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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Development of a global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals

Transport-related Sustainable Development Goals activities

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. The Working Party may recall that at its sixty-eighth session, a representative from the Statistical Division of UNECE gave an update on the work of the Interagency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal indicators (IAEG-SDG), which included details on the Sustainable Development Goal indicators most relevant to transport (specifically Goals 3, 9 and 11), and the updates on which tiers (1, 2 or 3) that each one was currently classified as, based on whether data and agreed methodology exist. The Working Party may wish to be informed about the secretariat's involvement in additional developments in measuring the Sustainable Development Goals.

II. Capacity Building workshops

2. Since the sixty-eighth session, the secretariat (in coordination with the transport division's regional advisor) has taken part in four capacity-building workshops. The workshops were held in:

- (a) Podgorica on 11 and 12 October 2017, for countries of the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova;
- (b) Astana on 2 and 3 November 2017, for countries covered by the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), Belarus and Russian Federation;
- (c) Ljubljana on 16 and 17 November 2017, for countries of Central and Eastern Europe; and
- (d) Kachreti, Georgia on 15 and 16 February 2018, for Albania and Georgia.

The workshops in Podgorica and Astana concentrated on raising awareness of the transport-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators, mainstreaming their collection into national statistical systems, and highlighting the importance of existing data collection mechanisms, not least the UNECE/ITF/Eurostat web common questionnaire (WebCoQ). The Ljubljana workshop had a particular focus on Goal 9 concerning sustainable and resilient infrastructure, and the secretariat's intervention covered how UNECE transport statistics can help measure this. The Kachreti workshop's focus was road safety, and how countries can measure their road safety performance in an internationally comparable way, allowing data-driven evidence-based policy improvements.

3. These workshops covered the fundamentals of data collection techniques. Invited experts gave detailed presentations on best practices in producing accurate statistics on road safety and transport in general, and all invited countries presented their own experiences in data collection, statistical production and Sustainable Development Goal reporting mechanisms. This structure allowed a robust dialogue between countries and country-to-country knowledge sharing.

4. The workshops reached a combined audience of nineteen member States, spreading information to a collection of statisticians and policy makers across statistics offices, ministries of transport, road safety agencies, police departments and ministries of infrastructure.

5. As a result of the workshops and follow-up letters sent in January 2018, the secretariat has already received better data through WebCoQ for many countries, some of whom had not submitted data for several years, and this is expected to continue in the future with continuing secretariat engagement.

III. Data collection for indicator 9.1.2

6. The Working Party may recall that the IAEG-SDG has suggested custodian agencies for each Sustainable Development Goal indicator, and that for indicator 9.1.2 the designated possible custodian agency is the International Civil Aviation organisation (ICAO), with the International Transport Forum and UNECE as partner agencies¹. The Sustainable Development Goal indicators² database has published data on passenger and freight volumes for road, rail and air transport since May 2017. The secretariat decided to pro-actively engage with these actors, in order to:

(a) Improve data validation (some of the road and rail data seemed to be out by a factor of 1000);

(b) Ensure that official statistics were being used wherever available, rather than statistically modelled outputs (some data shown did not appear to come from official sources);

(c) Help to improve metadata, in particular through the Intersecretariat Working Group's (UNECE, the ITF and Eurostat) experience in collecting metadata together with official statistics and increasing references to the Glossary for Transport Statistics.

7. This work is ongoing as of March 2018 and the secretariat will orally update the Working Party on progress.

¹ https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/Tier%20Classification%20of%20SDG%20Indicators_15%20Dec%202017_web%20final.pdf

² <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>

IV. Linking core activities to Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals

8. In addition to these efforts, the secretariat has also been improving the visibility of the Working Party's regular work in the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, in the recent press release concerning the new release of bus and coach statistics (see ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/5), the secretariat stressed the importance of these data with respect to achieving Sustainable Development Goals 3, 7, 9 and 11. In this regard, the importance of the Working Party's efforts in the production of official statistics and methodological harmonization is communicated to a wider audience.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2018/5

V. Conclusion

9. The Working Part is invited to comment on the secretariat's work on the Sustainable Development Goals, and member States or international organizations are invited to share their own experiences regarding the Sustainable Development Goals.
