

I. **2018 Achievements: Highlights of Key Activities since 23rd RCM:**

ESCWA and UNFPA are co-chairing the SDG data taskforce (TF) at the RCM. Follow-up with different regional UN regional organizations that are part of the SDG Data Taskforce is taking place since the 23rd RCM. On 27th to 28th June 2018, a meeting of the SDG Data TF was held at the UN House in Beirut to take stock of what member organizations are doing, and to enhance coordinated support to the Joint Working Group on the 2030 Agenda. The aim of the taskforce meeting was to agree on a conjoint work plan for 2019

The meeting's discussions focused on the requirements of national, regional and global reporting processes on SDG indicators. Participants emphasized the importance to minimize the burden on already over-stretched national statistical systems through identifying core sets of data, to set a data sharing platform and to engage in capacity development and technical cooperation. From the regional perspective, the SDG Data TF members agreed on the need to identify the core set of data, reflecting the regional strategic direction in ensuring proper verified monitoring of SDGs. This will take into consideration regional data flows, data gaps, and the role of UN country teams in statistics and data. They also determined that existing frameworks (such as ICPD lead indicators) could be helpful to formulate SDG data strategies; other organizations have their own based on the indicators they are custodian of. ESCWA and UNFPA will help consolidate all inputs into one document to act as the regional strategy. The strategy shall be then developed and finalized by all members in 2019.

The Task Force members agreed to speed up the establishment (and regular updating) of the inventory that was on 2017 plan– to serve as the main coordination tool. The inventory should include completed, ongoing and planned statistics related activities from 2016 onwards. UN-ESCWA and UNFPA were asked to circulate a template to the Task Force members to fill in their responses. The inventory had two parts:

- a. Inventory of statistics-related activities by SDG Data TF members
UNFPA, IOM, UNICEF, WHO and FAO has provided their input to the inventories with their respective information
- b. Mapping of data flows – the current status

II. Main Activities and Outputs Planned for 2019:

- a. The inventories on statistics-related activities and data flows will be followed up on and updated regularly to ensure consistency of data received at global levels with that at the regional level.
- b. The work plan features including data flows, roles and activities; that were agreed will be finalized after compiling inputs on inventories for 2019 upon meeting of the SDG Data TF members.
- c. The 2019 workplan will include a number of data-related activities, pertaining to capacity building to government partners, developing tools that support the clarification of metadata, verification, and calculation of indicators, applicability, and challenges for data and the monitoring indicators completion. The workplan will also specify responsible organizations, time frame, coverage, and availability of resources.
- d. The SDG Data TF will develop a policy framework like ICPD to follow up on related data and indicator issues with governments.
- e. UNFPA in collaboration with ESCWA will conduct a quarterly webinar with SDG Data TF members to follow up on action points defined in the 2019 workplan. A physical meeting will be held during the first quarter of 2019.
- f. ESCWA to continue its verification of metadata with Statistical offices and endorse the calculations of SDG indicators.

III. Decisions Requested from the Members of the RCM (if any):

- Decision on update/modification of the Arab Development Portal (project run by UNDP) to include metadata and a verification/validation methodology