

# Integrated Monitoring Guide for Sustainable Development Goal 6 on Water and Sanitation

## Good practices for country monitoring systems



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This publication will be continually updated throughout the duration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to incorporate new developments and lessons learned.

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 UN WATER

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# 1. Introduction

The UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 supports countries in monitoring water and sanitation and compiles data to report on global progress. The Initiative is a collaboration between United Nations agencies to streamline global monitoring efforts and foster cross-sectoral collaboration.

The Integrated Monitoring Guide for SDG 6 constitutes a main point of reference in this work.

## 1.1. What is the Integrated Monitoring Guide?

The Integrated Monitoring Guide aids national governments in monitoring their progress towards the new SDG on water and sanitation (SDG 6). The Guide proposes methodologies for monitoring each of the 11 global indicators under SDG 6, as defined by the country-led Inter-agency Expert Group on

Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG). It also outlines the rationale for monitoring these indicators and how the data collected can be used, as well as how SDG 6 monitoring can be successfully implemented at the national level.

The Guide seeks to embrace and build on existing monitoring efforts at the national level, thereby enabling countries to undertake monitoring efforts at a level in line with their capacity and available resources, and to advance progressively. The methodologies also seek to promote harmonization and the use of similar standards and definitions, to facilitate data sharing and comparison, within and across countries and over time.

The Guide should not be seen as a prescriptive set of rules to be adhered to, but rather as promoting an integrated approach for monitoring SDG 6. We anticipate that the Guide will be continually revised during the SDG period, to incorporate methodological and technological developments, as well as institutional good practices that can improve monitoring effectiveness and efficiency.



SDG 6 monitoring builds on existing efforts in countries, thereby enabling countries to begin monitoring at a level in line with their capacity and resource availability, and to advance progressively. Photo credit: Proggie, Creative Commons Attribution

## 1.2. Who is the Integrated Monitoring Guide for?

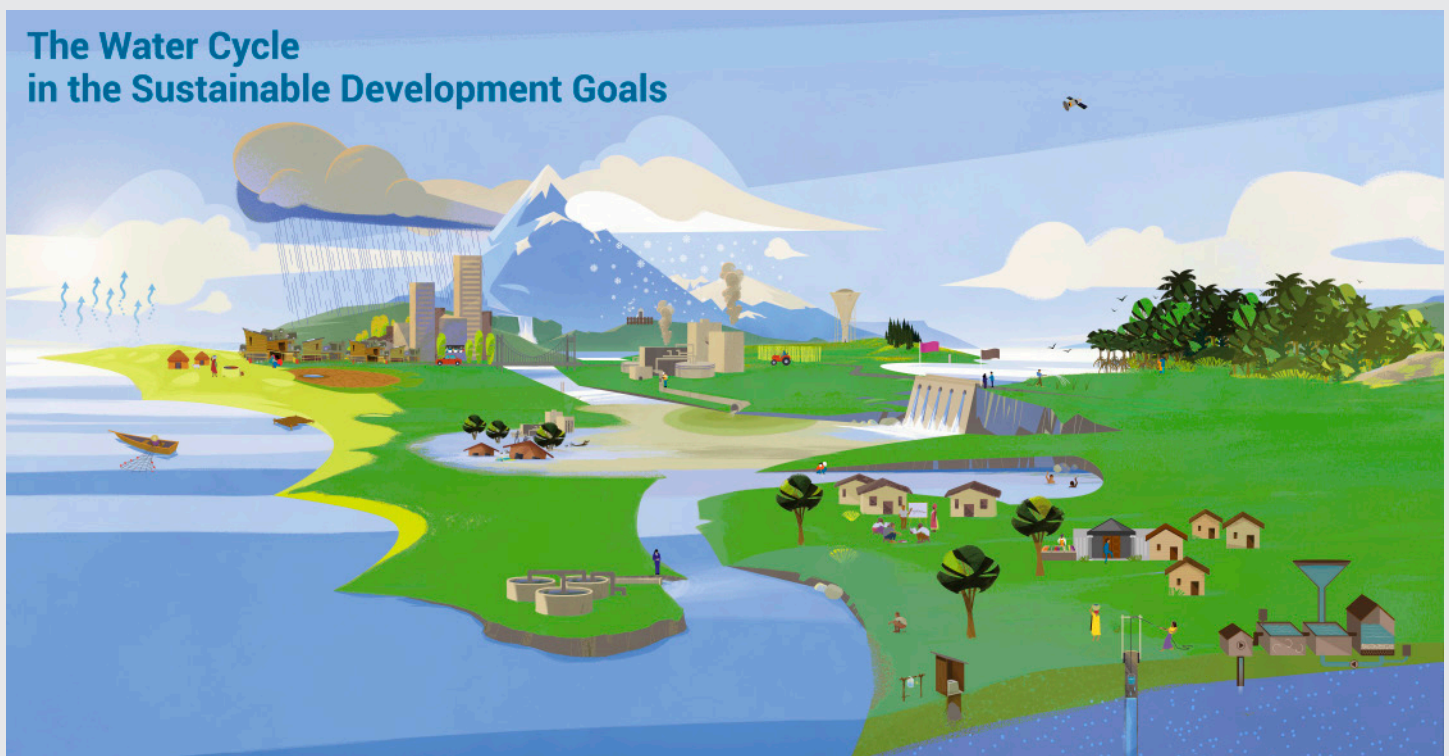
The Guide is designed to be used by those responsible for measuring, collecting and compiling water- and sanitation-related data. This may be technical staff within relevant line ministries and National Statistical Offices, or within subnational governments and water and sanitation utilities, as well as academia, the private sector and civil society groups

involved in monitoring. Below is a list of the components of the Guide and their intended use.

Additional resources targeted at the general public and policymakers include the brochure [Monitoring Water and Sanitation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – An introduction](#), which provides background information on the intergovernmental processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global indicator framework, the rationale for water sector monitoring and the development of the Guide.

**Table 1. Overview of the Integrated Monitoring Guide for SDG 6 and its target audience**

| Guide component   | Description  | Target audience  |
|---|--|--|
| <a href="#">Integrated Monitoring Guide for SDG 6 – Good practices for country monitoring systems</a> (this document) | Good practices on processes and principles for implementing SDG 6 monitoring at the national level, including success factors, institutional arrangements, stakeholder involvement and resource requirements     | Senior staff responsible for setting up and coordinating SDG 6 monitoring (e.g. SDG 6 focal points); technical staff responsible for monitoring the SDG 6 indicators; politicians and the general public (for a better understanding of the overall process) |
| <a href="#">Integrated Monitoring Guide for SDG 6 – Targets and global indicators</a>                                 | Presentation of SDG 6 and its targets, highlighting interlinkages within SDG 6 and with other SDGs; broad overview of SDG 6 global indicators, their rationale and recommended methodologies for monitoring them | Senior staff responsible for setting up and coordinating SDG 6 monitoring (e.g. SDG 6 focal point); technical staff responsible for monitoring the components of SDG 6; politicians and the general public   |
| <a href="#">Step-by-step methodologies for SDG 6 global indicators</a>  | Step-by-step guidance on recommended methodologies for monitoring the SDG 6 global indicators, including advice on data collection and management  | Technical staff responsible for monitoring the components of SDG 6   |



To learn more about SDG 6 and its targets and indicators, see the second component of the Guide, [Targets and global indicators](#). For recommendations on how to monitor the indicators, see the detailed [step-by-step methodologies](#)

### 1.3. How was the Integrated Monitoring Guide developed?

This Guide has been developed by technical staff within the United Nations agencies that are formally mandated to compile country data for global reporting on SDG 6, cooperating under the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6.<sup>1</sup>

The work on developing the recommended monitoring methodologies started in 2014. By closely following and contributing

to the IAEG-SDG process, and with the help of stakeholder consultations, draft methodologies were ready at the beginning of 2016. Throughout 2016, the draft methodologies were piloted at scale in five countries<sup>2</sup>, with the aim of reviewing their technical feasibility and the institutional set-up for implementing them. The methodologies were also subject to an open expert review, with input from a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives from national institutions, academia and business associations. In light of the lessons learned and the feedback from the pilot testing and the open expert review, the methodologies and other components of this Guide were revised and expanded upon.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the back cover of this publication for contact information.

<sup>2</sup> Jordan, the Netherlands, Peru, Senegal and Uganda



Some of those involved in developing and testing the methodologies for monitoring SDG 6 global indicators, gathering in Delft, the Netherlands, in September 2016. They shared experiences and lessons learned to further improve this Guide.

## 2. Unpacking the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In September 2015, Heads of State from around the world gathered at a summit in New York to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – an ambitious “plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”, comprising 17 SDGs and 169 targets, which aims to do no less than “transform our world”. Below is a short introduction to the different elements of the 2030 Agenda, including how they relate to country processes and SDG 6.

### 2.1. Translating global goals and targets to national action

The 2030 Agenda defines the 17 SDGs and their respective 169 targets as global and aspirational. It also specifies that each country should set their own national targets, inspired by the global ambition but taking into account their specific circumstances. National circumstances may refer to a country's available resources and existing capacity, or to national priorities and the urgency of different issues. For example, a water-scarce country may prioritize working on water-use efficiency, water reuse and water recycling (6.3 and 6.4), while a country suffering from severe water pollution may focus their efforts on improving sanitation and wastewater treatment (6.2 and 6.3).

Some of the global targets specify a quantitative level, for example, “universal” access to drinking water (6.1) or “halving” the proportion of untreated wastewater (6.3). Other targets are less specific, for example, seeking to “substantially reduce” the number of people suffering from water scarcity (6.4) or to “protect and restore” water-related ecosystems (6.6), without quantifying to what extent these should be reduced, protected or restored. In both cases, it is up to the countries themselves to quantify their national targets.

### 2.2. Interlinkages

It is important to highlight the strong emphasis the 2030 Agenda places on addressing the integrated nature of the SDGs. If these interlinkages are recognized and actively managed, implementing one SDG target can assist with implementing many others, thereby optimizing the use of existing resources and capacity and realizing the purpose of the 2030 Agenda. For example, water and sanitation are strongly interlinked with food and energy security, improved health, economic growth and ecosystem resilience. The need for integration both within and beyond SDG 6 is implicit in this publication. For more information, please refer to the [UN-Water Analytical Brief, Water and sanitation interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).



Water and sanitation are at the core of sustainable development, with strong links to food and energy security, improved health, economic growth and ecosystem resilience. Addressing such interlinkages is essential to achieving all the SDGs.

## 2.3. Process for progress

To ensure progress towards the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda includes components on monitoring, follow-up and review and means of implementation. Together, these components enable a structured and iterative process of learning and improving practices i.e. adaptive management, as well as a mechanism to ensure accountability and generate political support (see Figure 1).

### Making progress – the role of implementation

The SDG 6 targets seek to achieve certain outcomes, such as improved water quality (6.3) and increased water-use efficiency (6.4). Implementation is the process of taking actions to achieve such outcomes, for example, by building and operating wastewater treatment plants, instituting good practices in agriculture, installing water-saving technologies in industry or enforcing laws on water pollution.

### Measuring progress – the role of monitoring

Monitoring is the process of collecting information on a set of indicators that inform on key parameters. By comparing the current indicator data with previous data, we can track progress over time and find out which solutions are effective and which are not. This information is essential for an effective follow-up and review, to ensure accountability and communicate needs. By defining indicators, we specify what we want to monitor, and by defining methodologies, we describe how to monitor these indicators.

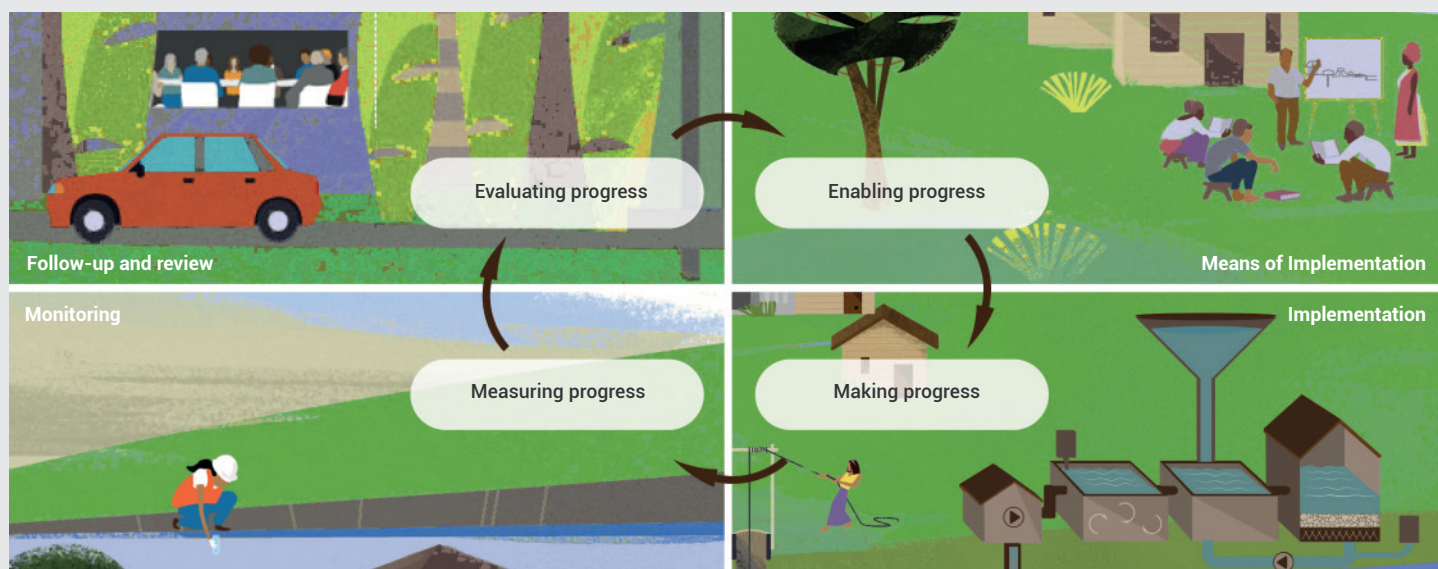
It's important to recognize that different types of indicators and monitoring serve different purposes. In the context of the 2030 Agenda, a global indicator framework has been broadly defined to track progress towards the SDGs at the global level. To this end, each country is asked to provide one national value (aggregate) for each global indicator. Having data on overall water stress (global indicator 6.4.2) from all countries in the world, for example, will provide a good overview on how well the global community is ensuring sustainable water withdrawals (SDG target 6.4), and will also indicate which countries and regions need to focus more attention on this target. At the national level, a national aggregate can act as a very powerful message, emphasizing the need for strategic focus and internal and/or international investment. It can also be used to communicate the extent of progress to the general public, to ensure accountability.

For policy- and decision-making and planning at national and subnational levels – for example, deciding where to build a new drinking water supply or which ecosystem to protect – more detailed information is needed to prioritize and optimize interventions. The global indicators are still useful but the data need to be disaggregated spatially and temporarily, by sector, subcomponents and different socioeconomic strata. The data also need to be contextualized and considered alongside data from other sectors, to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the impact of different development paths.

The global indicators have been defined to correspond to the global targets, and to be as useful as possible for as many countries as possible. However, not all global indicators are relevant to all countries, so each country should devise additional national and subnational indicators that reflect national circumstances and priorities while complementing the global indicators.

*“The Goals and targets will be followed up and reviewed using a set of global indicators. These will be complemented by indicators at the regional and national levels, which will be developed by Member States, in addition to the outcomes of work undertaken for the development of the baselines for those targets where national and global baseline data does not yet exist.” – 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

**Figure 1. Process in place to ensure progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Monitoring identifies areas where progress is lagging and helps policy- and decision makers to set priorities and adjust their means of implementation, to aid future implementation.**





Monitoring water flow in a river in Kenya. Photo credit: Georgina Smith, Creative Commons Attribution

### Evaluating progress – the role of follow-up and review

Follow-up and review is the process of evaluating progress – seeking to improve accountability, identify challenges, exchange knowledge and establish good practices, and also to support cooperation and mobilize resources. As such, the process is instrumental in guiding and strengthening implementation. To ensure progress towards the 2030 Agenda, countries commit to engage in systematic follow-up and review, at national, regional and global levels. These processes will be voluntary and country led, taking into account national circumstances, capacities and levels of development, and respecting national policy space and priorities. To ensure national ownership, the outcome of processes at the national level will be the basis for reviews at the regional and global levels.

For the follow-up and review process to be effective, it needs to be based on credible and accurate information. The global process will primarily be based on official national data sources, as published in the annual SDG Progress Report. Follow-up and review involves different aspects at different levels, as outlined below:

**At the national level:** National processes often focus on accountability, to evaluate whether policies are working, progress is happening and commitments are being met. Inclusiveness of all relevant stakeholders, including indigenous people, civil society and the private sector, is essential for ensuring an effective and transparent process. An example of a national follow-up and review process is the joint sector review.<sup>3</sup>

**At the regional level:** Regional follow-up and review processes focus on peer learning and the exchange of good practices, as well as discussions about shared challenges and opportunities. The processes, which are carried out within existing regional forums, draw on national reviews and contribute to the process at the global level. Examples of regional forums are the African Union (including the African Ministers' Council on Water), the European Union (including the Water Framework Directive) and the Arab League (including the Arab Ministerial Water Council), as well as the United Nations regional commissions.

**At the global level:** Global follow-up and review takes place at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Each year, the HLPF reviews progress towards the



2030 Agenda through the lens of a specific theme, including an in-depth review of a subset of goals. It focuses largely on the means of implementation and global partnerships, on which progress will be reviewed every year. SDG 6 is subject to in-depth review in the 2018 HLPF, together with SDG 7 (Energy), 11 (Cities and human settlements), 12 (Consumption and production), 15 (Terrestrial ecosystems) and 17 (Means

of Implementation), under the theme of “transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”. The HLPF also includes voluntary national reviews, where each year a subset of countries presents an in-depth review of their progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The aim is for each country to present twice during the entire period of the 2030 Agenda.

*“Operating at the national, regional and global levels, it will promote accountability to our citizens, support effective international cooperation in achieving this Agenda and foster exchanges of best practices and mutual learning. It will mobilize support to overcome shared challenges and identify new and emerging issues.” – 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

<sup>3</sup> Results-based national process where key stakeholders within a sector meet on a regular basis to discuss progress within the sector.



National processes often focus on accountability, to evaluate whether policies are working, progress is happening and commitments are being met. Photo credit: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Creative Commons Attribution

### Enabling progress – the role of the means of implementation

Effective implementation is dependent on an enabling environment, such as sufficient financial and human resources, efficient and transparent administrative and legal institutions, supportive policy and legal frameworks and access to expertise, technology and markets. For example, building and operating a wastewater treatment plant requires finance, skilled professionals and technology, and possibly a law on water pollution to trigger the initial investment; enforcing that law on water pollution requires institutions to monitor compliance and sanction violations.

In the 2030 Agenda, SDG 17 in its entirety is dedicated to creating an enabling environment for implementation. All other SDGs also include targets on the specific means necessary to implement them, for example, to expand international cooperation and capacity-building support (6.a) and strengthen stakeholder participation (6.b). For more information on the means necessary to implement SDG 6, please refer to the UN-Water report, [Means of Implementation: A Focus on Sustainable Development Goals 6 and 17](#).



Educating students in water and sanitation management is an example of a means of implementation for SDG 6. Photo credit: R.dwarka, Creative Commons Attribution

## 2.4. Process for global indicators

The development of the SDG global indicator framework was led by countries themselves through their National Statistical Offices, as members of the [IAEG-SDG](#). The United Nations agencies, including UN-Water and many other stakeholders, were consulted during the process but it was the countries that had the final say.

The IAEG-SDG categorizes the indicators into three different tiers, based on the maturity of the methodology and the extent of the data collection, defined as follows:

- Tier I indicators have established methodologies and data regularly produced by a critical mass of countries
- Tier II indicators have established methodologies but data are not regularly produced by countries
- Tier III indicators have methodologies that are under development

All indicators are equally important, and the purpose of the categorization is to make sure that due attention is paid to developing methodologies and implementing data collection for tier II and III indicators, with a strong focus on country capacity-building.

The [final indicator framework](#), as adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2017, includes about 230 indicators. The IAEG-SDG will continue to refine the indicator framework throughout the SDG period, including revising the tier classification on a yearly basis. The first revision of the framework is scheduled for 2020.

A baseline is a clearly defined starting point – a reference in time – from when implementation begins and progress is measured. The baseline of the 2030 Agenda and its goals and targets is set out by the global indicator framework, with one specific baseline data point for each indicator. In principle, the first year of the 2030 Agenda represents its baseline, but in practice, the specific baseline for each indicator will be established once enough country data are available to be globally representative. For SDG 6, the aim is to compile enough country data to establish a global baseline for each of its indicators by 2018, in time for the HLPF in-depth review of SDG 6.

# 3. SDG 6 monitoring at the global level

## 3.1. Roles and responsibilities

Below is a brief overview of the different roles and responsibilities for global SDG monitoring and reporting, including details on how country data will be shared at the global level.

**Countries** are the centre and starting point for all monitoring and oversee national monitoring via their national statistical system. The national statistical system comprises the National Statistical Office, line ministries and other national institutions involved in monitoring (see Figure 2).

It is up to the countries themselves to decide on the level of detail of data and metadata they wish to share with the custodian

agencies, and to what extent these should be published. The minimum requirement is one national aggregate per indicator, however, by sharing more detail on the subcomponents of the indicators and the monitoring methods, and at a higher level of disaggregation, the data will be more credible and useful for different audiences.

As mentioned above, the SDG global indicators only represent a subset of the full suite of indicators monitored in a country. Countries are welcome to share additional relevant data sets with the custodian agencies and directly with the HLPF, through their voluntary national reporting, for example.



Countries are the centre and starting point for all monitoring. Photo credit: Tom Page, Creative Commons Attribution

**Regional mechanisms** may, as appropriate, facilitate the transmission of data and metadata from the national to the global level. Regional mechanisms also have an important role to play in knowledge exchange and capacity-building within the specific region, focusing on regionally important issues.

**Custodian agencies** are United Nations bodies (and in some cases, other international organizations) responsible for compiling and verifying country data and metadata, and for submitting the data, along with regional and global aggregates, to the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). These agencies may publish the country data in their own databases and use it for thematic reporting. The country data need to be internationally comparable. To this end, the agencies are also responsible for developing international standards and recommending methodologies for monitoring.

Another central responsibility of the custodian agencies is to strengthen national monitoring and reporting capacity. When country data are missing, collected using a different methodology or inconsistently reported by different sources, agencies may need to do estimates or adjust the data together with the specific countries. All final data to be submitted to UNSD will first be validated and approved by countries.

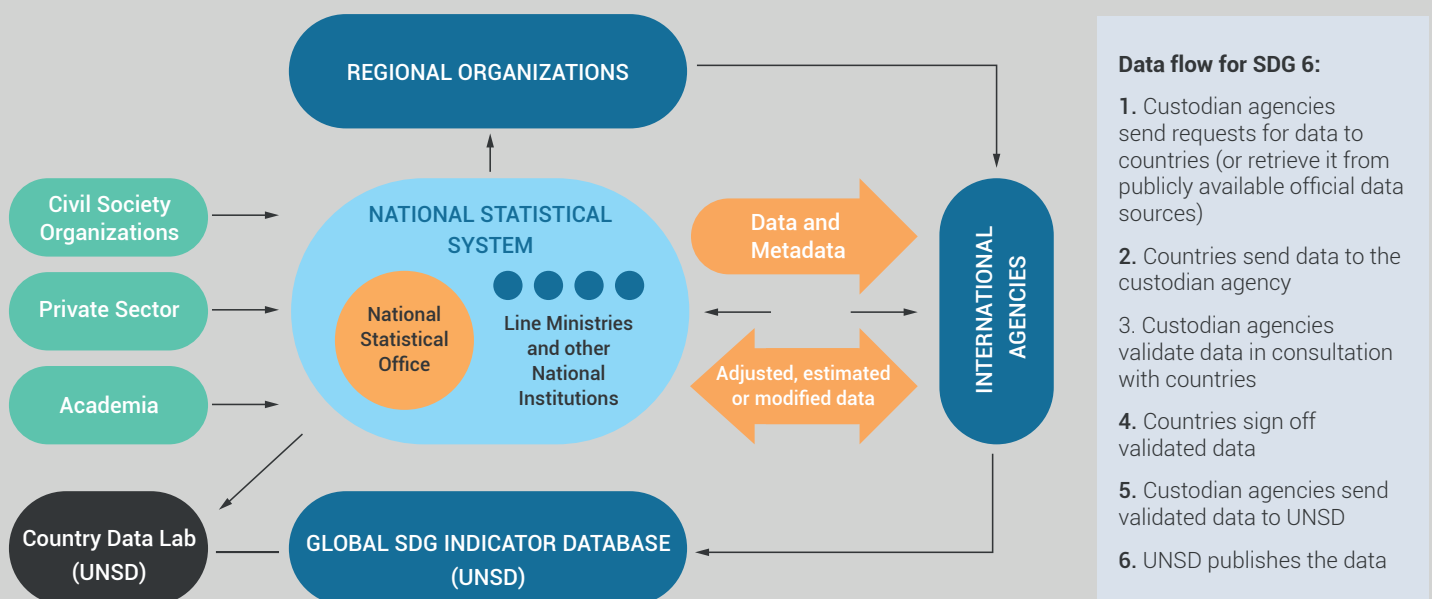
In many cases, the SDG global indicators only represent a fraction of the custodian agencies' respective monitoring

focus and global data sets. For example, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) regularly compiles country data on roughly 100 water resource-related parameters, including those necessary to compute SDG indicator 6.4.1 and 6.4.2, and SDG indicator 6.5.2 is one of multiple components under the reporting towards the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

**UNSD** will make regional and global aggregates and country data and metadata available on the [SDG Indicators Global Database](#). The data will also be incorporated into the annual SDG progress reports, to inform follow-up and review at the HLPF. Although the database will mainly focus on the SDG global indicators, supporting data sets may be published, as appropriate.

**UN-Water** and the **Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6** bring together the custodian agencies for all SDG 6 indicators and coordinate their efforts, so as to better support countries in monitoring SDG 6 in an integrated manner, with a strong focus on the institutional aspects of monitoring and the intersectoral nature of water and sanitation. Country data compiled and verified by the custodian agencies will be published by UN-Water in an SDG 6 data portal, to enable a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the overall state of water and sanitation and progress towards SDG 6.

**Figure 2. Data flow in SDG reporting, highlighting the central role of the national statistical system (illustration adapted from IAEG-SDG).**



### 3.2. Presenting the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6

The custodians for the SDG 6 global indicators are listed in Figure 3 below. They organize their work within three complementary initiatives: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), the Integrated Monitoring of Water and Sanitation-Related SDG Targets (GEMI) and the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS).

Building on its 15 years of experience from Millennium Development Goals (MDG) monitoring, the JMP looks after the drinking water, sanitation and hygiene aspects of SDG 6 (targets 6.1 and 6.2). GEMI was established in 2014 to harmonize and expand existing monitoring efforts focused on water, wastewater and ecosystem resources (targets 6.3 to 6.6). The means of implementing SDG 6 (targets 6.a and 6.b) fall under the remit of GLAAS, which monitors the inputs and the enabling environment required to sustain and develop water and sanitation systems and services.

Together, JMP, GEMI and GLAAS are referred to as the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6. The three initiatives,

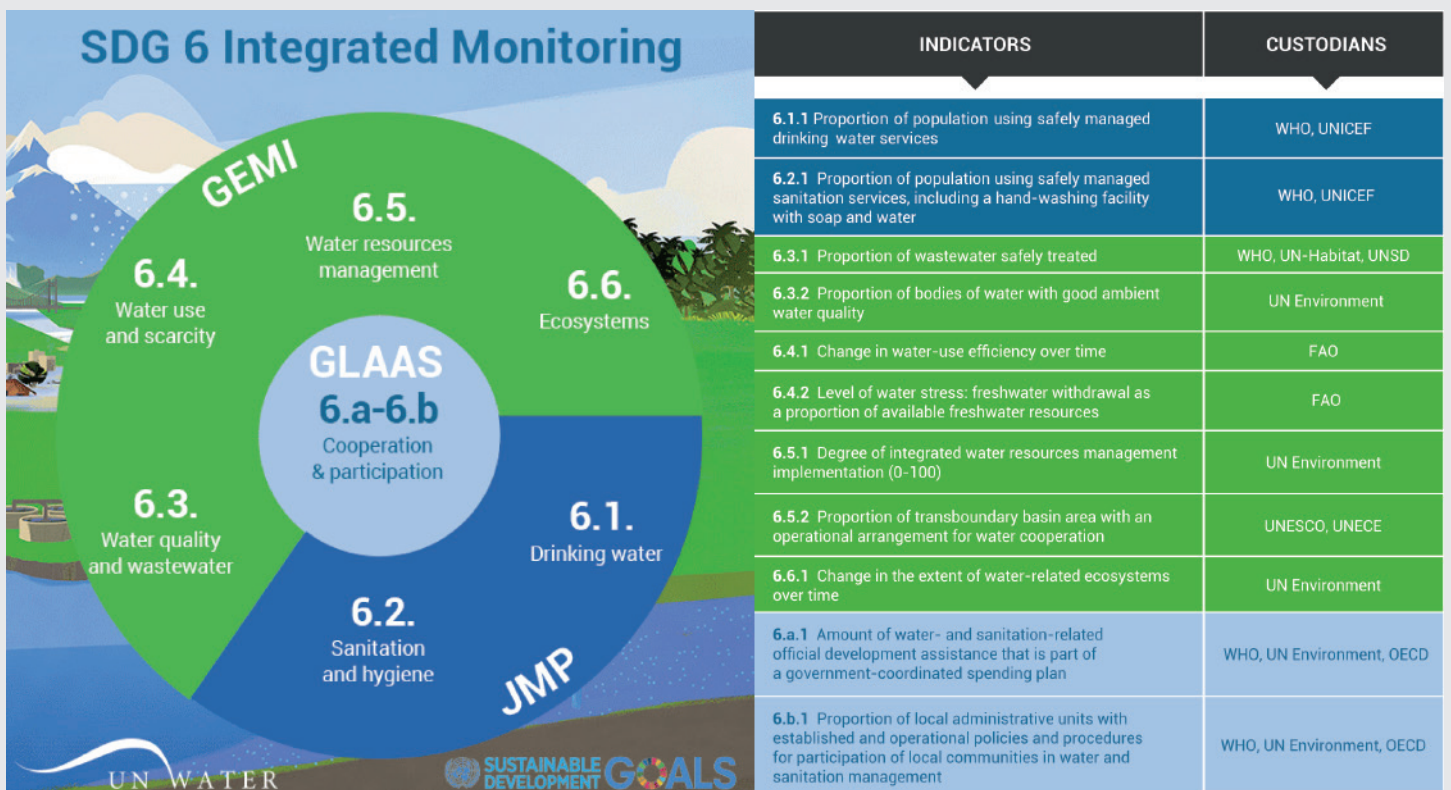
which have somewhat different work modalities and country counterparts, are progressively aligning to better respond to country requirements.

The objectives of the Integrated Monitoring Initiative are to:

- Develop methodologies and tools to monitor SDG 6 global indicators
- Raise awareness at national and global levels about SDG 6 monitoring
- Enhance technical and institutional country capacity for monitoring
- Compile country data and report on global progress towards SDG 6

The joint effort around SDG 6 is especially important with regard to the institutional aspects of monitoring, including the integration of data collection and analysis across sectors, regions and administrative levels. To this end, the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 is collaborating with a wide range of partners at the international, regional and national levels.

**Figure 3. UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 supports countries in monitoring water and sanitation and compiles data to report on global progress.**



### 3.3. Core principles for SDG 6 monitoring at the global level

There are several principles that govern the work of the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6. For more information on how these principles have been applied in the recommended methodologies, please refer to the second component of the Guide, Targets and global indicators.

#### **Building on and harmonizing national monitoring efforts**

Countries own the monitoring and reporting of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda clearly specifies that global follow-up and review “will be primarily based on national official data sources”. Countries are also the main beneficiaries of improved access to higher quality data, and in most cases, they already have monitoring systems in place. Global (and regional) monitoring efforts must therefore build on, and reinforce, national monitoring. This calls for a strengthening of the national statistical system, with a focus on developing technical and institutional capacity and infrastructure for monitoring.

Global monitoring must also work to ensure that data from one country are comparable with data from another, and comparable over time. This harmonization process is based on internationally agreed definitions and standards, and necessitates striking an important balance between country ownership and global (and regional) comparability.

Of equal importance is the harmonization of definitions, standards and monitoring efforts within countries, and across different ministries and other data providers. This process involves working closely with the National Statistical Office.

For SDG 6, the recommended methodologies have been designed to enable the use of existing national data from multiple sources, while at the same time encouraging countries to progressively align with international definitions and standards. By focusing on the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the monitoring process, the aim is to promote harmonization within countries. Detailed and transparent metadata help bridge differences in national, regional and international definitions and standards – through a rigorous data validation process, these can be analysed and reconciled.



Breaking the silos – a key objective of the monitoring effort is to collate all information, to aid an integrated management approach that contributes to reducing institutional fragmentation. Photo credit: Etienne Poulin, Creative Commons Attribution

### Steps for progressive monitoring

By adhering to the concept of progressive monitoring, the recommended methodologies enable Member States to monitor SDG 6 at levels in line with their national capacity and available resources, building on existing monitoring efforts and data sets.

Countries can start with simplified methods, for example, using qualitative estimations based on alternative data sources, or monitoring a limited set of parameters at a limited number of sites. As country capacity and resources increase over time, the scope of monitoring programmes can be expanded and more robust methods can be adopted, such as in situ measurements and metering, both of which improve data disaggregation. Modelled data can fill the gaps in the short- and midterm.

The same is true for Earth observations, which can be used for cost-effective monitoring of the extent and quality of ecosystems, land use and hydrology. Given that the spatial and temporal resolution of Earth observations is often continuous, this type of information is particularly useful for tracking environmental changes over time.

Data on water and sanitation are collected by a wide variety of stakeholders; thanks to their involvement in the national monitoring process, countries may see a large increase in the available data.

Furthermore, new technologies are rapidly improving the capacity to collect, store, analyse, report and share data, while reducing the costs involved. In addition to Earth observations, there are cell phone applications and geospatial data collection, through which data can be made available in real time for various uses via mobile-to-web applications. Such simplified and affordable technology facilitates the development of citizen science,

which in turn can help bring monitoring to remote or resource-constrained settings and improve data disaggregation.

### Data integration

The SDG 6 indicators correspond to different aspects of water and sanitation, and information about these are frequently collected by different sectors. For example, data on water use in agriculture are often collected by the Ministry of Agriculture, whereas data on drinking water quality may be collected by the Ministry of Health, and data on ambient water quality and wastewater discharge by the Ministry of Environment. Some data are compiled by national and subnational ministries or the National Statistical Office, whereas other data are collected by non-state actors such as utilities, universities and research institutes, non-governmental organizations and citizens' initiatives, the private sector and development partners. The recommended methodologies for monitoring SDG 6 indicators also include very different mechanisms for harvesting data, ranging from household surveys to Earth observations.

However, to achieve SDG 6, it is necessary to move away from the sectoral approach characteristic of the water and sanitation sector, towards a more integrated approach to management. To design coherent policies and make informed development decisions, it is necessary to assess and analyse the potential consequences of different development paths on social, economic and environmental well-being. An integrated management approach can therefore only be obtained by integrating hydrological, environmental, social and economic information. As such, one of the monitoring effort's key objectives is to collate all this information, to enable a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the state of water resources and the different development paths, and to help reduce institutional fragmentation.



Disaggregation is essential to making data as useful as possible for policy- and decision-making and planning, including ensuring that no one is left behind. Photo credit: Asian Development Bank, Creative Commons Attribution

### Data usage and disaggregation

One of the key objectives of monitoring is to inform policy- and decision-making. To this end, it is important that the data are detailed enough to indicate where, when, how and at whom to target interventions. This calls for data that can be disaggregated spatially (which river is polluted?), temporally (in which season is wetland extent being recorded?) and by sector (which sector is using water and generating wastewater?). It may also be useful to separate indicators into their subcomponents, for example, the different aspects of integrated water resources management (IWRM) or the type of ecosystem.

In the preamble of the 2030 Agenda, countries “pledge that no one will be left behind”; in other words, that no SDG goal or target should be considered met until it is met by all. To track progress in this regard, it is necessary that data can be disaggregated by a number of socioeconomic strata, such as income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in a national context.

For SDG 6, the pledge to leave no one behind is particularly relevant for targets 6.1 and 6.2 on universal access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. Current data can be disaggregated for place of residence and subnational region, as well as wealth. Over time, the aim is to include informal urban settlements in the data collected, and to develop survey instruments that can capture marginalized groups and intra-household inequalities, such as gender, age and disability.

For targets 6.3 to 6.6 on water, wastewater and ecosystem resources, with indicators of a physical nature, it is more challenging to disaggregate data for social strata. However, the poor management of these resources impacts different groups of people differently, and it is important to assess and analyse these effects; geo-referencing physical data facilitates such an assessment and analysis. For example, by recording in which basin water scarcity is prevalent in a country, it is possible to assess the social impacts of water scarcity by looking at the number of people living within that basin.



The use of new monitoring methodologies, such as Earth observations, can rapidly improve our knowledge about our water resources.

Photo credit: Malik Naumann, Creative Commons Attribution



### 3.4. Global process and support for countries

Following the development, testing, evaluation and revision of methodologies for monitoring SDG 6 global indicators during 2014 to 2016, the global implementation of SDG 6 monitoring was officially launched in early 2017. The first phase – the 2017 integrated baseline process – seeks to establish a global baseline for the 11 global indicators under SDG 6, in time for the HLPF in-depth review of SDG 6 in 2018. Subsequent phases

will focus on reaching global coverage and building national ownership (2018-2021), integrating and mainstreaming (2021-2025) and finally, consolidating and sustaining (2025-2030) the monitoring process at all levels. You can learn more about the 2017 baseline process on [our website](#).

The Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 and the custodian agencies will provide both technical and institutional support to countries, as summarized in Table 2 below. For a more detailed overview, please refer to [our website](#). You can also refer to the subsequent section on “Human and financial resources” for additional possibilities.

**Table 2. Description of the institutional and technical aspects of monitoring and associated requests and support for countries**

| Process component | Description   | Responsible entity at global level  | Requests to countries   | Support for countries   |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Institutional     | Focuses on the means of implementing SDG 6 monitoring, such as building political support and institutional capacity, aligning with national structures and processes and fostering intersectoral collaboration | Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (administrated through the UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit) | Identify overall national focal point for SDG 6 monitoring to coordinate the process and potentially convene intersectoral monitoring team (see next chapter on “Country process during the pilot testing” for more on this)                                | Institutional guidelines, webinars and help desk<br><br>Organization of activities related to institutional aspects and multiple indicators, e.g. workshops, country process facilitation and institutional support |
| Technical         | Concerns the implementation of indicator methodologies – structures and processes will differ across the specific indicators, depending on data sources, methodology and stakeholders involved                  | SDG 6 custodian agencies  | Share country data and metadata on global indicators – the national counterpart that receives the request may vary across the indicators; the national focal point is to be informed about the request (also see Figure 2 for an overview of the data flow) | Indicator-specific technical guidelines, webinars, tutorials and help desks<br><br>Organization of indicator-specific activities, e.g. communities of practice, workshops, technical experts                        |

## 4. SDG 6 monitoring at the national level

Member States will need to decide on a suitable structure for implementing SDG 6 monitoring at the national level. The following chapter provides guidance and recommendations on how this can be done, looking at success factors such as political support, a focus on data usage and the alignment with national processes and structures, as well as the wide range of stakeholders involved and the human and financial resources needed. It then proposes a process for initiating SDG 6 monitoring at the national level, taking the above points into account.

This chapter is based on country feedback and lessons learned from the 2016 pilot testing of SDG 6 monitoring, which was carried out in Jordan, the Netherlands, Peru, Senegal and Uganda. The purpose of the pilot testing was to evaluate both the technical and institutional feasibility of SDG 6 monitoring, and to explore how to successfully implement it at the national level. Towards the end of the pilot testing, representatives from all the pilot countries gathered to share their experiences, discuss opportunities and challenges for the path ahead, both in the short and long term, identify success factors for national level implementation and provide recommendations on how the United Nations system could better support countries in this regard. This chapter also captures feedback received during the open expert review in 2016.

### 4.1. Country process during the pilot testing

In each of the pilot countries, the monitoring process started with a **national inception workshop**, which was attended by participants from across many different sectors and government departments, with different interests and areas of expertise, and different (sometimes contradictory) data sets. These workshops always made a point of involving the National Statistical Office, which is typically the ultimate authority for final approval of official statistics. See Table 3 further on for a list of the stakeholders involved.

All countries identified an **SDG 6 focal point**, either before or after the inception workshop, who would act as the overall process coordinator and point of communication with the global Initiative. The ministry to which this focal point belonged differed from country to country.<sup>4</sup>

**Technical teams** gathering all relevant stakeholders were formed for each indicator, or sometimes for an SDG 6 target covering multiple indicators. For each team, one or more lead institutions were

appointed and given the ultimate responsibility for implementing the monitoring, coordinating the efforts of other stakeholders and providing regular updates to the SDG 6 focal point.

The technical teams held **technical workshops** to review the methodologies, assess existing data sets and set out processes for consolidating data. In some cases, the consensus was to collect new data. The teams also discussed the additional indicators needed to track progress towards SDG 6 at the national level. They then proceeded to implement the plans, collecting, validating and analysing data. Where necessary, they approached the custodian agencies for additional technical support, whether in the form of virtual advice or more directly through expert missions.

In each country, an **intersectoral monitoring team** was also created, comprising the SDG 6 focal point and the leads of the technical teams. Its purpose was to work with monitoring and data across indicators and sectors, to facilitate learning, streamline data collection and management and support joint analysis and use for policy- and decision-making.

At the end of the process, several countries held **national closing workshops**, which convened many of the attendees from the inception workshop, to discuss results and lessons learned and plan for subsequent data-collection cycles.

To learn more about the results from the pilot testing, please visit our [website](#).



SDG 6 monitoring in Senegal kick-started with a workshop that gathered stakeholders from across sectors. Photo credit: UN-Water

<sup>4</sup> Jordan: Ministry of Water and Irrigation; the Netherlands: Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment; Peru: Ministry of Agriculture (and more specifically, the National Water Authority); Senegal: Ministry of Water and Sanitation; Uganda: Ministry of Water and Environment

Figure 4. Organization of stakeholders involved during the pilot testing.



### Box 1. Why start with a national inception workshop?

Face-to-face meetings are an effective way to connect and engage stakeholders, exchange information and generate momentum. Kick-starting SDG 6 monitoring with a national inception workshop that convenes all relevant stakeholders can also serve the following purposes:

- Provide clarity on implications of the 2030 Agenda on water and sanitation monitoring
- Identify existing water and sanitation monitoring in the country e.g. what is being monitored by whom and which data are already available
- Allocate roles and responsibilities for SDG 6 monitoring:
  - lead persons/institutions for each technical team
  - membership of each technical team
  - overall focal point and intersectoral monitoring team
  - terms of reference for the SDG 6 focal point, technical teams and intersectoral monitoring team
- Agree on overall plan for how to establish a baseline for the SDG 6 global indicators (to be complemented with indicator-specific plans)

## 4.2. Data availability and reporting synergies

All countries participating in the 2016 pilot testing were able to compile data for their baseline, and the general consensus was that a lot of data are already available but that they are often poorly organized and scattered across ministries and institutions. It was noted that future monitoring will require progressive improvements in data collection, storage and analysis, but also that **successful SDG 6 monitoring does not necessarily require complete data sets**. The countries generally appreciated the steps of progressive monitoring, as they gave them the possibility to adjust monitoring to match their current level of capacity and resources.

In many countries, some of the SDG 6 global indicators, or components thereof, are covered through other reporting mechanisms such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Eurostat questionnaire (6.3.1, 6.4.2), follow-up on the commitments of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and the Arab Ministerial Water Council (several SDG 6 global indicators), the European Union Water Framework Directive (6.3.2, 6.6.1), the reporting under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (6.5.2), and the Ramsar Convention (6.6.1). It is also worth highlighting that the SDG 6 global indicators include subcomponents, some of which are used to populate multiple indicators. For example, the same data on water withdrawals is used to compute both indicator 6.4.1 and 6.4.2.

Learn more about indicator-specific data sources and collection methods, including examples of progressive monitoring steps, in the second component of the Guide, [Targets and global indicators](#).



African countries meeting in Accra, Ghana, in May 2016, to discuss regional monitoring and reporting efforts taking place under the AMCOW umbrella and how these can feed into global SDG 6 monitoring and reporting. Photo credit: UN-Water

## 4.3. Success factor: Building political support



Political support for the monitoring process can be built by highlighting how data can improve policy- and decision-making and planning.

Photo credit: Creative Commons Attribution

The importance of high-level recognition and support for the monitoring process, from leaders in all relevant sectors and institutions, was highlighted by all pilot countries. This is key for ensuring that the data are being shared across sectors and institutions, that they are being used for policy- and decision-making and to secure funding for monitoring over time.

One pilot country reinforced political support through high-level presence during its inception workshop. Another country did so by writing to all relevant ministries and requesting them to formally appoint focal points. The technical teams were often led by senior staff working on policy- and decision-making, which further reinforced institutional commitment to the process.

To build political support, it is essential to:

- Make a strong case for why monitoring is important, highlighting how policy- and decision-making and planning can be improved by having access to high-quality data.
- Clearly communicate the implications of the 2030 Agenda and the links between global and national processes, especially with respect to monitoring e.g. the role of global vis-à-vis national indicators, how country data will be used at the global level. See the previous chapter on “Unpacking the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and the previous section on “Roles and responsibilities”.
- Clearly communicate what is feasible within the national context and a specified time frame, to manage expectations. The “progressive monitoring steps” can be useful in showing that it is possible to start monitoring SDG 6 in a relatively simple and resource-efficient manner.
- Build on and strengthen existing national governance structures. See subsequent section, “Success factor: Linking with national processes and structures”.

## 4.4. Success factor: Focusing on data usage

Following the pilot testing, the pilot countries emphasized several important points related to data usage. Firstly, that the purpose of data collection is to support policy- and decision-making at the national level. It is therefore important to link the monitoring process to policy processes. In one pilot country, this link was established by appointing policymakers as the coordinators for monitoring each indicator. Furthermore, by having the same ministry coordinating both the implementation and the monitoring of a specific target, the different processes can reinforce each other by sharing information, good practices and lessons learned.

Secondly, the need for integration within and beyond SDG 6 when analysing the data. Since water and sanitation monitoring is often carried out across various sectors, this provides an excellent opportunity for using water and sanitation data to link together data sets from these other sectors. Having an intersectoral monitoring team can be very helpful for carrying out a cross-sectoral analysis of water and sanitation data. It is also recommended that different data sets from across sectors be widely accessible (both from a technical and political perspective), for which transparency, standardization and political support are key. To carry out an integrated analysis, there is also a need for comprehensive analytical tools or frameworks.

Thirdly, the importance of using data for awareness-raising among politicians and the general public. In this regard, it is

important to present the information in a non-technical format.

To learn more about how data on the different indicators can be used for policy- and decision-making, please refer to the subsequent chapter on "How to use the data" and the second component of the Guide, [Targets and global indicators](#).

## 4.5. Success factor: Linking with national processes and structures

For long-term sustainability, it is essential to align the SDG monitoring process with existing national monitoring and reporting processes within all relevant sectors and the National Statistical Office, as well as with policy- and decision-making processes and existing institutional and coordination frameworks. The monitoring process needs to be properly reflected in workplans and budgets.

In the pilot countries, the roles and responsibilities for SDG 6 monitoring were aligned with existing governance structures for monitoring, reporting and implementation. For example, in one pilot country SDG 6 monitoring was combined with the national joint sector review process, which also provided an opportunity to review and adapt existing monitoring frameworks. Another pilot country pointed to the convenience of reviewing and "nationalizing" the monitoring methodologies to adapt to the national context and build ownership; another recognized that although it was possible for them to generate baseline data in a very short time, the bigger challenge is long-term institutionalization and mainstreaming.



For long-term sustainability, it is essential to integrate the SDG monitoring process into existing processes and structures, and to properly reflect it in workplans and budgets. Photo credit: Julio Pantoja, Creative Commons Attribution

## 4.6. Success factor: Stakeholder involvement

As mentioned in the previous section on "Data integration", the monitoring of SDG 6 will necessarily include a wide range of stakeholders, across sectors and levels of government. Table 3 gives an overview of stakeholders involved in the pilot testing of SDG 6 monitoring.

With multiple stakeholders, a clear institutional set-up for the monitoring process is needed, with roles and responsibilities

clearly defined. In the pilot countries, identifying an overall SDG 6 focal point and establishing technical teams for each indicator/target, as well as an intersectoral monitoring team, helped organize stakeholders (see the previous section on "Country process during the pilot testing" and Figure 4 for a description of these teams). The pilot countries vouched for the value of these teams, noting that the process brought together many agencies and stakeholders that traditionally had not worked together before (or even met), sparking and enhancing collaboration well beyond SDG 6 monitoring.

For examples of how different stakeholders can contribute to the monitoring of SDG 6, please refer to our [website](#).

**Table 3. Overview of stakeholders involved in the monitoring of SDG 6 global indicators (for more detailed information, please refer to the second component of the Guide, [Targets and global indicators](#))**

| Examples of national ministries and institutions  | Examples of other national stakeholders   | Examples of regional and global stakeholders  |
|---|---|---|
| Ministries/Institutions/Agencies for Water, Sanitation, Environment, Meteorology, Hydrology, Geology, Food, Agriculture, Irrigation, Health, Public Services, Planning, Housing, Infrastructure, Production, Energy, Natural Resources, Mines, Finance, etc.<br>National Statistical Office | Subnational governments, public and private utilities and other service providers, space agencies, universities and research institutes, watershed management boards, user associations, business associations, National Water Partnerships, NGOs | Intergovernmental institutions, ministerial councils, United Nations bodies, regional commissions, development partners, donors and banks, NGOs |

## 4.7. Human and financial resources

It is important to recognize the resource implications of monitoring and be realistic about what can be achieved with existing resources. Monitoring requires staff time, capacity-building and technical support, as well as infrastructure and its continual operation and maintenance. However, costs are expected to decrease over time as the process becomes institutionalized.

Most of the pilot countries stated that their monitoring activities would fall under the responsibility of existing staff, but noted the importance of allocating enough time and funding to accommodate the expanded scope of SDG 6. One pilot country identified its great human and logistical potential across sectors, but also identified that to realize this potential would require coordination and systematization.

Successful monitoring is directly dependent on committed champions within the institutions involved. One pilot country

explained that the contributing experts cleared their busy schedules to make time for the project, because they found it so interesting and important.

The need for external technical support and capacity-building was noted, especially for the so-called "new" indicators on water resources, wastewater and ecosystems. National hydro-meteorological observation networks and the statistical capacity of both the National Statistical Offices and line ministries constitute the basic infrastructure for monitoring, and investment in these is paramount.

The support that the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 offers countries (see Table 2) is designed based on feedback from the pilot countries. Other types of in-kind and financial support that countries may benefit from include the following:

- Water and sanitation utilities often collect data for management and regulatory purposes, which may be useful for monitoring at national level.

- Universities and research institutes may gather data for research purposes and thus, may have data and monitoring infrastructure to share. They may also be able to support capacity-building.
- National and international NGOs, as well as citizens science groups, may have rich data sets, e.g. on drinking- and ambient water quality or ecosystem health. They may also be able to complement national monitoring processes by operating additional sampling stations, improving both the spatial and temporal resolution of data.
- Existing bilateral donors and development banks may collect data as part of their overall programming and may be encouraged to align with the SDG 6 global indicators.
- Earmarking a small percentage of infrastructure investments for monitoring (nationally and internationally funded projects, grants and loans).
- The business community may collect data related to their general operations for management and regulatory purposes, and may also conduct monitoring (or be encouraged to) as part of their corporate social responsibility.
- Monitoring efforts in other sectors can offer synergies with water and sanitation monitoring, e.g. household surveys can be expanded to include more questions about water and sanitation; health records can provide indications on drinking water and sanitation; water smart metres can be installed with those for other types of basic infrastructure; Earth observations.



Monitoring requires staff time and successful monitoring depends on committed champions within the institutions involved. Photo credit: ILRI, Creative Commons Attribution

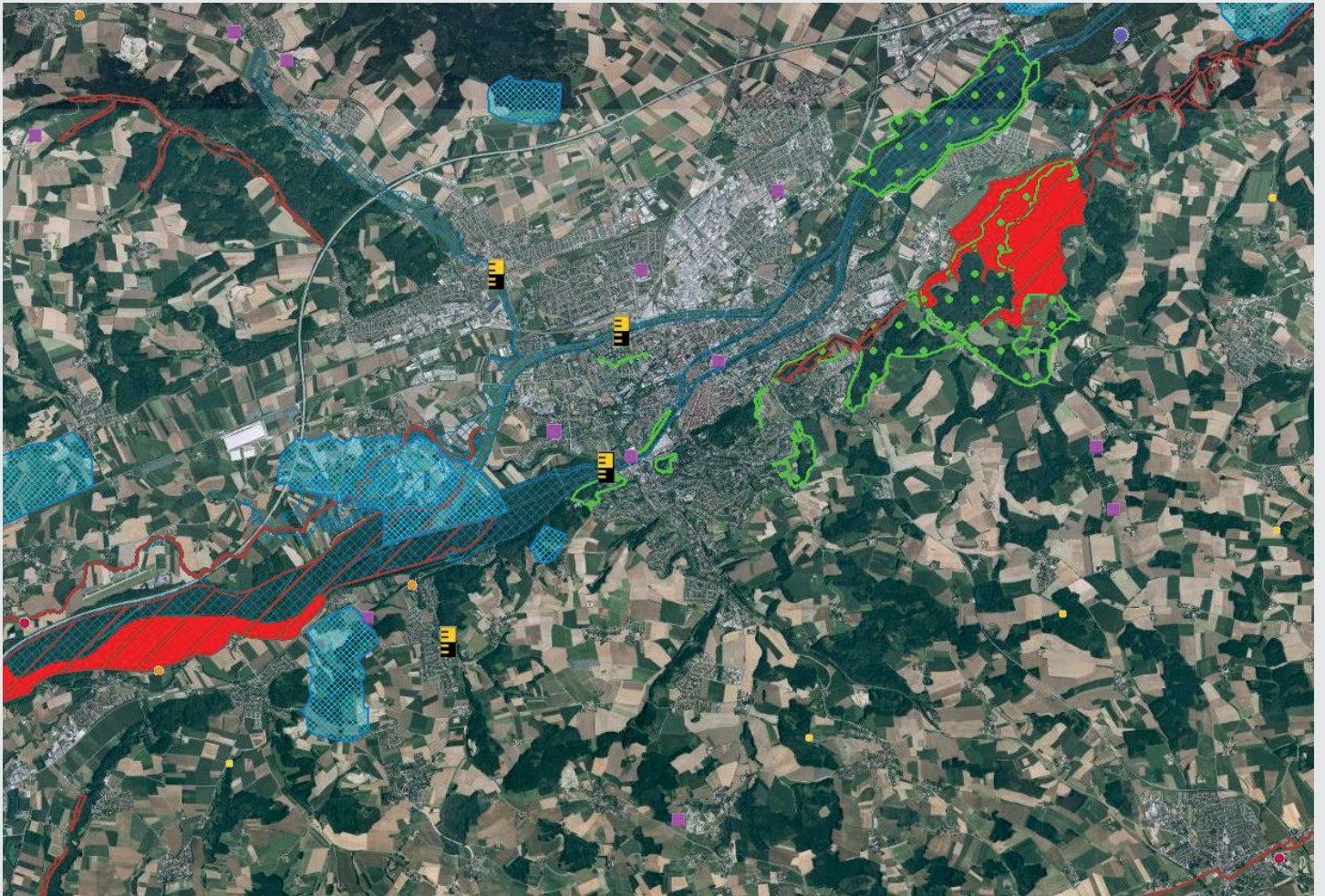
## 5. How to use the data

Data collection serves various purposes. As highlighted throughout this publication, data can help policy- and decision makers at all levels of government to:

- Identify gaps and set priorities for effective water and sanitation policies and investments
- Learn about good practices to implement more efficiently
- Identify interlinkages across sectors to harness synergies and manage potential conflicts
- Communicate progress and requirements to ensure accountability, raise awareness, gain political support and stimulate action, including financial investment

High-quality data are, furthermore, an essential element for detailed development planning across sectors, governing the choice of location, function and size of different types of infrastructure – for example, drinking water supplies and networks, irrigation systems, wastewater treatment plants, storm water management systems, roads and railways and power lines, and residential, commercial and industrial areas.

As previously mentioned, a key objective of the monitoring effort is to collate all information from across sectors, to aid an integrated management approach that contributes to reducing institutional fragmentation. To this end, in addition to accessible, transparent and standardized data, there is a need for comprehensive analytical tools or frameworks that can guide policy- and decision makers in their analysis.



Water data are key for the planning and design of human settlements and different types of infrastructure. By gathering all the data in one place and making them easily accessible, for example, through a geographical information system, planners and engineers can do a better job. The map above gathers information from several databases and includes information on aspects such as the type and location of protected ecosystems and drinking water sources, the risk of flooding, the location and results of flow monitoring and water quality sampling stations and wastewater treatment plants, as well as a wide range of other data required for physical planning (Source: BayernAtlas).

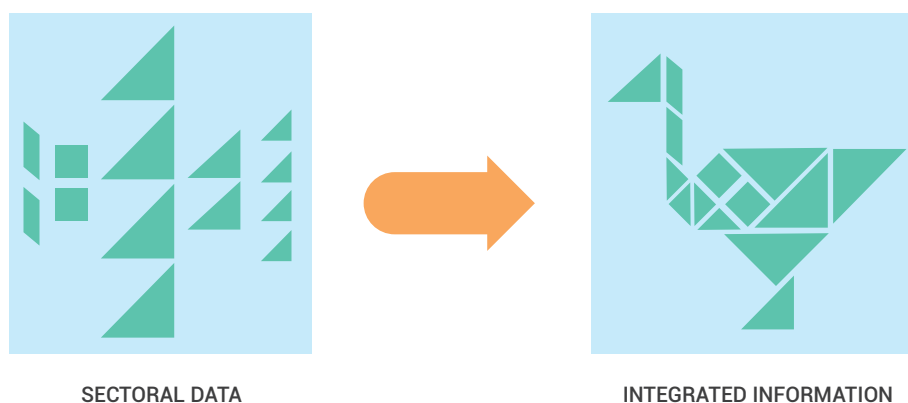


### Examples of analytical tools and frameworks for integrated analysis

There are several such tools and frameworks readily available to countries. This section highlights a few examples that have been mentioned during the 2016 pilot testing and review.

- The [System of Environmental-Economic Accounting \(SEEA\)](#) is an internationally recognized standard and an example of how information from across sectors can be organized in a statistically sound manner to aid an integrated analysis. It includes the subsystem SEEA-Water, designed to support water and sanitation policy- and decision-making. By applying the [International Recommendations for Water Statistics \(IRWS\)](#), SEEA-Water uses a mass balance approach based on stocks and flows, to combine physical and monetary water and sanitation data. In many countries, the National Statistical Office already uses the System of National Accounts to organize economic data and this could be expanded to include environmental data.
- The framework of IWRM, including the monitoring and reporting on the means of implementation indicators [6.5.1](#), [6.a.1](#) and [6.b.1](#), provides a structure and process for analysing data across sectors.
- The European Environment Agency and the European Union Water Framework Directive use the Driving forces, Pressures, State, Impact, Responses framework (DPSIR) as a tool to analyse and report on complex interlinkages between society and the environment, expanding on the OECD Pressure-State-Response model. By incorporating data on state (e.g. many of the SDG 6 global indicators, such as water quality) into a broader context of driving forces (e.g. population), pressures (e.g. wastewater generation) and impacts (e.g. ecosystem health), it is possible to predict the effectiveness of different responses (e.g. a law specifying the minimum level of wastewater treatment).
- The [SDG Policy Support System](#) (SDG PSS) of the United Nations University seeks to support national cross-sectoral, evidence-based policymaking and planning, by providing a system that can bring together different tools and data sets that are often critical for sustainability. This PSS can help, for example, to inform the setting of national targets and help experts and decision makers collaborate around SDG evidence for water.
- The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has developed a [methodology for mapping and assessing interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda](#), based on systems thinking, to support countries in identifying critical leverage points where investment could lead to multiple benefits across sectors.
- In the business community, there are several tools available to assess different types of water risks and set targets for water management. Although these tools may not be directly relevant to governments, it is important to recognize that data is valuable for business and could motivate business engagement in both SDG 6 implementation and monitoring.

**Figure 5. Collating all the information from across sectors helps to identify the bigger picture (adapted from SEEA-Water).**



### Making data and analysis available for different audiences

Once data sets are collected and analysed, it is essential to disseminate the information to all relevant stakeholders to maximize the usefulness of the data (and thus the return on the monitoring investment). Different stakeholders have different requirements, so it is important to package the information accordingly. For example:

- Politicians may ask for a synthesized analysis of the data that highlight trends, risks and opportunities
- Students and researchers are interested in the raw data and metadata to conduct their own analyses
- Decision makers and planners in the public and private sector need detailed and disaggregated information to Guide their engagement, investments and design solutions

- The general public may appreciate comprehensive key messages

Openly sharing data and metadata online is an effective way of making them available for a large audience. It also results in greater transparency, credibility and accountability. Regardless of the audience, there is much to gain by presenting the information in a compelling manner. For examples, see [www.gapminder.org](http://www.gapminder.org) and [www.healthdata.org/results/data-visualizations](http://www.healthdata.org/results/data-visualizations).

Starting in 2018, official country data collected by the SDG 6 custodian agencies will be published in a UN-Water SDG 6 data portal, which will aim to facilitate an integrated analysis and visualization of progress towards SDG 6 at different levels. Targeting a wide range of stakeholders, the portal will offer key messages and interactive exploration of the different data sets, as well as the possibility to download graphics, maps and country and regional fact sheets.



Politicians and researchers use data in very different ways. To maximize data usage, it is important to synthesize key messages and to make detailed data and metadata available. Photo credit: Creative Commons Attribution

## 6. Key messages

As we come to the end of the first component of this Guide, we would like to highlight some key messages to keep in mind when moving ahead with the implementation of SDG 6 monitoring.

Firstly, we should remember that **the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and their targets and the global indicator framework have been developed and agreed on by countries themselves**. The role of the United Nations system is to support countries in realizing the Agenda. Building on the globally defined SDGs and taking national circumstances into account, countries need to set their own national priorities and targets.

The **purpose of monitoring is to help policy- and decision makers** at all levels of government to identify challenges and opportunities, set priorities for more effective and efficient implementation and communicate progress, or lack thereof (and therefore associated requirements), to ensure accountability and generate political, public and private sector support for further investments. It is thus important to think about how data will be used and by whom, before undertaking a monitoring exercise.

The **global indicators for SDG 6 have been broadly defined to track progress** towards the SDGs at the global level, and equally, to be as useful as possible for as many countries as possible. However, not all the indicators are relevant to all countries. There is also a **range of other indicators that are relevant to national policy- and decision-making processes**, and their monitoring should in no way be disregarded when a country engages in SDG monitoring. National aggregates are powerful to communicate progress and requirements, whereas well disaggregated data are needed to support policy- and decision-making and planning.

**This Guide**, and in particular its indicator-specific methodologies, **provides recommendations on how to monitor the SDG 6 global indicators in a standardized way**, but the methodologies should still allow for some flexibility to reflect national circumstances and requirements. The Guide will be subject to continual refinement based on learnings.

The concept of **progressive monitoring was developed to enable as many countries as possible to engage in SDG 6 monitoring**, starting at a relatively simple and inexpensive level and becoming progressively more ambitious over time, as country capacity and resource availability improve.

**A key objective of the monitoring effort is to collate all the information from across sectors**, thinking broadly and strategically about the **involvement of different government sectors and non-governmental entities**, especially the National Statistical Office as the overall responsible entity for a country's SDG reporting. Integrated data collection and analysis enable a comprehensive assessment on the state of water resources and the impact of different development paths.

Finally, **in terms of global reporting**, countries are responsible for collecting and sharing indicator data and metadata, which will be compiled and validated by the indicator custodian agencies. The custodian agencies will then submit the validated data to UNSD, to inform follow-up and review at the HLPF on Sustainable Development. If country data are missing, collected using a different methodology or inconsistently reported by different sources, the custodian agencies may need to do estimates or adjust the data, however, this will have to be approved by countries before publishing.

The **Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6** is a collaboration among the SDG 6 custodian agencies to streamline global monitoring efforts to better support countries in their national monitoring efforts. The collaborative effort is especially important with regard to the institutional aspects of monitoring, including the integration of data collection and analysis across sectors, regions and administrative levels. The specific types of support offered through the Initiative are outlined in this document and on our website, which is the main source for further information and resources: [www.sdg6monitoring.org](http://www.sdg6monitoring.org)



Photo credit: NPS, Creative Commons Attribution





Notes

Handwriting practice sheet with 30 sets of dashed lines on a solid baseline.

# About us



Through the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6, the United Nations seeks to support countries in monitoring water- and sanitation-related issues within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner, and in compiling country data to report on global progress towards SDG 6. The Initiative brings together the United Nations agencies who are formally mandated to compile country data for the purpose of global reporting on SDG 6.

To learn more about water and sanitation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6, visit our website or contact one of our focal points.

## Website

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