

**Report - v 1.0**

**UNESCO/GFMD EXPERT MEETING ON TARGET 16.10.2,  
ALONGSIDE GFMD WORLD FORUM ON MEDIA DEVELOPMENT**

**19 September 2016**

**Multimedia Nusantara University Tangerang, Indonesia**

### **In a nutshell:**

After the approval by all 193 UN Member States of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, another important step took place: the definition of the core indicators that will be used to monitor the **17** goals and its **169** targets.

Under the leadership of the UN Statistical Commission, **230** indicators were designed and agreed, although not fully validated by all the different validation layers.

Different UN Agencies, funds and programmes have the responsibility of acting as custodians of different targets and, therefore, its respective indicators.

UNESCO is the **custodian agency** for this target and indicator:

**Goal 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**

Target 16.10. Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

**Indicator 16.10.2.** Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information

The **main goals** of the expert meeting, therefore, were to discuss:

- 1) Which **subindicators** should be suggested to Member States in order to better capture the information placed in high level indicator 16.10.2?
- 2) Which **means of verification** should be used?
- 3) Which **stakeholders/partners** should be involved?
- 4) Once the information is sent to UNESCO, besides reporting it to the UN General Assembly, what kind of **added value** and different **strategies of raising awareness** about it can be foreseen?

### **Annexes:**

1. Meeting agenda
2. List of Participants
3. Introductory PPT presentation
4. Briefing Note: Unpacking indicator 16.10.2 enhancing public access to information through agenda 2030 for sustainable development

## I. Introductory Remarks

Dr. Fackson Banda, on behalf of **UNESCO Communication and Information Sector** and on behalf of the **International Programme for the Development of Communication**, briefly introduced the expected results of the meeting as well as the core elements of the debates surrounding SDG16.10.2.

Key points of his presentation:

- A. History of SDGs, key facts and figures;
- B. Disclaimer that indicators still need endorsement by ECOSOC and UNGA;
- C. Indicators adopted are not a frozen exercise, they will be continually reviewed;
- D. Different stakeholders should be engaged in the current and next steps: UN Agencies, Member States, Civil Society Organizations, Academia, etc.;
- E. Expectations as custodian agency: indicator's analysis and operationalization (including metadata definition); identifying possible data building/collection/validation/verification partnerships; defining modalities of partnership; agreeing on an action timetable; defining an advisory group;
- F. Operationalization requires: performance sub-indicators, means of verification, possible data sources, data triangulation.

Bill Orme, as moderator and as **Global Forum for Media Development** representative to the UN, highlighted the relevance of the partnership between UNESCO and GFMD towards fostering SDG16.10 implementation and monitoring. He particularly underlined that permanent vigilance is needed in processes like this and that UNESCO's role played as custodian agency for the Education related Millennium Development Goals has built a reputation that will be relevant for our current endeavour<sup>1</sup>.

Leon Willems, as GFMD chairman, highlighted the importance of bringing global perspectives to this kind of processes, which can be enriched by Organizations such as GMFD and UNESCO, and, particularly, by partnerships among them.

Willems also pointed out the reshaping of international arena, where old North-South models are losing explanatory capacity or simply do not work any more – the SDGs framework is an important example of this.

For the GFMD's chairman the mobilization process, which helped to raise awareness among member states on the importance of including access to information and fundamental freedoms into the 2030 agenda must be acknowledged and taken into consideration<sup>2</sup>. An

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<sup>1</sup> For a summary produced by Bill Orme just after the approval of SDG16, see here: <http://gfmf.info/en/site/news/826/Ensuring-public-access-to-information-the-UN%E2%80%99s-new-global-goal.htm>

<sup>2</sup> The request signed by almost 200 Civil Society Organizations can be accessed here: <https://www.article19.org/resources.php/resource/37435/en/post-2015:-access-to-information-and-independent-media-essential-to-development>

An example of media coverage, here: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/feb/11/un-information-sdg-accountability-development>

important international coalition around this issue started to be built during that process, and the network of organization under the GMFD umbrella (more than 200, from 140 different nations) was and will be key to achieve our common goals.

This process, Mr. Willems underlined, showed how important is to think out of the box. Key elements that must be on the table:

- A. Multistakeholder perception, particularly by understanding how crucial information is;
- B. Journalists must be considered key players in this discussion;
- C. Grassroots, on the ground, real life stories, must be part of any successful strategy;
- D. Mapping what is already there is very important.

## II. Discussion

All experts invited offered important inputs to the discussion, particularly to fulfil the expected results highlighted by UNESCO and GMFD in the beginning of the exercise. A summary of these inputs are listed below:

1. **New challenge:** as Bill Orme underlined, SDG16 “is the difference between MDGs and SDGs”. Therefore, we are tackling a new challenge and this must be kept in mind when building strategies, new approaches will be required.
2. **National Statistical Offices:** these bodies are used to deal with very important “daily life” statistics (enrolment in schools, child mortality rates). Therefore working with them and their engagement in measuring SDG16 in general and SDG16.10 in particular will be quite relevant for the success of the reporting and monitoring process.
3. **Mapping existing indicators:** an initial mapping of existing exercises for monitoring access to information policies building and implementation will be central to this new UN system exercise.
4. **Mapping existing networks:** the already mentioned GFMD and the FoIAnet (250 organization members, 900 individual members) are good examples of the importance of mapping networks that can be allies in this process.
5. **What is already covered?** The Global Right to Information Rating is an important example that the assessment related to quality of **existing Freedom of Information laws** is already in place and can be more easily integrated to the global exercise demanded by SDG16.10.2. The real challenge is in monitoring the **effective implementation** of these laws. In Africa there are reports of the state of RTI covering at least 16 countries. **Active Transparency reports** were also mentioned as an area with increasing coverage by different stakeholders.
6. **Information Commissioners:** the central role of the authorities in charge of implementing the FoI laws was also highlighted by different experts, therefore, these authorities should be engaged in the indicators exercise from the beginning.
7. **Involvement of key users:** including heavy and strategic users (such as journalists) in this process and in the following up process of building subindicators is crucial. These players, particularly journalists, and their organizations, could be important means of verification to double check information provided by Member States.
8. **Broader stakeholders perspective:** how to involve players such as corporations?

9. **Infrastructure indicators:** it is important to highlight indicators related to the real access to internet, which is crucial to access public information.
10. **Gender perspective:** it is important to double check if the gender perspective is taken into account in this process.
11. **Integrated perspective:** it is important to consider how the process related to SDG16.10.2 will be connected with the other targets under SDG16 (rule of law, participation, transparency, accountability, freedom of expression, safety of journalists) and with other similar global processes (such as the Open Government Partnership or broader media development initiatives).
12. **Capacity building:** the overall strategy should include different training tools.
13. **Pilots:** a few initial pilots should be foreseen as part of the strategy.
14. **Shadow reports:** shadow reports prepared by other players, such as civil society organizations, will also be important, therefore, they must be stimulated and funded.
15. **Research:** this process also offers an opportunity for a new research agenda.
16. **New agendas:** how to include, for instance, protection of whistle-blowers as part of the indicators, as well as other new topics being raised?
17. **Funding mechanisms** should also be considered for this process.

### III. Concrete suggestions as a way forward (or ways forward):

1. **Scoping survey** to scout for data holders and actors that can be connected and involved in enriching the quality of indicators, data richness and contributions to the UNESCO 16.10.2 report;
2. **Piloting countries**, with the perspective of building champions and identifying good practices;
3. Developing an **initial set of questions** to be discussed and tested;
4. Establish **cross support** with other targets in SDG16 aiming to enhance the agenda of good governance;
5. Defining a **UNESCO annual timetable** for this process;
6. **Research agenda:** defining different research agenda items, for instance, is there a chilling effect of not having a FOI? Impacts in development?
7. Develop a **structured project** with the resources needed;
8. Develop an **awareness raising strategy** about SDG16;
9. Discuss the possibility of a **CSOs centralized report**.
10. **Enhance** existing FOI networks.

### IV. Information sources/experiences/groups mentioned during the meeting:

1. PRAIA Group on Governance Statistics

[http://www.effectiveinstitutions.org/media/Article\\_on\\_Praia\\_Group\\_on\\_Governance\\_Statistics.pdf](http://www.effectiveinstitutions.org/media/Article_on_Praia_Group_on_Governance_Statistics.pdf)

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-16-Praia-group-on-governance-statistics-E.pdf>

[http://www.ine.cv/grupopraia/Anexos/II\\_Reuniao\\_Estatistica\\_e\\_Governanca.pdf](http://www.ine.cv/grupopraia/Anexos/II_Reuniao_Estatistica_e_Governanca.pdf)

2. Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa

<http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/AfDB,%20SHA%20web.pdf>

3. SDG16 Data Initiative

<http://www.sdg16.org/about/>

4. Global Right to Information Rating

<http://www.rti-rating.org/>

5. FoIANet

<http://foiadvocates.net/>

6. Carter Center Implementation Assessment Tool

<https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/ati/iat/index.html>

7. State of RTI in Africa

<http://www.africafoicentre.org/index.php/resources/reports-publications/173-state-of-rti-in-africa-report-2015?path=>

8. Indicators Model: Red de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información

<https://redrta.org/modelo-indicadores-rta/>

9. The World Justice Report

<http://worldjusticeproject.org/>

10. International panel on social progress

<https://www.ipsp.org/>

11. IFLA's contributions to the 2030 Agenda

<http://www.ifla.org/node/10545>

12. SDG Funders:

<http://sdgfunders.org/sdgs/>