



An Interagency and Experts Collaboration to Improve the Production and Dissemination of SDG Indicators from Official National Sources

Series of SDG Webinars for the Arab Region:

UNESCO, UNESCO-IOC and UNECE

SDG 6.5.2, 14.3.1 and 14.a.1

24 May 2022

Summary

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA), in collaboration with UNESCO, UNESCO-IOC and UNECE organized a series of webinars on selected SDG indicators that are less produced in the Arab region to create a common understanding among data producers on how to collect, measure and disseminate SDG indicators to increase data production and enhance national data flow to policymakers, other users, and custodian agencies.

The webinar, as part of the second wave of the series of SDG webinars, aims to create a common understanding among data producers on how to collect, measure, and disseminate SDG indicators to increase data production and enhance national data flow to policymakers, other users, and custodian agencies. The training encouraged interactive dialogue, sharing of national experiences in collecting SDG indicators including challenges, queries, and concerns.

1. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA), in collaboration with UNESCO, UNESCO-IOC and UNECE organized a series of webinars on selected SDG indicators that are less produced in the Arab region, on 24 May 2022— on Zoom platform, as part of the second wave of series of SDG webinars. The webinar is in response to the resolution (A/RES/70/1) on the adoption of the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development in September 2015 to strengthen the capacity of national data systems through collaboration between national statistical systems and the relevant international and regional organizations to enhance data reporting channels and ensure the harmonization and consistency of data and statistics for the indicators used to follow up and review the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. It also responds to Member States’ request to the 14th Statistical Committee for ESCWA to organize capacity-building webinars emphasizing the methodology, method of computation, and data collection tools of selected SDG indicators.
2. The webinar was attended by 28 representatives from 10 countries namely: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, State of Palestine, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Sudan as well as two representatives from UN agencies.
3. The main objectives of the webinars are to enhance understanding of metadata and nature of data in the UNSD SDG database, improve statistical capacities to invigorate production and use of comparable SDG indicators, strengthen inter-institutional coordination to invigorate production of SDG indicators and data flow and share and discussing country challenges in measuring SDG indicators.
4. The Workshop agenda covered the following items:
 - SDG indicator 6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation.
 - SDG indicator 14.3.1 Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations.
 - SDG indicator 14.a.1 Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology.
5. SDG indicator 6.5.2 monitors the “transboundary basin” area within a country covered by an “operational” “arrangement for water cooperation”. A “transboundary basin” refers to a river or lake basin, or an aquifer system that marks crosses or is located on boundaries between two or more states. “Arrangement for water cooperation” refers to a bilateral or multilateral treaty, convention, agreement or another formal arrangement, such as a memorandum of understanding between countries sharing transboundary basins that

provides a framework for cooperation on transboundary water management. The official counterparts at the national level are the ministry of the environment, water, natural resources, energy or agriculture; institutes of water resources, hydrology or geology which typically have spatial information about the location and extent of the surface water basin boundaries and aquifer delineations as well as geological surveys. Information on existing arrangements and their operationality is also commonly available from the same institutions. 15 out of 21 Arab countries sharing water resources responded to the exercise out of which the indicator was only calculated for nine of them.

6. SDG indicator 14.3.1 is based on observations that constrain the ocean carbon system and are required to describe the variability in ocean acidity. The carbon system in this context mainly refers to the four measurable parameters: pH (the concentration of hydrogen ions on a logarithmic scale), DIC (CT; total dissolved inorganic carbon), pCO₂ (carbon dioxide partial pressure), and TA (AT, total alkalinity). Average, as used here, is the equally weighted annual mean. Ocean acidification is defined as the decrease of seawater pH over an extended period, typically of decades or longer, which is caused primarily by the uptake of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The official counterparts of this indicator are the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) focal points. They, as well as National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODCs), are contacted by IOC to request relevant data from the appropriate national oceanographic data centres and/or relevant scientists, agencies or programmes. Data and metadata are submitted on SDG 14.3.1 Data Portal. Currently, only 37 countries have reported on this indicator including Kuwait, while Jordan has submitted data that do not meet the requirement of this indicator.
7. SDG indicator 14.a.1 shows the annual national research budget allocated by governments in the field of marine technology, relative to the overall national governmental research and development budget in general. This indicator is reported to UNESCO-IOC via the GOSR questionnaire consisting of 65 questions in 7 parts on the GOSR portal through IOC national representatives, NODCs/ADUs, and individual scientists. Future data collections might explore data availability at NSOs. 45 Member States answered the questionnaire among which only Kuwait and Oman are from the ESCWA Region. A shorter questionnaire of 10-15 questions focusing on human and technical resources as well as SDG 14.a.1 and ocean science investment more general is currently being developed and will be sent to Member States 3rd quarter of 2022.
8. The following recommendations and the way forward were reached to shape future work and plan for upcoming webinars:
 - ESCWA to encourage all Arab countries sharing water resources to engage in future reporting exercises for SDG 6.5.2, and in particular support the countries that have not yet reported or where the reports have not been validated.

- Countries having a value for SDG indicator 6.5.2 as N, are invited to reflect this in their national SDG framework, by mentioning this indicator as irrelevant.
 - NSOs are invited to first identify the data providers for SDG indicator 6.5.2, communicate with them, and follow up on how this data is going to be provided to UNESCO and UNECE.
 - Bahrain and the State of Palestine are invited to nominate a data expert for SDG indicator 14.3.1.
 - ESCWA and UNESCO-IOC to provide more training and capacity development workshops on the methodology of reporting on SDG indicator 14.3.1.
 - National counterparts of SDG indicator 14.3.1 are invited to include NSOs in the process of data collection and submission.
 - Countries are urged that certain ministries should know how much they invest in marine technology and to report on SDG indicator 14.a.1.
 - Countries are advised to nominate a national data expert from the Ministry of Finance to collect data on SDG indicator 14.a.1.
 - UNESCO-IOC to help identify the universities and research institutes to help identify the national data expert for SDG indicator 14.a.1.
9. Workshop Evaluation: Among 28 participants, 14 participants provided their feedback. Overall, 50% of the participants rated the workshop excellent, and 36% good. Participants were asked if the workshop objectives were met, 50% of the participants gave an excellent rating and 43% gave a good rating. In terms of presenters' inputs, 50% of respondents rated the presentations as excellent and 36% rated the presentations as good. Finally, 57% of the participants rated the logistics and organization of the workshop as excellent, and 29% as good.
10. The workshop presentations and resources will be available on the ESCWA website, accessible at the following link: <https://www.unescwa.org/events/series-sdg-webinars-arab-region>.
11. Further useful resources:
- Supporting the Monitoring and Implementation of the SDGs in the Arab region: Transboundary water cooperation SDG 6 Indicator 6.5.2: <https://www.unescwa.org/events/supporting-monitoring-and-implementation-sdgs-arab-region-transboundary-water-cooperation>
 - Progress on Shared Water Resources Management in the Arab Region: Regional baseline for SDG Indicator 6.5.2: <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/progress-shared-water-resources-management-arab-region-regional-baseline-sdg-indicator>

- Progress on transboundary water cooperation: global status of SDG indicator 6.5.2 and acceleration needs, 2021: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380287>
- UNESCO IGRAC Information System on transboundary aquifers: <https://ggis.unigrac.org/view/tba>
- UNECE: www.unece.org/water/transboundary_water_cooperation_reporting.html
- UNESCO: https://en.unesco.org/themes/water-security/transboundary_water_cooperation_reporting
- UN-WATER SDG6 monitoring: www.sdg6monitoring.org/indicator-652
- UN-WATER SDG6 data portal: www.sdg6data.org/indicator/6.5.2
- 14.3.1 Data Portal: <https://oa.iode.org/>
- GOA-ON Data Explorer: <http://portal.goa-on.org/Explorer>
- GOSR portal: <https://gosr.ioc-unesco.org/>
- <http://en.unesco.org/gosr>
- <https://ioc.unesco.org/>

12. Group photo

The image shows a Zoom meeting window with a grid of 20 participants. The participants are arranged in a 4x5 grid. The top row includes Alistair Rieu-Clarke UNECE, UNESCO-W Joelle Atallah, ESCWA Zoom-2, UNESCO_Aurélien Dumont, and Saad Shannak. The second row shows a 'Connecting to audio' placeholder, Kirsten Isensee UNESCO-I, Katherina Schoo UNESCO, Neda Jafar, and Nihal Al-Saleh. The third row features Saad Mannan, chantal el chaer, Interpreter Jocelyne Mgh, Abeer Aysah, and Hanady Assaf. The fourth row contains zahran khaleef, tamam yassin, fareeda almousa, Reham Mualla, and Prof. Mohamm... The fifth row lists Abdulrahman R..., Khaled Alshatarat, Magda Moham..., Dr. Mohammad..., and tareq alsayali. The bottom of the screen shows the Windows taskbar with various application icons and a system tray displaying the time as 11:28 AM on 24/05/2022.

	UNESCWA-Joell... UNESCWA-Joelle Atallah			
Connecting to audio ...				
			Abeer Aysah Abeer Aysah	Hanady Assaf Hanady Assaf
zahran khaleef zahran khaleef	tamam yassin tamam yassin	fareeda almousa fareeda almousa	Reham Mualla Reham Mualla	Prof. Mohamm... Prof. Mohammad Al-Gho...
Abdulrahman R... Abdulrahman Ramadan	Khaled Alshatarat Khaled Alshatarat	Magda Moham... Magda Mohamed Elgaali	Dr. Mohammad... Dr. Mohammad Alsheyab	tareq alsayali tareq alsayali