UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
STATISTICAL INSTITUTE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (SIAP)

# Compiling National Metadata for the Sustainable Development Goals

# (e-Learning course)

# 22 March-28 April 2021

# Guideline

## I. OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, sets forth the global vision to 2030. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which provide the benchmarks that should be achieved by 2030 in order to leave no one behind. A robust follow-up and review mechanism for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires a solid framework of indicators and statistical data to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders at the global and national level. The global indicator framework consisting of 169 targets and 242 indicators was adopted by the General Assembly in 2017. The framework has been updated and as of 2021, there are 231 unique indicators.

At the national level, the 2030 Agenda encourages member states to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven. The United Nations is working closely with national actors as well as international partners to build capacity in countries for reporting on the SDG indicators using national indicator frameworks.

National metadata are an important element in better understanding how the SDG indicator has been collected, processed and disseminated. The global metadata set can be used as guidance, but source and processing information will be different in each country and for each data source. Definitions and concepts may also vary and it is important to sensitise the user to this.

A short test is included in the last module.

## II. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

The target audience are experts in national statistical offices, line ministries and other institutions who are responsible for providing data and metadata for one or more national SDG indicators. The course can also be useful to a wider audience who is interested to learn more about metadata in the SDG context. The same course was also conducted in 2020; participants from the 2020 course are welcomed to join this course if they wish to review the topic.

## III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, participants will be expected to:

- better understand key concepts around metadata, particularly related to the SDGs
- learn how to fill the SDG metadata template
- better understand the importance of metadata to help explain the data and potential differences between data.

## IV. COURSE DESIGN AND CONTENT

Each module consists of slides with explanations. After all modules have been completed, participants will be required to complete a final test that will cover all modules. The modules are expected to take a maximum of 4 hours to complete. Participants are also expected to attend two webinars. The webinars will provide an overview of the course topics and allow for participants to ask questions. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to actively participate in the online forum of the course. Topics for discussion will be posted on a regular basis and participants are invited to share their views/comments/questions.

**Outline**

| Module | Coverage |
|---|---|
| 1. **Introduction to SDG Monitoring** | • The Sustainable Development Goals<br>• Monitoring the SDGs at the global level<br>• Monitoring the SDGs at the regional level<br>• Monitoring the SDGs at the national level<br>• Challenges and opportunities presented by SDGs monitoring |
| 2. **Introduction to SDG Metadata** | • What is metadata?<br>• Why is metadata important?<br>• Some issues relevant to metadata<br>• Examples of metadata |
| 3. **Introduction to SDG Metadata template** | • Role of the SDG metadata template<br>• Elements of the SDG metadata template |
| 4. **Common terminology** | • What is common terminology and its usage<br>• Introduction to examples of glossaries/tools for common terminology<br>• Terminology management<br>• Most frequently used terminology |
| **5. Drafting guidance** | • Guidance on drafting definitions and concepts<br>• Guidance on drafting the section on methodology |

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| | • Guidance on drafting the section on data sources<br>• Guidance on drafting other parts of metadata |
| 6. **Voluntary national reviews** | • Voluntary National Review (VNRs) and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development<br>• Lessons from existing VNRs<br>• Guidance on presenting statistics |

## V. EVALUATION

Participants must receive a 70% or higher in the test at the end of the course. They must also submit metadata for an indicator in their area of work (SDG or other indicators); details on this component of the evaluation will be provided during the course.

Participants will be given 60 minutes to complete the test. They may take the exam up to three times and retain their best score. Participants may not work together on the test. The course facilitator reserves the right to deny course certificates to participants suspected of cheating on the test. The supervisor is expected to ensure that the test of the course is taken in his/her presence.

## VI. SOURCE MATERIAL

This course draws upon various sources, including international statistical standards and case studies from national statistical offices.