



Update on the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) working group on measurement of development support

*TOSSD Task Force Issues Paper¹ - Agenda item 4
6 – 9 October 2020*

Introduction

1. This paper provides **an update on the work of the IAEG-SDGs working group (WG)** created in March 2020 following the 51st session of the UN Statistical Commission to develop a measure of development support. The paper recalls the background that led to the creation of this group and its mandate (Section I.) and provides an update on its progress and next steps (Section II.).

I. The IAEG-SDGs working group: short history and mandate

Background on the creation of the working group

2. In June 2019, the Task Force Secretariat submitted a proposal for TOSSD to be integrated in the 2020 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicators, as an additional indicator under Target 17.3 (“Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources”). The group under the UN Statistical Commission (StatCom) that manages this review process, called the IAEG-SDGs, met on 21-24 October 2019 in Addis-Ababa, including to review the TOSSD proposal.

3. **At this meeting, the IAEG-SDGs acknowledged the importance of measuring TOSSD flows, but also mentioned that the indicator still needed refinement, and therefore proposed to form a working group with more country and UN-system involvement to work to finalise the methodology.** The newly created working group would have a duration of two years at which point a finalised methodology would be considered for inclusion as part of the global indicator framework (in 2022).

4. The 51st Session of the UN Statistical Commission on 3-6 March 2020 reviewed a report of the IAEG-SDGs, which recommended further refinement of the TOSSD proposal, and decided to create a working group to this effect².

Mandate and modes of working of the IAEG-SDGs working group

5. The main objective of the working group is to further develop and refine the measurement of development support in line with the 2030 Agenda under target 17.3 “Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources”. The detailed objectives of the working group as described in its Terms of reference can be found in Annex A.

6. The working group is **co-chaired by Colombia and Norway** and is comprised of **21 members** including **10 members of the Task Force** (see full list in Annex B), with balanced regional representation.

¹ Jointly drafted by Guillaume Delalande (Guillaume.Delalande@oecd.org) and Valérie Gaveau (Valérie.Gaveau@oecd.org).

² The Statistical Commission: [...] (f) Expressed support for the establishment of a United Nations working group to further develop and refine the measurement of development support in line with the 2030 Agenda and welcomed the inclusion of member States representing all geographical regions, both donor and recipient countries, in the working group; and asked the group to build on relevant, previous work in this area; [...]



An additional 10 countries can join as observers and at present **Brazil** is the only **observer**. For each member, two representatives were nominated to cover both statistical aspects (focus of the IAEG-SDGs) and the specificities of the measurement of development support.

7. The UNSD (the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs - UNDESA) is the Secretariat of the working group. The OECD and UNCTAD (the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) are tasked to provide **substantive support to the working group**. Other international agencies and entities can be consulted on an ad hoc basis. In this regard, the TORs clearly indicate that **“the working group may request the TOSSD International Task Force or directly one or more of its members, or its secretariat to provide technical inputs”**.

8. The working group is to take its decisions on the basis of **consensus** and if this consensus can't be achieved, the group might take decisions by majority, or submit various options to the IAEG-SDGs for discussion.

9. The terms of reference provide a broad timetable for the work of the group until March 2022, with **regular physical and virtual meetings as well as the organisation of pilot studies, with a view to agree on a final proposal by October-November 2021**, in time for a presentation to the UN Statistical Commission in March 2022.

II. Update on progress to date and next steps

10. The working group has held four meetings so far in May, June, August and September 2020.

11. The first meeting focused on procedural aspects (introduction of the Terms of Reference, general expectations by members, discussion on the timetable and work arrangements).

12. In the second one, the UNSD Secretariat submitted a background paper written by an external consultant on the history of the measurement of development support in the UN since the 1950's, intended to provide a broad perspective on the indicator under review. This document did not refer to the more recent developments and the TOSSD proposal. The paper proposed to organise the work of the group around 8 questions³ and this option was retained by the group. The UNSD undertook a Survey to collect members' views on the 8 questions identified. Several members underscored the importance of building on the work of TOSSD, including around addressing international public goods and South-South Co-operation, and especially given the tight timeframe. Others felt that discussions should not be limited to TOSSD work. The TOSSD Task Force Secretariat provided a comprehensive reply to the Survey, pointing to TOSSD previous relevant work on each of the identified topic.

13. In the third meeting, the group discussed two of the questions (questions 4 and 5, see footnote 3) and decided to open three “research agendas” on a dedicated wiki platform – South-South Co-operation,

³ (1) what is the indicator being used for; (2) what flows and other items to consider; (3) what basic concept of “development support” should determine which flows to include; (4) for which countries should the indicator be compiled; (5) which types of flows should be included; (6) whether a single indicator 17.3.1 will suffice; (7) whether it (or they) should be expressed as an amount or a ratio; (8) to what extent current data and metadata availability, quality, timeliness and considerations of the data flow should constrain the choice, bearing in mind the deadline for submission of a proposal to the UN Statistical Commission in 2022 and that the next comprehensive indicator review will be conducted by the UN Statistical Commission in 2025.



International Public Goods and Mobilised Private finance – to inform the work of the group. Ahead of the fourth meeting of the group on 15 September 2020, and after contributing substantively in the first three meetings, the Task Force Secretariat submitted three papers, one on each of these subjects, summarising the TOSSD proposal in these areas.

14. The UNSD undertook a new Survey to collect members' views on the objective of an indicator to measure development support, the components to include in such an indicator, and the data availability for these components (questions 1, 2 and 3 in footnote 3). The Survey included the UNSD's view on the components to include in the Group's proposal to be finalised by end 2021, classified as "yes", "maybe" or "probably no". Only the ODA, FDI and South-South flows components were proposed as "yes" (i.e. very close to the components already currently included in the 17.3.1 indicator under review), other components such as non-concessional flows or private finance mobilised were listed as "maybe" while IPGs as "probably no". Preliminary results of the Survey were presented during the fourth meeting and several members insisted on the need to link the new measure and its components to the sustainable development agenda and reiterated the call for building upon TOSSD to define these components. **It was therefore decided that the 5th meeting of the group, to take place on 15 October 2020, would include a presentation on TOSSD.** At the time of drafting this paper, the focus and exact content of this presentation was still to be discussed with the UNSD Secretariat and the co-Chairs of the working group, but this presentation represents a valuable opportunity to share the TOSSD proposal with members of the working group.

15. In this context, the Task Force is invited to comment on the progress of the working group to date, discuss how TOSSD could best be presented at the next meeting and more generally how to best coordinate and engage with the working group.

Issues for discussion

- **Members of the Task Force that are also members of the IAEG-SDGs working group are invited to provide their perspective on how the group is functioning and progressing so far.**
- **The Task Force is invited to discuss how to best present TOSSD at the 5th meeting of the working group.**
- **Finally, the Task Force is invited to discuss how to coordinate and engage with the IAEG-SDGs working group through members and the Secretariat.**



Annex A – Objectives of the working group on the measurement of development support⁴

The detailed objectives of the working group are as follows:

- (a) *“Further develop and refine the measurement of development support in line with the 2030 Agenda under target 17.3 “Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources”;*
- (b) *Consider different components of development support, understanding development support in a broad sense of the term and including components other than ODA, such as other official flows, private finance, international public goods for sustainable development, and South-South and triangular cooperation; the working group will consider, but not be limited by, work already conducted to develop measures of these components;*
- (c) *Provide some guidance for case studies and pilots to be conducted and assessed in an effort to test the validity and feasibility of the proposed methodology;*
- (d) *Develop a final proposal including the various components considered in the methodological work, for which the group was able to define and test validity and feasibility based on the IAEG-SDG criteria for indicators, including for data reporting (...), for consideration by the UN Statistical Commission at its 53rd Session in 2022;*
- (e) *Develop recommendations for the implementation of the measurement in line with the needs for global, regional and national monitoring;*
- (f) *Make recommendations or suggestions on further work required at the end of its current two-year term.”*

⁴ Extracts from the TORs of the IAEG-SDGs working group on measurement of development support.



Annex B – Composition of the group on the measurement of development support⁵

Eastern Africa:

- Kenya
- United Republic of Tanzania*

Middle and Southern Africa:

- South Africa^
- Cameroon*

Western Africa:

- Ghana*^

Northern Africa:

- Egypt*^

Western Asia:

- Jordan

Central, Eastern, Southern, and South-Eastern Asia:

- China^
- India
- Japan*^

Oceania:

- Samoa*

The Caribbean:

- Cuba
- Grenada*

Central and South America:

- Colombia*^
- Mexico

Eastern Europe:

- Russian Federation*

North America and Northern, Southern and Western Europe:

- France*^
- Norway^
- Sweden*^
- Switzerland
- USA^

* Members of the IAEG-SDGs as of March 2020.

^ TOSSD International Task Force Members or Observers as of 23 April 2020.

⁵ Extracts from the TORs of the IAEG-SDGs working group on measurement of development support.