Impact Brief

Enhanced capacity for measuring progress towards the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals

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UNEP EARLY WARNING AND ASSESSMENT DIVISION

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Background to Project

The project *'Enhanced Capacity for Measuring Progress towards the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals'* (SDGs), funded by the European Commission, included an activity (Activity 1.3) that aimed to strengthen the national capacity for monitoring and reporting on the environmental dimension of the SDGs.

Technical assistance missions were held in five beneficiary countries (Ghana, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Senegal, and Uganda) for SDG indicators 8.4.1/12.2.1 (material footprint), 8.4.2/12.2.2 (domestic material consumption), 12.4.2 and 12.5.1 (hazardous waste generated and national recycling rate), and 17.14.1 (policy coherence). A training on SDG indicator 12.3.1b (food waste) was held in Paris, France with participants from India (the sixth beneficiary country), together with Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, and Senegal.

The main objectives of the national activities were:

- To empower officials of beneficiary countries with knowledge and know-how to collect information and disseminate selected SDG indicators;

- To strengthen inter-institutional coordination to invigorate the production of SDG indicators and data flows;

- To share and discuss country challenges in measuring specific SDG indicators; and

- To develop national statistics related to relevant SDG indicators under goals 12 and 17.

The likely impact from these national activities on the six beneficiary countries is highlighted below.

Project Activities Impact

Overall, the national activities improved the capacities of key stakeholders in the context of knowledge (methodologies, statistical skills, analysis, and reporting) for all the targeted SDG indicators. Five beneficiary countries can either fully or partially report on SDG indicators 8.4.2/12.2.2, 12.4.2, 12.5.1 and 17.14.1. With SDG indicator 12.3.1b (food waste), a full overview of the topic was disseminated to the participating stakeholders, as well as the recognition to plan, finance and collaborate to collect and compile data on food waste.

The participation of a wide range of stakeholders from compilers/producers and users of data/information enabled the strengthening of inter-agency stakeholders at the national level and the identification of data gaps that can be used to improve their ability to collect and report on the targeted SDG indicators.

Overall, further technical assistance is required to improve the quality of collected and reported data for all the targeted SDG indicators by:

- Obtaining inputs from experts and stakeholders to improve the accuracy and relevance of national data collected;

- Appointing focal points in relevant institutions with sufficient resources with the responsibility for data collection; and

- Holding regular meetings between relevant inter-agency organisations.

Ghana's activities and impact

Ghana participated in all the national capacity building activities, except for the food waste training. Participants came from a wide range of data producers, compilers, and users: Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), Energy Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana Education Service, Minerals Commission, Ministry of Environment, Science,

Technology and Innovation, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, National Development Planning Commission, and the Public Procurement Authority.

As Ghana lacks sufficient data on hazardous waste and (municipal waste) recycling rates, it is still not able to properly report on these SDG indicators; more effort is required to address this situation. Efforts are planned/underway to improve waste generation data and to engage with relevant stakeholders to develop mechanisms accordingly.

In the policy coherence area, collaboration amongst key stakeholders raised their statistical capacity and awareness in the topic and evaluated the country's progress towards policy coherence. However, further efforts are required, including: strengthening inter-ministerial consultation; enhancing data collection and monitoring; involving more civil society organisations, private sector and other stakeholders in policy-making; identifying and addressing barriers to policy implementation that may hinder progress towards the SDGs; ensuring that economic incentives are aligned with sustainable development objectives; and prioritizing policies that address environmental protection, climate resilience and emissions reduction.

India's activities and impact

The likelihood of a positive impact on India is restricted to capacity being raised in the National Institute of Urban Affairs and Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation regarding knowledge transfer of SDG indicator 12.3.1b on food waste. The technical assistance encompassed an extensive introduction of food waste terminology, the complexity of data collection, financial resources to collect data and actions that are necessary to collect food waste related information. As no food waste data is currently collected, further actions are required to show a positive impact related to this indicator.

Jordan's activities and impact

Jordan participated in all the national capacity building activities, except for the food waste training. Participants attended from the Department of Statistics (DoS), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Local Administration, Ministry of Environment and Jordan Customs.

Despite gaps, Jordan has enough data to compile indicator 8.4.2/12.2.2 (domestic material consumption) and to report on indicators 12.4.2 (hazardous waste generated) and 12.5.1 (national recycling rate), although it lacks the capacity to estimate raw material equivalents of imports and exports. The impact of the training is a better understanding of the methodology and an increased potential for improved data collection and reporting in the future. Further support is required so Jordan can estimate emissions based on the residential principle and to calculate indicator 8.4.1/12.2.1 (material footprint), which could include taking a regional or sub-regional approach.

In the policy coherence area, the key stakeholders improved their knowledge to identify the necessary information to publish data for SDG indicator 17.14.1 and gained a willingness to continue stakeholder engagement in developing data for the SDG indicator in question. The impact was enhanced understanding of the questionnaire (self-assessment tool) to populate and report SDG indicator 17.14.1 as well as stating the willingness to form a national committee to collect and publish data related to this indicator.

Kazakhstan's activities and impact

Kazakhstan participated in all the national capacity building activities, mainly focusing on SDG indicators 8.4.1/12.2.1 and 8.4.2/12.2.2, food waste training (12.3.1b) and to a lesser

extent 12.4.2 and 12.5.1. Kazakhstan did not benefit from the policy coherence training as the country already collects and reports data on this indicator (17.14.1). Participants attended from the Institute of Economic Research, Bureau of National Statistics, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Joint Stock Company 'Zhasyl Damu'.

Whilst data exists for hazardous waste and municipal waste (as well as landfilling and treatment of waste), there are discrepancies in definitions which make it difficult to fully report on these indicators, hence this needs to be resolved before there is any major impact.

There is some good quality data to be able to calculate the domestic material consumption indicator (8.4.2/12.2.2), but Kazakhstan lacks the capacity to estimate raw material equivalents of imports and exports, and therefore cannot estimate its material footprint (8.4.1/12.2.1). Support is therefore required, to be able to fully estimate emissions based on the residential principle and calculate their material footprint.

For indicator 12.3.1b (food waste), the technical assistance provided, in addition to detailed methodological information, guidance on how to plan the design of a strategy to collect food waste data at national level, depending on the specificities of Kazakhstan.

Senegal's activities and impact

Senegal participated in all the national capacity building activities. Participants came from a wide range of data producers, compilers, and users: National Agency for Statistics and Demography (ANSD), Ministry of Finance and Budget, Ministry of Livestock and Animal Production, Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition, and the Ministry of Oil and Energy, as well as Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Urban Renewal, Housing and Living Environment, National Integrated Waste Management Company, and Senegal Numerique.

Based on the capacity building, Senegal should be able to complete its Material Flow Accounts reporting obligations once data gaps are completed, and report to UNEP, although technical assistance should be given when the methodology for deriving raw material equivalents for export and imports is available.

Generally, whilst there is some data for hazardous waste and e-waste generated in the government sector, there is a lack of data on hazardous waste and recycling, and little progress was made until more data becomes available on waste generation. The Zero Waste project (implemented by SONAGED) from December 2022 should provide more data on waste arisings soon. It is also recommended that Senegal Numerique is commissioned to report on e-waste arisings and recycling and foster the collection of data required to complete the data for indicators 12.4.2 and 12.5.1; both these factors should provide a positive impact for these waste indicators.

In the policy coherence area, collaboration amongst key stakeholders raised their statistical capacity and awareness in the topic area and participants were able to score their country's progress towards policy coherence based on the 8 dimensions methodology used. It was recommended that ANSD arranges a bi-yearly meeting on progress towards SDG indicator 17.14.1 and remaining challenges.

For indicator 12.3.1b (food waste), provided, in addition to detailed methodological information, guidance on how to plan the design of a strategy to collect food waste data at national level, depending on the specificities of Senegal.

Uganda's activities and impact

Uganda participated in the national policy coherence capacity building activity. Participants included the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), the Office of the Prime Minister and the

National Environmental Management Authority. This forum enabled the strengthening of inter-agency stakeholders at the national level and to identify gaps in available data that can be used to improve their ability to collect and report on the targeted SDG indicators under goal 17.

The capacity building enabled the organisations to self-evaluate their country's progress towards policy coherence, based on the 8 dimensions of the policy coherence SDG indicator.

Specifically, UBOS needs more efforts in inputs and validating the data recorded during the training and subsequently to submit the results to UNEP, and to expand the number of stakeholders involved in the SDGs, i.e. 20 Programme Lead entities, and hold regular meetings between them. Appointing focal points in relevant institutions with sufficient resources for the responsibility for data collection is also recommended.