
ONS approach to measuring and reporting SDGs in the UK

Overview

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been designed to “leave no one behind” and bring an end to extreme poverty, inequality and climate change by 2030. The 17 goals agreed at a United Nations Sustainable Development World Summit are the result of over 2 years of intensive consultation. The goals are underpinned by 169 global targets and 244 global indicators, against which each country is required to report progress.

As the UK’s national statistics institute, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for collection, collation, analysis, presentation and dissemination of data for regular monitoring of UK progress against the global indicators. Our role is to preserve transparency and ensure technical rigour in this process. To achieve this, we need robust statistics underpinned by sound methods that reflect national priorities and challenges.

We want to approach these tasks in ways that are meaningful and we need your help to determine the best way to do this. This consultation marks an important step in what we hope will be an ongoing dialogue with you to ensure that our focus and priorities continue to reflect the changing world in which we live.

Why we are consulting

We want to make information on global indicators available in the most accessible way possible. We are keen to use the full range of data available, whilst ensuring data are fit for purpose, and we want to be confident that our approach to reporting and prioritising areas for data development is the right one. We want to hear your views.

Section 1: How should the ONS report progress?

As the UK's national statistics institute, the ONS is required to report data for the UK against global sustainable development indicators to the United Nations. In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, we will make this data available to all. Some options for how we may do this are set out below and we would like your views on these.

Please note that ONS is not responsible for reporting on how the SDGs are being implemented within the UK. This is the responsibility of government. The purpose of our role is to preserve transparency and technical rigour, which will complement UK government activity. An overview of how the government is contributing to the delivery of each of the goals is summarised in **Agenda 2030: The UK Government's approach to delivering the Global Goals for Sustainable Development: at home and around the world**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agenda-2030-delivering-the-global-goals> .

The devolved administrations of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own reporting arrangements in relation to sustainable development indicators.

In Scotland, this will be done through the **National Performance Framework**

<http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/pdfNPF> , while in Wales, the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/> provides the framework for sustainable development. Welsh Ministers are required to report annually on the progress towards the seven statutory well-being goals. The 46 national indicators used to measure progress against the Welsh goals will also be mapped against the SDGs. In Northern Ireland the framework for sustainable development will be set out in any new Programme for Government. The outcomes and indicators used to chart progress within this framework will be mapped to the SDGs.

We will continue to work closely with the devolved administrations in recognition of the different priorities and approaches adopted.

Reporting mechanisms

We will report on UK progress against SDGs in the following ways:

Data publication: all data held for global indicators will be updated as soon as it is available and will be open for all to access and download via a web-based tool

Data visualisations:

- a summary of stock-take information will be available, for example, the number of indicators for which data are available and those where we are actively developing new datasets
- visuals of overall progress and change in global indicators will be provided as an annual snapshot, to show how the UK is doing

In-depth commentaries and analyses:

- likely to include an annual summary of progress, which will signpost other relevant information, for example, the approaches adopted by devolved administrations, and will be published at the same time each year to facilitate easier comparisons of change; and
- more frequent in-depth analytical commentaries

1 Will the proposed reporting mechanisms provide you with enough information about the global indicators to understand the progress the UK is making towards the Sustainable Development Goals?

Please select only one item

Yes No I don't know

2 Are there specific ways in which you would like us to report or provide access to data for global indicators? If yes, please state.

Please select only one item

Yes No

3 Which approach is most meaningful to you in terms of how the ONS reports on progress? (your response will prompt an additional question)

Please select only one item

Goal by Goal By topic - for example, gender, environment or society
 Some other way - for example, by geographical region

Section 1: How should the ONS report progress?

3a If a goal by goal approach is most meaningful to you, at which level would you find it most useful for the ONS to report on UK progress? Please choose one of the following:

Please select only one item

Goal Target Global Indicator All No preference

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3b If you would prefer a topic reporting approach, which topics would be most meaningful to you and why?

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3c If a different approach is most meaningful to you, please state.

Some other way

Section 1: How should the ONS report progress?

The ONS is responsible for reporting data and analysing other measures of progress, for example, measures of national well-being. These measures are currently reported on in our annual "**Life in the UK**" <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/measuringnationalwellbeing/apr2017> report. The report demonstrates UK progress against a set of 41 headline indicators, which include both objective and subjective measures of 'how we are doing'. Indicators are grouped into 10 areas of life that were established as having significant value to the UK public during a national debate. These include: personal well-being; health; our relationships; education; what we do; where we live; the economy; personal finance; governance; and the natural environment. Change over time is also assessed to establish whether national well-being is improving or deteriorating.

4 While the "Measuring National Well-being" and "Sustainable Development Goals" agendas are motivated by different needs, both are concerned with measuring UK progress to help ensure a sustainable future. With this in mind, which would you prefer to see?

Please select only one item

- A report that combines measures to report on UK progress overall
- A separate report focused solely on SDGs No preference

Section 2: Criteria for data selection

The need to identify or develop new data sources is central to being able to monitor progress at a granular level against Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This applies to both developed and developing countries. We will explore new avenues for data sources, including Big Data and administrative data, and also the possibilities offered by data science.

We recognise that a lot of data already exists, which could potentially be used to support the measurement of progress against global indicators, and we are keen to engage with potential suppliers. Any data that are used must meet the standards set out by the **European Statistical System quality assurance framework** <<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/64157/4392716/ESS-QAF-V1-2final.pdf/bbf5970c-1adf-46c8-afc3-58ce177a0646>> , which categorises quality in terms of relevance; accuracy and reliability; timeliness and punctuality; coherence and compatibility; accessibility; and clarity. We would be happy to advise on this.

In addition, we will also consider the following criteria to determine suitability of a data source to measure a global indicator:

Ability to disaggregate (as appropriate to the indicator) by the groups identified by the United Nations, namely income; gender; age; race; ethnicity; migratory status; disability; geographic location; and other characteristics specific to the indicator, for example, socio-economic groups

Certainty of data source availability, for example, the likelihood of data being available for at least the next 3 years

Extent to which the data source matches the indicator definition (for example, some data may be a complete match, others may be aggregated by different age groups to those proposed in the indicator)

Financial cost

5 Do you feel there are any other criteria that should be considered?

Please select only one item

Yes No

If yes, please state.

6 If you are aware of any existing or planned data or initiatives that would assist us in assessing progress towards the global indicators, please provide details.

Section 3: Approach to prioritising data development

We are currently reviewing official data sources for use in monitoring UK progress against global sustainable development indicators. Once complete it is likely to confirm a large number of indicators for which there are no readily identifiable data sources. Given the scale of the task ahead, we would like your views on how we should prioritise our data development activities.

7 Which goals are you most interested in?

Please select only one item

- Goal 1 - No Poverty Goal 2 - Zero Hunger Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-Being
- Goal 4 - Quality Education Goal 5 - Gender Equality Goal 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation
- Goal 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities
- Goal 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Goal 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production Goal 13 - Climate Action
- Goal 14 - Life Below Water Goal 15 - Life on Land
- Goal 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions Goal 17 - Partnership for the Goals
- All the Goals

8 The United Nations recommends that, where relevant in the national context, data for global indicators should be disaggregated by the fields listed. Please rank the following fields in order of interest to you where 1 is of most interest and 8 of least interest:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Income <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Age <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Race <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ethnicity <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Migratory status <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Geographic location <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9 Do you have any specific needs relating to the fields listed in question 8, for example, specific geographies, age groups, or ethnic group breakdowns?

Please select only one item

Yes No

If yes, please state the fields and your specific needs.

10 After data availability, we propose the following principles for use in prioritising our approach to developing data to plug gaps. For you, which are the most important principles of those listed? (choose up to 3)

	1	2	3
Feasibility of acquiring or developing data <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity to build capability (domestically and internationally), for example, use of satellite data to assist with estimating harvest statistics and agricultural productivity <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evidence of support from user engagement and information-gathering activities <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to satisfy other UK priority initiatives, for example, providing information to enhance national accounts, race disparity audit <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data needed to satisfy current UK political priorities <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of acquiring or developing data <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of proxy data <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11 Are there any other criteria you would like us to consider in prioritising our approach to developing data?

Please select only one item

Yes No

If yes, please state.

Section 4: A bit about you

We'd like to know as much as possible about what you think of our approach to the global indicators. We aim to be as open and transparent as possible, so we will publish all responses to this survey. This will include the name of your organisation and, with your permission, your name. We will not publish personal contact details.

To help us know how to handle your response, please answer the following questions.

12 What is your name?

Name

13 Do you agree to have your name published alongside your response?

(Required)

Please select only one item

Yes No

14 What is your email address?

This is optional, but if you enter your email address then you will be able to return to edit your consultation at any time until you submit it. You will also receive an acknowledgement email when you complete the consultation.

Email

15 Are you answering this survey on behalf of an organisation?*Please select only one item*

- Yes No (personal view)

16 If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please state its name.

Organisation

17 Which sector best reflects you or the organisation on whose behalf you are responding?*Please select only one item*

- Academia or research Business International organisation Journalism or media
 Local or regional government or public organisation
 National government department or organisation Voluntary and charity
 Other (please specify)

other sector

18 May we contact you for any further discussion about our work on Sustainable Development Goals?

(Required)

Please select only one item

- Yes No

19 Which of the following options best reflects your interest in SDGs or those of the organisation on whose behalf you are responding?

Please select only one item

- I am interested in specific data that I analyse as an essential part of my job
- I want to create my own datasets, often cross-referencing with data from other organisations
- I want to find data to inform policy
- I want to look for data that will help me in my job, although using it isn't vital to my work
- I want data to help me make personal decisions (eg about my finances or current news stories)
- None of the above (please state)

20 In which region are you located?

This information will help us should we decide on the need for focus groups. (If you're in England, please indicate which region applies).

Please select only one item

- Northern Ireland Scotland Wales England

Please select only one item

- North East North West Yorkshire and the Humber East Midlands
- West Midlands East London South East South West

What to expect from us

This consultation forms part of an ongoing dialogue we would like to have with you. We will use the results of the consultation to help shape our approach to monitoring and reporting UK progress against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will publish a response within 12 weeks of the consultation end date.

We plan to publish our first annual report on SDGs in late 2017 and anticipate the need to further consult as the work evolves.

In the mean time please email us at sustainabledevelopment@ons.gov.uk if you have any questions.