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Guidelines for Development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) State Indicator Framework (SIF)

Objective

1. The objective of these guidelines is to facilitate and assist State Governments in the development of a State Level Monitoring Framework including institutional arrangements to track the progress on the SDGs by building on the existing National Indicator Framework.

Background

2. The 70th Session of the UN General Assembly held on 25th September 2015 adopted the document titled "*Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*" comprising 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets. Government of India has played a leading role in defining the contours of the agenda and is committed to achieve these goals in a time bound manner. The SDGs seek to address not only the root causes of poverty but also the universal need for development to provide a life of dignity to all and are the most comprehensive list of global goals integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development. Countries have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the national, sub national and lower levels with regard to the progress made in implementing the goals and targets over the next 15 years. Though not legally binding, the SDGs have become *de facto* international obligations and will re-orient domestic spending priorities during the next fifteen years. Implementation of SDGs and their success will rely on countries own sustainable development policies, plans and programmes. In addition, given the complexity of the SDGs, there is an unprecedented demand for data on the national and sub-national statistical systems.

A. Roles of MoSPI and NITI Aayog

2. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is responsible for the development of the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for measuring the progress of the SDGs and associated targets. MoSPI is also making efforts to ensure that State governments and UTs have guidance and capacities to monitor the SDGs at the state and lower levels.

3. National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) has the overall responsibility of SDGs implementation and align government schemes/ programs to SDGs. Thus, NITI Aayog is facilitating and coordinating the implementation of SDGs in the country and also undertaking comparative analysis of SDG achievement in the States and UTs.

B. Process of Development of National Indicator Framework (NIF)

4. The 17 SDGs came into force with effect from 01st January, 2016 and these are summarized below:

SDG #	Goal
SDG 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
SDG 2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
SDG 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
SDG 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
SDG 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
SDG 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
SDG 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
SDG 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
SDG 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
SDG 10	Reduce inequality within and among countries
SDG 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
SDG 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
SDG 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
SDG 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
SDG 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
SDG 16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
SDG	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global

SDG #	Goal
17	Partnership for Sustainable Development

5. MoSPI has developed a National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring SDGs Goals and associated targets using statistical indicators to measure the outcomes of the policies to achieve the targets under different SDGs. The NIF aims to provide appropriate direction to the policy makers and the implementers of various schemes and programmes.

6. In September 2016, MoSPI developed a consolidated list of possible national indicators based on the available information. A National Consultation Workshop was held with the Central Ministries / Departments and State Governments in September 2016 to discuss the proposed indicators. The Ministries/ Departments were requested to examine their programmes and schemes to align with the SDG targets and to define / identify suitable indicators for the SDG targets. Based on the inputs received from the Ministries / Department a draft National Indicator Framework was prepared and also uploaded on the Ministry's website for public responses. The National Indicator Framework (NIF) was accordingly developed through this consultative process and currently comprises 306 indicators for different targets and goals. There are certain global indicators for which national indicators have still to be decided on.

C. Salient features of NIF (v1.1)

7. The national acceptability and statistical robustness were the most important criteria used in deciding the indicators. The other criterion adopted for National Indicator Framework are relevancy to the targets; covering all components of the targets; consent/ownership of the concerned Ministries; data source and periodicity of data; frequency of data; and ownership of data by the data source Ministries. The level of data disaggregation is to be decided by the concerned data source Ministry/Department. Nearly 80% indicators in the NIF are sourced from Administrative Data followed by surveys. The Goal-wise distribution of National Indicators is as under:

SDG Goal	Number of Indicators in NIF
SDG 1	19
SDG 2	19
SDG 3	41
SDG 4	20
SDG 5	29
SDG 6	19
SDG 7	5
SDG 8	40
SDG 9	18
SDG 10	7
SDG 11	16

SDG Goal	Number of Indicators in NIF
SDG 12	17
SDG 13	4
SDG 14	13
SDG 15	21
SDG 16	18
Total	306

D. Institutional arrangement for further improvement of NIF

8. The Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 24th October 2018, approved the constitution of a High Level Steering Committee (HLSC) under chairmanship of Chief Statistician of India (CSI) & Secretary, MoSPI with the Secretaries of data source Ministries and NITI Aayog as members and Secretaries of other related Ministries as special invitees for periodically reviewing, refining and modifying the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with associated targets.

E. Dashboard on SDGs NIF

9. MoSPI, in collaboration with the office of United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC), India has developed a dashboard on SDGs in India. SDG Dashboard has provision to visualise data from national level up to district level for NIF(<http://www.sdgindia2030.mospi.gov.in/>). It will help in Statistical monitoring of SDGs Goals and targets with greater outreach and better visualization of data on SDGs NIF.

F. SDG Index

10. The NITI Aayog brought out an SDG Index for India and States during 2018 and a ranking of the States on the progress made on SDGs. It also provides an aggregate assessment of the performance of all the States and UTs to the leadership and policy makers to evaluate their performance on SDG Goals and associated targets. The index gives a comparative position of States on selected performance indicators and assist State Governments in evolving targeted policy interventions. This exercise is likely to continue yearly with greater involvement of MoSPI with suitable modification in the methodology and inclusion of more indicators based on the availability of more data. The Index also allows States/UTs in following:

- to benchmark progress against targets and performance amongst States;
- to devise / reorient strategies to achieve the SDGs by 2030;
- to identify priority areas which need investment and improvement; and
- to identify and address data gaps.

G. SDG NIF Baseline Report 2015-16

11. MoSPI released the first Sustainable Development Goals National Indicator Framework Baseline Report 2015-16. The Report contains Data Snapshot, metadata, definitions, computation formulae, data including sources, unit of measurement and periodicity. This report provides a benchmark to track the progress towards SDG targets at national level. The period 2015-16 has been used as baseline period. Each indicator has been mapped with their availability (periodicity), baseline reference period and data sources.

H. **Need for State Indicator Framework (SIF)**

12. The States have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the state, district and local government levels with regard to the progress made in implementing the SDG goals and targets and their achievements. It is thus important for States to develop their own State Indicator Framework (SIF) based on their individual critical development priorities, data requirements, available infrastructure and resources.

13. As the monitoring requirements at the state level are very different, the States can further adapt NIF as per their policy/local needs. For example, States may require more disaggregated data not only vertically (districts, sub-districts and lower level) but also horizontally (sex, classes, social groups, marginalised population groups – persons with disabilities, elderly, children, among others).

14. Different states of the country are at various stages of socio-economic development. The data requirements particularly in terms of disaggregation, are likely to differ across States and thus there may not be uniformity across State Governments in the State Indicator Framework, however, efforts are to be made to have them aligned at the National level with the NIF.

15. Each State is required to develop its own State Indicator Framework in consultation with all the stake holders and with due diligence in the State Governments. The State Indicator Framework must meet the state requirements of SDGs monitoring with suitable provisions for its refining, modification and improvements over time.

I. Guiding Principles for Development of State Indicator Framework (SIF)

16. **SIF is to be prepared in a participatory manner:** The development of the State Indicator Framework is expected to follow a process with the involvement / consultation of all stake holders and ownership with the State. Bypassing the consultative process or a non-involved outsourcing of its development to a consultant will reduce the likelihood of its successful implementation. Support from external resources such as multi-lateral, bi-lateral organisations, expert organisations can be sought in the development process, but the State needs to drive the consultative process while finalising the State Indicator Framework.

17. **SIF should complement the overall development strategy of the State:** All the SDG goals and targets may not be applicable to every State, therefore, the States are required to closely examine all the SDG Goals and targets to see their relevance for the State. This should be the first step in the direction of adopting and mainstreaming of the SDGs in the development planning strategy of the state. State should refer to their SDG vision documents, if such document for the state has been finalised and accepted. First step for developing the State Indicator Framework is the mapping of the relevant SDGs goals and targets with the Departments of the State Government. This mapping won't be one to one rather it may be one to many or many to one. Once the mapping process is complete, it would become clear which Departments are responsible for each of the SDGs. The next step is the mapping of the Government Schemes of different Departments with the SDGs and targets. In doing so one should map a scheme only to its keygoals and targets (usually more than one) but it should be ensured that one scheme is not mapped to many goals and targets.

18. **State Indicator Framework to be in sync with National Indicator Framework:** Scientifically work out the Statistical Indicators which may be used for measuring the success and outcomes of various Government Schemes that have been mapped to SDGs. In doing so it may be ensured that the Indicator adopted for monitoring the SDGs and targets meet the criterion of "*fitment for the purpose*". The SIF needs to maintain a balance between social, economic and environmental indicators to remain committed to the intent and ambition of the SDGs. The Statisticians involved in the development of the State Indicator Framework are duty bound to ensure that the measurement of progress of SDGs and targets is undertaken as per the statistically robust methodology and adopt only robust indicators which can withstand statistical scrutiny now or in future. Once this exercise is completed, the State needs to analyse the extent that the SIF is in sync with the indicators in the National Indicator Framework for the same goal and Target.

19. **State and UTs have the flexibility to define their own State Indicator Framework:** It may not possible for the States to adopt NIF given the varied priorities and monitoring requirements at the state level. The State priorities, infrastructure, resources and the capacity of the state statistical system vary across the states. Thus the State Indicator Framework may be different for each State and each State has to develop its own State Indicator Framework in consultation with all the stake holders

and with due diligence on their alignment with the NIF to facilitate inter-state comparisons. While undergoing the consultative process, the State Government needs to identify:

- (a) Indicators not relevant for the State/UT;
- (b) Indicators that are fully aligned with the State SDG priorities in scope and ambition;
- (c) Indicators that are partially aligned in scope or ambition with the State SDG priorities;
- (d) Indicators that are critical for State and UTs but missing from the NIF;
- (e) Indicators that are produced by the national statistical system following established standards and agreed methodologies should be prioritized, additional indicators should also be included by the State to reflect their key development priorities. For instance, NIF only has indicator on floods and none on drought. It will be important for States facing drought to include relevant indicators as per their realities. In undertaking this exercise extra care must be taken on the number of indicators to be included in the State Indicator Framework. The selection of new indicators should be evidence-based, informed by an analysis of the most urgent development gaps; and
- (f) Efforts also need to be made to ensure that the State Indicator Framework is manageable in terms of number of indicators.

20. Drawing from the above, SIF can (a) drop indicators that are not relevant (b) include indicators that are fully aligned (c) improvise indicators that are partially aligned and (d) include indicators that are missing. It should be ensured that the indicator selected is a robust measure of progress towards the target of the SDG; is generated from the official statistical system; be quantifiable, and be consistent to enable measurement over time;

21. **SIF should take into account existing efforts by MOSPI in related policy areas to minimize their data burden:** Another very important aspect which should always be kept in mind while including an indicator in the State Indicator Framework is the availability of data on that indicator with little or no cost. To meet the requirements of SDGs monitoring at the national level and also to help the states to reduce their cost to produce data, the Central Government had already decided to infuse more resources in the National Statistical System to undertake some National Sample Surveys more frequently and also to undertake new Sample Surveys. For example, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) which provides estimates on large number of indicators up to district level will now be undertaken every three years. Similarly, the Ministry (MoSPI) will also undertake Time Use Survey and Economic Census regularly. These are expected to provide large amount of data on women empowerment, women economic activity and contribution and host of other economic activities. However, these estimates would be available to only up to state level due to the limitation of sample size. The states may join NSSO efforts through the matching State Sample. Undertaking the data collection of State Sample in time as per requirement would enable to pool the two samples to generate the district level

estimates. This would require coordinated efforts by Centre and States. Apart from this, the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) is now a continuous exercise which will provide estimate for Labour Force Participation Rates, Unemployment Rate etc. regularly both for rural and urban areas. Further, MoSPI is also planning to start the Multi Indicator Survey (MIS) with the next round of NSSO survey which would yield estimates at the state level on number of indicators. The state may also consider to become a partner in MIS through the mechanism of matching samples to develop estimates up to district level.

22. **SIF can be viewed as Sub-Set Plus of the NIF:** The State Indicator Framework can be seen as a set of process or output Indicators contributing to the outcome indicators of the National Indicator Framework. For example, for regularly monitoring of the Maternal Mortality Rate, the NFHS will provide estimates every three years, however, during the intervening years, State should monitor the number of institutional deliveries and reported maternal deaths. If former is going up and latter going down, then the state is moving in the right direction on MMR. There are many more such example for other indicators which should be considered. The additional indicators in the State Indicator Framework would be those where the state is producing data through sample surveys or through the Monitoring systems of the schemes / programmes. It should be ensured that scheme specific indicators that are merely physical and financial targets of the scheme would not be suitable for the SIF. Scheme specific indicators should be outcome oriented.

23. **SIF should be manageable:** Efforts also need to be made to ensure that the State Indicator Framework is manageable in terms of number of indicators.

J. **Creating an enabling policy environment to monitoring the SDGs**

24. Following steps may be kept in mind by the States and UTs while developing the monitoring framework for the State:

- (a) Identification of state level targets and fixing timelines for achievement of these.
- (b) Use of SIF not only as a reporting tool but using SIF to ensure data driven decision making with regard to policies and financial allocations.
- (c) Institution of High Level Technical Committee under chair of Head of Planning Department to develop, review and refine the State Indicator Framework (SIF).
- (d) Identification and designation of nodal Department and officers concerning identified targets and State indicators.
- (e) Capacity development of Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) and statistical officials working in different Departments of State Governments. States should map the data flow for each indicator. Data

ecosystem analysis to assess the gaps technical, financial and human resources can also be undertaken at state and district level should also be undertaken.

- (f) Efforts should be taken to dovetail the data efforts on SDGs with planning efforts at State level as well as at the local level with Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).
- (g) States are also encouraged to promote the use of technology, innovative approaches for collection of data including data on new issues. For some of the topics where national and statistical system do not provide data, use of proxy indicators can be explored.
- (h) State may also make efforts to bring out State SDGs Index, in line with SDG Index India of NITI Aayog for the districts and rank them so as to promote healthy competition among the districts for achieving the SDGs goals and targets.
- (i) State may prepare and publish periodic progress reports based on SIF and disseminate it widely.
- (j) Third party audit on preparedness and progress on localisation of SDGs.
- (k) State governments may access locally available private partnerships, finance, and technical support to SDG targets monitoring.

K. **Other suggestions**

25. In additional, some other suggestions are proposed as given below:

- (a) States may share their SIF with the National Statistical Office, MoSPI for review, feedback and technical support.
- (b) It is also suggested to involve senior officers of National Sample Survey Field Operations Division (FOD), MoSPI posted in all State capitals in State Level Technical/Monitoring Committee for development of monitoring framework and SIF.
- (c) State level consultation programme/ workshops may be initiated by involving State officials, UN Agencies, research institutions and other stakeholders.
- (d) States should also depute senior officers from concerned Departments to MoSPI's Workshops and Training of Trainer programmes for SDG related activities.
