

Effective monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda in Canada

The scale and scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has 232 indicators, present a challenge for Canada to effectively monitor and evaluate progress. There is a need to ensure that efforts are informed by evidence and that necessary data are available to track progress and promote accountability, particularly for communities at risk of being left behind.

Key messages

- Standard practice is monitoring relevant global Sustainable Development Goal indicators for which data already exist or through proxy indicators with efforts made to invest in the production of data for nationally relevant indicators. Statistics Canada has identified available data to monitor progress.
- Efforts to monitor and evaluate progress on the 2030 Agenda should make use of existing systems where possible to reduce reporting burdens. Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy should be subject to its own monitoring and evaluation processes.
- The Government of Canada should invest in capacities to fill data gaps, including with respect to monitoring progress towards global and national Sustainable Development Goal targets, ensuring the availability of disaggregated data that meet the needs of historically marginalized communities, and supporting community-led monitoring processes. The government should also continue to invest in strengthening data ecosystems in developing countries, in accordance with its commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals.



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Introduction

In 2015, world leaders adopted the United Nations' [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The 2030 Agenda, which introduced 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sets out a transformative plan for people and planet. It aims to promote shared prosperity, environmental sustainability and progress on sustainable development that leaves no one behind. Realizing the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda requires a whole-of-society approach. Governments, citizens, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector all have roles to play in contributing to sustainable development outcomes.

Nearly four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, many countries have put in place building blocks for its implementation as shown by reviews of government reporting to the [United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2016, 2017 and 2018](#). Many countries have integrated the SDGs into policy frameworks. Institutional and governance mechanisms have been established to oversee and evaluate progress on implementation. Partnerships across sectors are forming, while systems for monitoring and evaluation are being put in place. However, progress has been mixed across countries, particularly in terms of the extent to which countries have localized implementation of the 2030 Agenda, integrated its transformative elements into policies and practices, and developed enabling environments that promote whole-of-society contributions to sustainable development.

Monitoring and evaluation

The scale and scope of the 2030 Agenda present a challenge for countries to effectively monitor and evaluate progress. Given the agenda's [232 indicators](#), many observers have called for a [data revolution](#) to support its implementation.

There is a need to ensure that efforts are informed by evidence and that necessary data are available to track progress and promote accountability. Indeed, data and statistics are means to an end. The data revolution has led to an emphasis on strengthening national statistical systems, exploring ways that unofficial data can support 2030 Agenda implementation, and promoting overall accountability for implementation through the generation and use of more and better data to track progress.

Many initiatives have been launched to improve capacities, particularly in developing countries, and harness data generated by a wide range of stakeholders, such as the private sector, academia and civil society, to track progress on the SDGs.¹

This policy brief outlines emerging standard and good practices with respect to monitoring and evaluating progress on the 2030 Agenda implementation with the aim of informing Canada's approach.² It is based on a review of country reporting to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development over the 2016–18 period through [Voluntary National Review \(VNR\)](#) reports, which collectively serve as a key element of international follow-up and review of 2030 Agenda implementation. Also, interviews were conducted with six civil society organizations and one government institution in seven countries³ to complement and validate information presented in VNR reports. In addition to identifying emerging practices, the brief provides an overview of key considerations for the Canadian context and concludes with recommendations for Canada. An annex with detailed information on the specific good practices highlighted in this brief serves as a useful resource for the Government of Canada and other stakeholders interested in the adoption and promotion of good practices for 2030 Agenda implementation.

What is a good practice?

TRANSFORMATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE 2030 AGENDA

A good practice is an activity or approach that demonstrates incorporation of one or more of the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda. The agenda is human rights-based and focuses on the inclusion of, and change for, the poorest and most vulnerable by promoting their inherent dignity and human rights through efforts to leave no one behind. Efforts are informed by inclusivity, solidarity and participation. The 2030 Agenda is universal in that it applies to all countries and people. The economic, social and environmental pillars of the 2030 Agenda are of equal importance, with the SDGs being integrated and indivisible—achievements under any one goal are linked to progress on others. Implementation of the agenda should occur with respect for planetary boundaries and inter-generational responsibility, recognizing the need to protect the planet's resources now and for future generations.

1 See, for example, the [United Nations Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators](#), the [Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data](#), the United Nations Development Programme's [guidance note on data and monitoring for the 2030 Agenda](#), the United Nations Development Group's [guidance note on supporting country reporting on the SDGs](#), the [SDG monitoring and reporting toolkit](#) for United Nations Country Teams, and [Localizing the SDGs](#), which collates resources, including on monitoring and evaluation, for sub-national governments. Notably, the United Nations Statistics Division prepared a [handbook](#)—a living document—to guide national statistical offices and other official data producers to collect data, calculate indicators and monitor progress on the SDGs.

2 This policy brief complements the policy briefs in this [series](#) on policy integration and coherence, policy and data gaps, and accountability. Respectively, they address monitoring and evaluation issues related to identifying national priorities, targets and indicators, assessing data availability and establishing baselines, and reporting processes. This brief focuses on systems for monitoring and evaluation, coordination and capacity development according to the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda.

3 Interviews were carried out with civil society organizations from the following countries: Colombia, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Nepal, Nigeria and Uganda. This brief also includes a number of good practices based on VNR reports for other countries, but it should be noted that information for these countries could not be validated beyond additional Web-based searches.

Importantly, good practices respect the aspirational nature of the 2030 Agenda, demonstrably moving beyond standard practices or business-as-usual approaches. Finally, the 2030 Agenda is grounded in commitments to transparency and accountability.

-  **HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH**
-  **LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND**
-  **INTEGRATED AND INDIVISIBLE**
-  **INCLUSIVITY AND PARTICIPATION**
-  **PROGRESS WITHIN PLANETARY BOUNDARIES**
-  **INTERGENERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**
-  **ASPIRATIONAL**
-  **TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Approaches to monitoring and evaluation should be informed by the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda. Good practice includes a transparent commitment to monitor and evaluate the 2030 Agenda, identification of national targets and indicators,⁴ and efforts to ensure inclusivity and participation in these processes including through engagement with and use of unofficial data produced by non-state actors. The adoption of rights-based approaches to data collection is also an aspect of applying the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda to monitoring and evaluation. Ensuring that monitoring and evaluation processes focus on communities at risk of being left behind is also a good practice. Good practices in the selection of national targets and indicators are captured in the policy brief on policy integration and coherence in this series.

 **SPECIALIZED AND INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRESS**

Good practice includes integrating the SDGs into existing systems for monitoring and evaluation to reduce reporting burdens. Integration entails collecting data for SDG indicators through existing surveys and developing new surveys where needed. As noted in the policy brief on [accountability](#) in this series, monitoring implementation of the 2030 Agenda through existing reporting processes is also a good practice, including reporting by government institutions and specialized independent bodies such as human rights commissions. At the same time, there is a need to ensure that 2030 Agenda implementation plans are monitored. In other words, good practice in monitoring includes tracking progress on SDG indicators as well as implementation of 2030 Agenda plans at national and sub-national levels. In addition, good practice is updating existing evaluation processes to include relevant aspects of the 2030 Agenda as well as carrying out more comprehensive reviews of national implementation strategies and roadmaps.

 **COORDINATED MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING**

The scope of the 2030 Agenda—17 SDGs, 169 targets and 232 indicators—presents a challenge for any government in terms of monitoring, evaluation and reporting. National statistical offices play a primary role, yet other government institutions at national and sub-national levels also collect data, including administrative data, that can contribute to monitoring, evaluation and reporting efforts. The whole-of-society approach to 2030 Agenda implementation also has implications in this area. It raises the questions of how contributions by non-state actors can be monitored, evaluated and included in reporting processes as well as whether unofficial data can play a role in addressing gaps in official data. Good practices are creative solutions that ensure inclusive coordination to effectively monitor, evaluate and report on the 2030 Agenda.

 **INVESTING IN CAPACITY TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE**

Good practice is investing in high-quality disaggregated data to ensure that national statistical offices and other official data producers have the necessary resources and capacities to collect, analyze and disseminate data for reporting on the SDGs. Assessing data gaps and capacities to effectively monitor and evaluate progress on the 2030 Agenda, and establishing a plan to strengthen the data ecosystem (which includes the national statistical system, other official and unofficial data producers and data users) are good practices.

4 Good practices in the selection of national targets and indicators are captured in the policy brief on [policy integration and coherence](#) in this series.

National statistical offices are the primary producers of data on the SDGs. In many countries, they are hindered in carrying out their work by insufficient resources and inadequate capacities. Capacities to improve data collection, analysis, dissemination and use require investment, even in high-income countries that may not have data available to monitor progress on all SDGs. Under the leadership of national statistical offices, monitoring requirements for the 2030 Agenda also necessitate new mechanisms and skills to coordinate official and unofficial data producers.

For most countries, leaving no one behind requires additional investments to reach certain communities and work with them to generate the data needed to track progress on 2030 Agenda implementation and support their own efforts. The availability of disaggregated data is critical in this regard, particularly in terms of understanding who is being left behind and tracking progress for specific vulnerable communities. Good practice by international development partners is investing in boosting the capacities of data ecosystems, especially national statistical offices, in developing countries. Such investments align with commitments in target 17.18 under [SDG 17](#) on partnerships for the goals that focuses on capacity development to increase the availability of high-quality disaggregated data.

Standard practices

Standard practice is monitoring relevant global SDG indicators for which data already exist or through proxy indicators. As noted in the policy brief on [policy and data gaps](#) in this series, standard practice is assessing data availability to monitor the 2030 Agenda.

That said, countries do not tend to provide information on the availability of disaggregated data in their VNR reports, including information on specific gaps in disaggregated data.

In terms of systems for monitoring, national statistical offices are the main data producers that monitor 2030 Agenda implementation, with other government institutions playing supporting roles. National statistical offices tend to have responsibility for coordination of monitoring efforts, with some countries creating task teams or working groups related to monitoring. While some countries have integrated the SDGs into existing systems for monitoring and evaluation, the extent to which such integration has been widely adopted as a standard practice is unclear from VNR reports. Moreover, limited examples are available of efforts by sub-national governments and non-state actors to monitor and evaluate progress on the 2030 Agenda.

Standard practice with respect to evaluations of progress is also unclear from VNR reports. A range of mechanisms exist to report on SDG indicators, such as Web portals or departmental reports. However, information on evaluations of progress is relatively limited in VNR reports. The status of reporting that moves beyond the presentation of indicators and trends to assess how and why progress has occurred is uncertain.

Finally, the identification of capacity gaps and how to address them to support monitoring of the 2030 Agenda is a standard practice. In 2018, 31 of 46 countries that reported to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development highlighted efforts to improve data availability. Developing countries generally focused on capacity development and technical assistance (32 of 91 countries⁵ over 2017–18). Twenty-two countries noted that they will improve data availability through the creation of new data sets, while 17 pointed to improved coordination. In 2018, 11 countries noted that they had adopted or would develop a plan to improve statistical capacity.

Good practices

Good practice is integrating 2030 Agenda implementation into existing monitoring and evaluation systems where relevant to track contributions from government institutions and overall progress on global and national SDG targets, including through existing survey mechanisms and administrative data. The use of existing systems helps to reduce reporting burdens. Establishing systems to showcase monitoring efforts specific to the SDGs, such as national reporting platforms, is also a good practice. Such approaches are important for consolidating information as well as ensuring transparency and accessibility to information on progress. In addition, efforts to monitor and evaluate progress on the implementation of national 2030 Agenda strategies are also good practices since they provide opportunities to understand how progress has occurred, identify lessons learned and change course as necessary. Good practice is including the SDGs as part of local monitoring efforts on sustainable development.

Good practice is establishing mechanisms to coordinate 2030 Agenda monitoring. Coordination mechanisms bring together official and unofficial data producers at national and sub-national levels to identify data gaps and establish innovative partnerships to fill them.

⁵ In 2017, 43 VNR reports were submitted to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The report for the Netherlands included Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. The report for Belarus was only available in Russian and, as such, was not assessed. Thus, reporting by 45 governments was assessed. All 46 VNR reports submitted in 2018 were assessed.

Monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda in line with its transformative elements are good practices. Such practices include ensuring transparency and accessibility of data through reporting and technological solutions such as mobile applications and national reporting platforms. Ensuring inclusivity and participation in monitoring and evaluation processes through multi-stakeholder engagement is a good practice, as are partnering with non-state actors to fill data gaps and using unofficial data to fill gaps in official monitoring and evaluation processes. Good practice is the adoption of a human rights-based approach to data as well as efforts to ensure that monitoring and evaluation processes target communities at risk of being left behind, including through the generation of high-quality disaggregated data and engagement with communities.

Good practice is investing in a national statistical system and the broader data ecosystem to support 2030 Agenda implementation. Effective reporting on the 2030 Agenda requires that national statistical systems have the necessary capacities and resources to monitor global, national and sub-national sustainable development progress. In addition to investing in new data, capacity development and coordination, good practices include capacity development efforts aimed at supporting local governments to monitor their progress on sustainable development such as through the creation of toolkits and collaborative initiatives. Investing in the national statistical systems of developing countries is a good practice for international development partners.



INTO EXISTING MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

According to its VNR report, **Afghanistan** is making use of its existing Millennium Development Goal data repository and results-based monitoring and evaluation system to track progress on the SDGs. Government institutions report on their efforts to the Ministry of Economy, which prepared annual and semi-annual progress reports for the High Council of Ministers, Cabinet and United Nations. To avoid duplication of efforts, monitoring of the SDGs in **Bhutan** will be harmonized with the existing monitoring and evaluation system for the country's national development plan, which is based on key performance indicators. **Kenya** is [tracking progress](#) at national and sub-national levels through its National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System and County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System, respectively. SDG indicators were integrated into these systems and regular surveys carried out by the national statistical office.

At the local level, New York City in the **United States** regularly monitors overall sustainability. The city, which was the first to submit a [Voluntary Local Review](#) to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018, tracks over 1,000 indicators that pertain to policies, government institutions and initiatives, including through the use of existing data and historic investments in a robust system for performance management.



SPECIALIZED EFFORTS TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE THE 2030 AGENDA

Egypt's [Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform](#) created an [integrated electronic tool](#) for planning and monitoring projects related to the SDGs. This tool ensures that projects are compatible with sustainability criteria and matches all projects submitted by other public entities with the SDG targets and key performance indicators.

In **Armenia**, the national statistical office, [Armstat](#), developed a platform for SDG monitoring at the national level, which is supported by the United Nations Population Fund. The monitoring indicators cover the three dimensions of the SDGs (economy, society, and the environment) and enable monitoring progress from the perspectives of different segments of the population (such as the elderly, youth, people living in poverty, and women). The use of a specialized national reporting platform⁶ allows for the provision of regular, up-to-date information on progress against the SDGs. In the case of Armenia, the focus on different segments of the population contributes to monitoring outcomes for those at risk of being left behind.

Examples also exist of efforts by sub-national governments to monitor progress on the 2030 Agenda. A growing number of local governments in **Australia** are measuring their progress against the SDGs. Local governments work with the federal government to contribute to national reporting. In **Spain**, a range of regional and local governments committed to monitor progress on the 2030 Agenda. The Autonomous Community of Andalusia selected an initial set of 43 indicators, while the Basque Government selected 100 SDG targets and 50 indicators.

In terms of evaluation, **Spain** committed to evaluate its action plan for 2030 Agenda implementation in 2020 to improve performance, collate lessons learned and adjust approaches as necessary. The government also plans to consolidate evaluation with the Institute for Public Policy Evaluation by establishing a system to coordinate evaluation in collaboration with government institutions.

⁶ See the policy brief on accountability in this series for a comprehensive list of national reporting platforms



COORDINATION ON MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Nepal's Central Bureau of Statistics established an inter-ministerial SDG Indicators Coordination Committee to track progress on SDG implementation at the sub-national level. **Poland's** Task Force for Coherence of Strategy for Responsible Development with Agenda 2030 is comprised of local and regional governments that are responsible for the monitoring and reporting of the SDG implementation strategy. **Thailand** established a sub-committee under its National Committee for Sustainable Development that is responsible for developing an information system to support sustainable development. The sub-committee includes a range of stakeholders and aims to establish a national central database for data collection and analysis.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACCORDING TO THE TRANSFORMATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE 2030 AGENDA

Inclusivity and participation are important transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda. **Albania's** [commitment](#) to institutionalize regular reviews of progress on SDG implementation at the national and local levels includes a promise to ensure inclusivity and participation. In consultation with a wide range of stakeholders such as the legislature and civil society, the national statistical office plans to prepare periodic and annual reports with findings and recommendations from the regular reviews. A [National Data Forum](#) was launched in Uganda in 2017. The forum brings together various stakeholders, including those that support vulnerable groups that are often left behind. The inclusive and participatory orientation of the forum has been important for establishing approaches to address data issues in order to leave no one behind. The forum is complemented by **Uganda's** multi-stakeholder working group on data, which has identified data sources to leave no one behind.

Some countries have taken steps to ensure that monitoring data are transparent and accessible. **Egypt's** [SDG Observatory Dashboard](#) presents data for SDG indicators based on categories such as SDGs, sectors, groups and key priority indicators of United Nations agencies. It has a mobile application to facilitate its use and the dissemination of information.

To ensure transparency, accessibility and accountability for sustainable development, New York City in the **United States** provides information context and explanations for outcomes on the indicators that it monitors, develops new indicators as needed to match corresponding initiatives, and has a [Mayor's Office of Data Analytics](#) that centralizes data sharing and analysis as well as ensures accessibility to open data.

As noted in the policy brief on [policy integration and coherence](#), **Armenia** and **Hungary** plan to adopt a human rights-based approach to monitoring progress on the 2030 Agenda.⁷ Armenia is collecting data for SDG indicators on a regular basis and with appropriate levels of disaggregation through a participatory and consultative approach. Hungary's [Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights](#) plans to monitor progress on the 2030 Agenda through the country's existing human rights monitoring systems and will provide advice and expertise to the government on a human rights-based approach to data.



WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACHES TO MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRESS

As mentioned, countries provided limited examples of efforts by non-state actors to monitor and evaluate progress on the 2030 Agenda. The policy brief on [accountability](#) in this series provides information on a number of efforts, including the creation of Web portals that track progress at sub-national levels, independent evaluations or reviews of progress by civil society organizations, and efforts to match official data from national statistical systems and unofficial data from different sources to present a coherent narrative of progress. In addition to these efforts, several initiatives were highlighted in interviews.

The [Leave No One Behind Coalition](#) has been supporting communities in **Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nepal** and **Vietnam** to generate their own community-driven data in order to monitor progress on sustainable development. Its initiative includes dialogue with governments and aims to receive official recognition of community-generated data for use in public planning.

⁷ The United Nations Development Group's [guidance note](#) on country reporting stresses the importance of a human rights-based approach to data that brings together stakeholders and communities to improve data quality and use consistent with international human rights norms and principles.

In **Colombia**, the government partnered with [CEPEI](#), a research institution, and the private sector to generate data on private sector contributions to the 2030 Agenda in order to inform the country's 2018 VNR report. The collaborative model included the creation of a survey, the results of which fed into the VNR report as well as individual companies' sustainability reporting. In **Egypt**, the [Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research](#) created mobile applications to crowdsource information on sustainable development. Civil society organizations in **Uganda** have seen recognition by the government of their important contributions to filling official data gaps. While challenges persist in terms of recognizing unofficial data, civil society organizations point out that the 2030 Agenda is about more than numbers. There is a need to showcase the experiences and voices of people impacted by policies and programs.



INVESTING IN CAPACITY TO MONITOR THE 2030 AGENDA

In addition to global efforts to improve capacities to monitor and evaluate progress on the 2030 Agenda,⁸ countries are adopting various approaches. As mentioned, emerging standard practice tends to include improved data collection, coordination and capacity development. Some countries also noted specific efforts to improve local capacities for 2030 Agenda monitoring. For example, the National Confederation of Brazilian Municipalities developed a toolkit to assist local governments in monitoring their efforts on sustainable development. Among other things, the [Mandala tool](#) aims to assist municipalities in **Brazil** to use appropriate data that reflect local realities to inform public policy making. Recognizing the need to improve data availability at the sub-national level, **Egypt** launched a project to collect data at the level of municipalities by actively engaging them in the process. This approach aims to ensure that better data are available which reflect regional disparities, improve the quality of data collection, and build capacity for sustainable data production.

In terms of efforts to support developing countries, **Australia** provided support to the [Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development](#) for monitoring and reporting on the SDGs. The country also worked in partnership with the [Pacific Statistics Steering Community](#) and [Pacific Community](#) to establish a subset of regional indicators for the SDGs that are relevant in the Pacific context. **Canada** is supporting data collection and official statistics production to measure progress on the 2030 Agenda. The government established a [Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems](#) and is working to [harness big data for the SDGs](#).

Monitoring and evaluating progress on the 2030 Agenda in Canada

NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Statistics Canada developed a national reporting platform, the [SDG Data Hub](#), to track progress on the global SDG indicator framework. Launched in May 2018, the hub provides information on available data, proxy indicators and indicators for which Statistics Canada is exploring data options. Statistics Canada faces the challenge of generating disaggregated data for a number of communities at risk of being left behind, such as Indigenous peoples who live on reserves and members of LGBTQ2S+ communities. It also participates in the [Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators](#) and contributed to the development of the global SDG indicator framework. This experience puts it in a position to share and draw on good practices from around the world. While [provinces and territories](#) produce and analyze statistics based on data from Statistics Canada and surveys that they carry out, they have yet to actively engage on the 2030 Agenda.

The Government of Canada has demonstrated its commitment to investing in statistical capacity. In addition to efforts that support developing countries,⁹ it launched the [Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics](#) to improve the availability of disaggregated data for communities at risk of being left behind in Canada. Notably, the [Aboriginal Liaison Program](#) works with Indigenous peoples to improve capacities to access and use data by Statistics Canada and liaise with communities and organizations on surveys and relevant initiatives.

⁸ See the [guidance note](#) prepared by the United Nations Development Programme on data and monitoring for the 2030 Agenda for an overview of the review activities at the global level aimed at supporting improved monitoring and reporting on the SDGs.

⁹ The Government of Canada's total contribution to statistical system strengthening in developing countries is not specifically reported in its [Statistical Reports on International Assistance](#) though specific initiatives exist

In terms of coordination, Statistics Canada has [advisory groups](#) for nearly all of its programs. They include the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Consultative Council on Statistical Policy that provides a space to determine data needs and coordinate on data dissemination. Statistics Canada also coordinates with federal government departments and has advisory groups related to health, education and justice, among other areas. Statistics Canada also engages with non-state actors.

In terms of Canada's international support for the 2030 Agenda, Global Affairs Canada has taken steps to align monitoring efforts with it. For example, Global Affairs Canada's [indicators](#) to assess progress on Canada's [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#) are linked to specific SDGs.

A number of existing mechanisms could be used to evaluate and report on progress with respect to the 2030 Agenda, as outlined in the policy brief on accountability in this series. They include, for example, reporting mechanisms on the [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](#) and the official development assistance, as well as reports and evaluations by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. To date, departmental performance reports across government institutions—at all levels of government—have yet to integrate the 2030 Agenda. There is an opportunity for Canada's [2030 Agenda National Strategy](#) to outline how the 2030 Agenda will be integrated into existing mechanisms and how monitoring and evaluations of the national strategy will occur.

WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH

The consultation on Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy includes various questions on the Canadian Indicator Framework, which will monitor progress on 2030 Agenda implementation.¹⁰ The consultation is collecting views on where data gaps exist, data needed to support local community priorities and leave no one behind, and how unofficial data and data held by different government institutions, including at provincial, territorial and municipal levels, could be used to fill gaps. This presents an opportunity for the national strategy to chart a course for a whole-of-society approach to monitoring and evaluation that includes investments in the data ecosystem to further address capacities to produce, analyze and use data as well as make use of unofficial data to fill data gaps through innovative partnerships. As noted in the policy brief on accountability, Canada has initiatives that report on community well-being such as the [Canadian Index of Wellbeing](#) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development's local tracking and reporting [tool](#).

As noted in [Generation SDG](#), a Blueprint published by the [Waterloo Global Science Initiative](#),¹¹ a whole-of-society approach includes sharing resources with communities to track, monitor and report on their progress on the 2030 Agenda.

Locally generated data can feed into national monitoring processes and serve as means to ensure that what is monitored matters for diverse communities. Collaboration across communities can help to build understanding of different indicators and balance local monitoring needs with efforts to ensure some level of comparability.

With respect to Indigenous communities, Canada's efforts to monitor the 2030 Agenda should align with the principles of ownership, control, access and possession established by the [First Nations Information Governance Centre](#). These principles outline provisions to collect, protect, use and share First Nations data, recognizing collective ownership of data and information, the right of Indigenous communities to have control over "research and information management processes that impact them" and "access to information and data about themselves and their communities regardless of where it is held." Finally, the principle related to possession refers to physical control over data, which ensures ownership.

¹⁰ The discussion guide was available by emailing Programme2030-2030Agenda@canada.gc.ca between March 15 and May 15, 2019.

¹¹ Founded by the University of Waterloo and Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, the Waterloo Global Science Initiative promotes collective global action by convening summits, publishing Blueprints and supporting partnerships.



Recommendations

This policy brief showcases standard and good practices for monitoring and evaluating progress on the 2030 Agenda. Several recommendations emerge.

Reduce reporting burdens by integrating 2030 Agenda monitoring and evaluation efforts into existing systems and making use of existing data.

Statistics Canada uses existing surveys and available data to monitor progress on global SDG targets. It follows good practice by exploring how existing administrative data and data collected by other levels of government can support 2030 Agenda monitoring. Efforts to support 2030 Agenda implementation could be incorporated into performance reporting by government institutions to reduce reporting burdens. Finally, through harnessing monitoring and reporting efforts by independent bodies, such as those related to human rights, government monitoring efforts could be complemented by insights from these bodies into relevant aspects of 2030 Agenda implementation.

Monitor and evaluate the implementation of Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy.

The Government of Canada should monitor and evaluate progress on the 2030 Agenda National Strategy, including monitoring of key activities outlined in the national strategy and periodic evaluations to understand how progress has occurred, identify lessons learned and change course as needed.

Invest to fill data gaps.

Statistics Canada has identified data gaps, including with respect to disaggregated data. The consultation on Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy will likely identify more data gaps at national, provincial, territorial and community levels. Additional investments will be needed to collect data to monitor global and national SDG targets, identify community-level priorities and ensure appropriate levels of disaggregation to leave no one behind. Official and unofficial data producers should be supported in this context.

Coordinate monitoring and evaluation efforts at national and sub-national levels and with unofficial data producers.

Statistics Canada's advisory groups will play an important role in supporting coordination on data collection to support 2030 Agenda implementation. Also, potential exists to harness collaboration and innovative partnerships to address data gaps at national and sub-national levels to monitor progress on sustainable development.

Adopt a transformative approach to monitoring and evaluation of progress on the 2030 Agenda to ensure that no one is left behind.

As with all aspects of 2030 Agenda implementation, monitoring and evaluation should be inclusive and participatory, with a focus on leaving no one behind. The addition of questions related to Canada's Indicator Framework in the consultation on Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy was positive. Going forward, the national strategy should set out how monitoring and evaluation efforts will remain inclusive and participatory, guided by the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda.

In accordance with commitments under SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals, continue to invest in the production of high-quality disaggregated data in developing countries.

The Government of Canada has taken steps to support the call for a data revolution. It should continue to support the capacity development needs identified by developing countries to strengthen their national data ecosystems.



Photo: Shanté Uganda

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