved by 2030.

These include the initiative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD (Measuring Distance to the SDG Targets), the methodology proposed by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific - ESCAP (Monitoring progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Asia and the Pacific), the method used by EUROSTAT to measure the progress made towards the SDGs in the EU context and the Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart developed by UNSD and included in the Secretary-General's Global Progress Report.

The Statistics Division of ECLAC has also worked in this field and has conducted earlier this year a simulation exercise to evaluate if the SDG targets will be met by 2030 by the region. The evaluation of progress towards the 2030 Agenda targets has also been addressed by some member states, which have defined mechanisms for measuring progress according to their own national SDG indicators framework, in many cases accompanied by online "dashboards" which enables the user to visualize the progress made, as is the case in Colombia, Mexico and Argentina.

The various approaches that have been applied differ according to the methods adopted to measure the trends and the future state, the way in which thresholds are defined for those targets that do not explicitly establish them, the selection of indicators on the basis of the available information, and the

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[1] *"Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, Annex: Gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development: political declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit",* endorsed by the General Assembly, 15 October 2019, Seventy-fourth session, https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/4

aggregation procedure (by target, objective or geographical level). Moreover, all the above-mentioned initiatives define levels of progress or systems of traffic lights by establishing performance thresholds that also vary from one method to another.

The lack of information for the calculation of some indicators implies an additional challenge for national statistical systems; highlighting that, with the completion of methodologies for most indicators at the global level, these information gaps become more relevant, to the extent that the availability of data for monitoring and follow-up of Agenda 2030 now depends almost exclusively on the availability of information.

In consideration of the above, this session aims to generate an exchange and discuss technical aspects on methodologies to assess the state of progress in the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals and intends to analyse the role of the National Statistical Offices in the context of the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals.

The session will last **two hours** and includes presentations and panel discussions, in accordance with the dynamics of the meeting.

### interventions:

- UN Statistics Division (UNSD): Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart

- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP): Monitoring progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Asia and the Pacific.

- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): Scenarios and Projections of the SDG indicators.

- INEGI/ Presidencia de la República, Mexico

- INDEC/ Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales, Argentina

### Possible points of discussion:

- Central aspects of the methodologies used in each case:

  - Gap measurement, progress measurement or projections to 2030

  - Selection of indicators and baseline definition

  - Standardization methods

  - Definition of target values.

  - Aggregation of indicators by target and by goal

- Effective communication of the results of the exercises in support of actions to comply with the 2030 Agenda (input for public policies).

- Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on progress measurements.


### GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR PLENARY DISCUSSION:

I) Several initiatives have emerged from different actors in the international statistical community, such as international organizations, study centers or national entities, to develop and/or use different approaches and methodologies to assess the current status of the achievement of the goals and to project whether the goals will be achieved by 2030. In this regard, the main approaches are:

- Measurement of the current status of compliance with the goals ("on track");
- Measurement of trends based on progress made;
- Projections to 2030, considering the progress that has been made and using explanatory variables that can impact the future performance.

**Is the country currently implementing any of these approaches or does it plan to implement them in the short term? What are the main advantages and challenges you have identified in using these approaches? What are the main challenges you see in trying to apply any of these approaches in your country?**

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II) One of the initial steps for the application of any of the above-mentioned approaches is the selection of indicators.

**Do you think that all or a subset of the indicators should be used? If you do not have data, would you use complementary indicators?**

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(III) In order to be able to communicate results in a synthetic way, some of the different approaches use methods of aggregation of indicators by goal, target or geographical level.

**What type(s) of aggregation methods would you propose (equal weighting by indicator, differentiated weighting, selection of reference indicators)?**

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