



Webinar to discuss the Draft Inventory of the WGI's Working Group on Indicators

Programme of work 2019 - 21

4 November 2019 – 15:30h-17:00h CET

Key Highlights

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome and short introduction to the webinar	2
Introduction to the Draft Inventory	2
Round of comments from Webinar participants	3
Wrap-up and next steps.....	4
Annex I: List of participants	7
Annex II: Agenda of the webinar.....	8

Welcome and short introduction to the webinar

1. The Secretariat opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and reminding them of the results of the discussion on the Working Group's objectives that took place during the last [Working Group webinar on May 20th 2019](#) and at the last [WGI meeting in Berlin](#). The aim of the webinar is to update participants on three main points:

- The progress of the Working Group since the last WGI meeting in Berlin, that led to the revision of the Scoping Note;
- Provide results on the survey;
- Provide an explanation on the work behind the Draft Inventory on Impact Indicators and Measurement Frameworks.

Introduction to the Draft Inventory

2. The Secretariat kicked off the webinar by reminding participants that since the WGI meeting in Berlin, the Scoping Note has been revised to clarify the scope of the Working Group on Indicators. The focus was placed on two objectives:

- Facilitating the uptake and use of the OECD Water Governance Indicator Framework through the carrying out of a self-assessment on the 11 case studies that had piloted the Framework using the 10-step assessment methodology and on other new potential case studies;
- Mapping existing impact indicators, which has been started with the Draft Inventory.

3. The Secretariat reminded participants that during the last WGI Meeting in Berlin, the Working Group decided against developing impact indicators, preferring to map what is already existing, identify where the gaps are and focusing on water governance impacts.

4. The Secretariat briefly summarised the main results of the survey (in total 40 respondents), which are the following:

- Most of the respondents have agreed to support the work of the Working Group with activities relating to the use and uptake of the OECD Framework, such as carrying out the self-assessment, being peer-reviewer or facilitator;
- Over 70% of respondents were interested in participating in a Special Issues Journal on water governance indicators, and many suggestions were received in terms of topics of interest, especially within the areas of water governance and decision-making processes.

5. The Secretariat informed participants that the survey inputs received were included in the zero draft, with an acknowledgement that the identification of impact indicators was challenging. Other broader measurement frameworks have been included as signalled by the WGI members responding to the Survey. These measurement frameworks will be complemented by others available in the literature. A classification of five different types of water governance impact was created (impact on water services, impact on water governance, impact on water management, impact on water resilience and sustainability, and socio-economic and environmental impact). A tentative conclusion is that there is not a homogenous or harmonised framework whereby impact indicators are easily identifiable and those that can be identified mainly focus on water management, and not on any other aspect of water governance. In addition, access to these indicators online and offline is difficult. The Secretariat referred to the previous Working Group's discussion

on capacity building, where it was suggested to link the two groups by evaluating long-term impacts of capacity development activities.

6. The Secretariat shared three questions for the Group Discussion:

- *What type of impacts should be focused on?*
The inventory identified impact indicators focusing on water management and water services and to a lesser extent on water governance and socio-economic dimensions.
- *Would you suggest a specific water governance dimension/feature to concentrate on for future work?*
In order to narrow the scope of the research and to join efforts, it would be preferable to concentrate on some areas of priority (i.e. accountability, stakeholder engagement, etc.)
- *Would you like to contribute to a Special Issue on Impact indicators?*
Over 25 members expressed interest in contributing to a “Special Issue” on measuring water governance outcomes via an article to be published in a scientific journal on a wide variety of topics. How shall the Working Group move forward on this?

7. The Secretariat reminded participants that the Draft Inventory that has been presented is not an inventory of all existing frameworks to measure water governance, as this has already been done in the past for the development of the [OECD Indicator Framework](#). The objective is to see if there are already any attempts to measure the impact of water governance, the question being “if governance is a means to an end, does it contribute to that end?”

8. The Secretariat has met the request of the members to avoid the development of indicators and rather take stock of how different countries and institutions have been measuring water governance in their realities through the efforts carried out in the Draft Inventory. The Secretariat thus requested participants to give comments to fine-tune and improve the Inventory.

9. The Secretariat referred to the stream of work that had been discussed at the last WGI meeting to link this work on indicators to the SDGs. As a result, a mapping was carried out of all the countries that have carried out Voluntary National Reviews focusing on tracking progress on SDG 6 targets and relating to water overall.

Round of comments from Webinar participants

10. Participants thanked the Secretariat for their work on the Inventories and commended efforts in trying to capture and represent as best as possible all existing impact indicators, with a focus on water governance. The main points of discussion were the following:

- ***Focus on measuring impact in specific dimensions of governance.*** Several members expressed concern at the scope of the analytical exercise given the broad nature of governance and recommended focusing on specific issues or dimensions within the broad spectrum of governance for the exercise to be more palatable. The Working Group decided not to approach the work with the view of making a holistic index, but rather using the [OECD Water Governance Principles](#) as a reading template and focusing on one or two areas where the Working Group can create added value through research and analysis. Recurrent themes of discussion during the webinar brought to light the possibility of focusing on transparency, accountability and integrity, as there is already a lot of useful information on these topics outside the water sector that can be used. Organisations such as Transparency International and WIN can contribute to this focus.

However, some participants raised concern about the challenges of choosing between dimensions and/or Principles as they all interlink with one another. Considering that capacity is one of the Principles too, and searching for the links between both Working Groups, the question was posed of how the Working Group can consider assessing the impacts of that capacity, even though this topic has already been identified as a challenge. Other participants expressed concern at focusing on only one of the Principles and instead recommended to focus on certain contexts or issues as this may be easier to communicate on and easier to make people interested in. Similarly, some participants encouraged a discussion on the type of audiences that the Working Group wishes to engage through its work, in order to make the choice of which Principles/dimensions are strategic. Three criteria for deciding where proposed:

- Impacts that put “left-behind” people at the centre (for example, how does good governance help to give poor people access to water?);
 - Efficient spending (for example, how does good governance improve the use of water resources?); and
 - Sustainability (for example, how does good governance impact climate-resilient water supply?).
- ***Looking outside the water sector.*** Participants agreed on the need to look outside the water sector and even outside the focus of governance in order to find inspiration for the work on impact indicators.
 - ***Keep the SDGs in mind as a guiding template.*** Several participants highlighted that the SDG framework is the lens through which development efforts are monitored. Therefore, the Working Group should keep this in mind and make sure efforts link to or cross-reference with the SDG framework.
 - ***Highlight the nexus between climate change and water resilience and sustainability.*** Some participants mentioned that, in the EU, there would be a programme for measuring countries’ progress in adaptation to climate change and this measurement will have some connection to water, and so some resilience and sustainability in water is connected to measurements for climate change.
 - ***Send the signal that data collection and methods for monitoring progress may need to evolve.*** Some participants highlighted that there is a very serious ongoing discussion amongst statisticians about different aspects of data collection and the methodology for tracking progress on SDGs. The OECD should be aware of this and contribute to the discussion. Civil society and NGOs can also provide very useful data, which is currently not being tapped. The OECD could send the signal to the formal statistical authorities that there are other sources of data and other types of methodologies to measure impact outside the formal academic process. This could also form the basis of a Special Issues paper: looking at examples where alternative types of data could be helpful in carrying out impact assessment. Some participants emphasised that this could be of interest to potential impact investors in the private sector.

Wrap-up and next steps

11. The Secretariat thanked participants for a very rich discussion with many interesting inputs and suggested some ways forward in the next several months:

- Ensure that the **focus of the group is on impact indicators**.. There has already been a lot of work on progress, output and outcome indicators and how they can contribute to better measure the OECD Principles on Water Governance. However, the focus now should be on the impact of water governance on water management performance, based on the argument that water governance in a means to an end. Therefore, it would be key to understand whether the existence of certain institutions, policy framework and tools have an impact on water security.
- **Look beyond the water sector** for inspiration on the potential value chain of impacts on water governance. There are already proxies that look at corruption and regulatory frameworks, and these could be used to strengthen the Draft Inventory.
- From the discussion it has become clear that there are **several relevant dimensions of governance** that could become the focus of the work on indicators:
 - **Finance:** do less fragmented institutions, the existence of a river basin or better stakeholder engagement lead to better decisions in allocation and use of financing and save money and resources?
 - **Environment, climate change and sustainability:** in the Inventory, impacts related to socio-economic and environmental aspects as well as resilience and sustainability have already been flagged. However, the relationship between specific governance dimensions and climate change is not explicit and the causal relationship between the governance dimensions and the kind of impacts the Working Group would like to identify is not clear.
- In relation to the discussion on SDGs, the Secretariat reminded participants that the OECD is co-custodian of SDG 6.b on local participation together with WHO, the leading custodian. This has been a difficult indicator to measure and discussions on this have already taken place at WGI Meetings. The Secretariat also informed participants that it is aware of the extent of the discussion in statistical committees and highlighted the importance of making sure more countries, regions and cities are participating in self-assessment efforts as part of the Voluntary National Reviews. **A way forward could be to invite countries, regions and cities that have carried out voluntary reporting to the next WGI meeting to speak about their experiences.** This can be valuable for the Working Group since it provides a learning experience from SDG processes and the results of the discussion that is currently ongoing in different statistical offices and commissions on how to appropriately measure progress on SDGs and how to go about collecting relevant data.

The OECD is already working hand-in-hand with the UN Statistical Commission on measuring the distance of countries to the targets, not just its progress. There are existing OECD Indicators that can complement UN Indicators. For example, the work entitled [A Territorial Approach to the SDGs](#), is being developed by OECD/CFE at the local and regional level and consists of measuring where cities and regions stand *vis a vis* their national average and goals. SDG 6 is being looked at in particular, and this analysis may provide more granular information than the national analyses. This discussion could be brought to the WGI meeting in January.

- For discussion at the next WGI meeting, the Secretariat proposed that **the Principles in their respective clusters be connected to types of impact** that could be expected to be related to each of them.

12. The Steering Group members were given the floor for final comments:

- INBO suggested to take a pragmatic approach whereby the impact frameworks that have already been identified in the Draft Inventory be used to analyse, in the light of one, several or all of the Water Governance Principles, what can be extracted as impacts for improvement of governance issues. The Draft Inventory could thus be expanded beyond water governance measures. INBO also offered to share the workload amongst the Steering Group members.
- AEAS shared enthusiasm for INBO's suggestion and reminded participants to not lose sight of the importance of analysing how climate change can impact water governance and how this, in turn, can help improve climate change capacity, as part of the Working Group's assessment of the impact of capacity development as related to water governance.
- Transparency International stated the importance of determining priorities in terms of the Principles. Though it supported INBO's suggestion, it cautioned as to the importance of working with other topics outside of the water sector and suggested to include as many African case studies as possible, given that the next World Water Forum will take place in Senegal.

13. The Secretariat enthusiastically accepted INBO's proposal. As the Draft Inventory stands, there is now a helicopter view on how different institutions have been trying to measure the impact of governance on different dimensions. Therefore, half of the work has already been done and what is remaining is to go back to each of the 12 Principles using the frameworks that have been identified and make basic assumptions on which impacts that could be measured. The Secretariat also suggested that the Working Group is in a better position to link governance instruments to impact, rather than governance institutions. This analysis could be done in an anecdotal or case study basis, or with econometric methods and tools.

14. Women for Water Partnership expressed some concern about the fact that useful data, especially regarding stakeholder engagement, is not being used and that organisations within the water sector seem to be very disconnected from even their own countries' statistical offices. Women for Water Partnership expressed hope that the OECD, as a professional organisation, and the WGI, as a multi-stakeholder network, can effectively contribute to the discussion on changing methodology and accepting the collection of alternative sources of data, as well as facilitating the discussion between the sector and statistical organisations.

15. The Secretariat responded to this concern by highlighting that the Special Issues could present the opportunity to communicate on these topics. Given that the work stream on SDGs was discussed as being the least important stream in which to emphasise efforts, the work carried out through the publication of the Special Issues can make a strong plea in terms of tapping into the diversity of sources of data and information that there are. Therefore, the Special Issue should not only bring light to how to measure the impact of water governance, but also how to broaden the scope, particularly when speaking about governance issues.

16. The Secretariat assured participants that webinar Highlights will be made available and that the expanded inventory and the analysis linking the Principles to certain impacts will be provided to WGI members by mid-December, along with all other WGI material.

Annex I: List of participants

Institution	Name
AEAS	Gari Villa-Landa Sokolova
Centre d'Economie de la Sorbonne	Claude Menard
CONAGUA	Daniel Arellano
CONAGUA	Lorena Martínez
CERIS-University of Lisbon	Susana Neto
Deltares	Gerald Jan Ellen
EurEau	Manfred Eisenhut
Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR)/ BMZ - Germany	Michael Eichholz
INBO	Daniel Valensuela
OSCE	Sogol Jafarzadeh
Suez	Maélis Monnier
The Nature Conservancy	Aparna Sridhar
Transparency International	Donal O'Leary
Veolia	Dominique Gatel
Waterpreneurs	Nicolas Lorne
Women for Water Partnership and Butterfly Effect	Lesha Witmer

Annex II: Agenda of the webinar

- Welcome and short introduction to the Webinar (5 min)
- Introduction of the Draft Inventory (10 min)
- Round of comments from Webinar participants (65 min)
- Wrap-up and next steps (10 min)