PROMOTE PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

Info Digest – Edition 12

Welcome to the new and updated SDG 16 info digest – edition 12!

This twelfth edition of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 Info Digest brings news and updates about the recent launch of the historic Praia City Group Handbook on Governance Statistics – an important stepping stone towards progressing on the 2030 Agenda. Also don't miss out on the upcoming TAP – UNDP Webinar on 10th March related to VNR's (details in the Upcoming Events section) and a call for submissions for SDG16+ stories from the ground. Also, as in the past, more SDG16 related information, country stories and best practice, tools and resources are included in this digest.
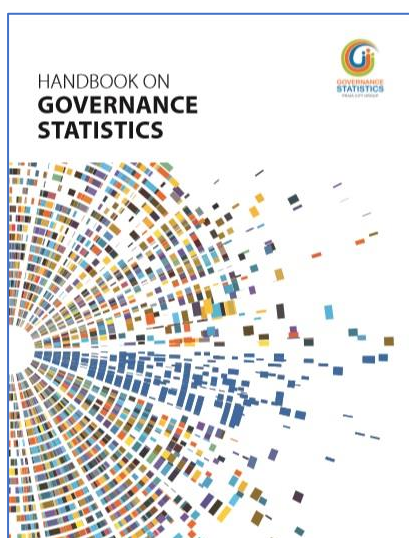
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The Info digest provides updates on SDG 16 related events and activities, within the UN System and outside. It also has information about resources like publications, articles, blogs, tools, platforms and upcoming events. We invite you to share any SDG 16 related information and resources that we can feature in future editions of this digest with Aseem Andrews.

SDG16 Highlight - #PraiaHandbook

*Launched on the 5th March (details below) this Handbook on Governance Statistics is divided in **two main parts**. The first part addresses cross-cutting issues applicable to all or most dimensions of governance statistics. The second part of the Handbook provides guidance on eight dimensions of governance: non-discrimination and equality; participation; openness; access to and quality of justice; responsiveness; absence of corruption; trust; and safety and security.*

This Handbook is an important steppingstone towards achieving international statistical standards in all areas of governance statistics and is primarily targeted towards national statistical agencies but is also a tool for all those wishing to produce and understand governance statistics. It takes stock of existing practices in governance data collection and proposes guidelines for the improved production and compilation of official governance statistics. It is also a comprehensive resource for monitoring progress on SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong institutions).

RECENT ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS – Updates from UN / UNDP:

Global and regional events:

Launch of the Praia City Handbook on Governance Statistics

The Praia Group has published a [Handbook on Governance Statistics](#), which was formally launched on March 5ᵗʰ, 2020 during the UN Statistical Commission's 51ˢᵗ session in New York. The launch event and discussion in the second half of the day saw several countries giving a clear statement of support. This included Bangladesh, Equatorial Guinea, Korea, Armenia, France, Angola, Burundi, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Mexico, Libya, Mali, Philippines, Spain and the United Kingdom, amongst others. The Praia report was endorsed by the Commission and the request to extend the mandate of the Praia group was approved to the year 2025. The Praia launch event was well attended with active discussions. Several countries expressed the importance and relevance of the Handbook and also expressed the need for capacity and technical support for measurement.

The endorsement and extension of the Group's mandate augur well for the future, especially as Governance statistics are fundamental to ensuring that the relationship between the State and its peoples is inclusive, transparent and accountable. Gov. Statistics assist in monitoring the performance of government and in better understanding the contribution of governance in its various dimensions to development. They contribute to the measurement and realization of human rights and can help to identify groups or sub-groups in the population that are most affected by the dysfunctions of governance systems, with a view to putting in place appropriately targeted policies, as reflected in the 2030 Agenda's pledge to "leave no one behind."

How are countries monitoring SDG 16 at the country level – before, after or even without doing a VNR?

To exchange practical experiences, success stories, obstacles and opportunities on this question, the [Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peace, Justice and Inclusive Societies](#) and the [Danish Institute for Human Rights](#) co-organized a global technical workshop from 5-7 February 2020 in Copenhagen. An enthusiastic multi-stakeholder group of more than 50 experts from all regions spent two days in working groups, plenary and fun formats such as TED Talks to look at [substantive areas of SDG 16](#) as well as cross-cutting questions such as nationalizing indicators, stakeholder engagement and institutionalizing monitoring mechanisms. To facilitate future collaboration, meeting participants are now jointly producing a repository of initiatives that support countries on monitoring SDG 16+ at country level and are keen to establish a virtual community of practice on the topic. A short report on the workshop will also be available soon.

Kyrgyz Republic: VNR related 2 day workshop

In July 2020, the Kyrgyz Republic will present its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the annual High-Level Political Forum. At a 2-day workshop in the mountain areas outside of Bishkek on 6-7 February, the working group on Governance convened to initiate the discussions and drafting of the chapter on SDG 16. With the support from UNDP, and in a "writeshopping" format the workshop enabled fruitful and engaging discussions as well as data and evidence collection from the various line ministries on the targets showing progress, challenges and opportunities for national development on peace, justice and inclusion.

With commitment and ambition from the working group, a first draft of the SDG 16 chapter was produced and the road to the HLPF is looking bright. As part of the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peace, Justice and Inclusion, UNDP generated many lessons learned from this process which will strengthen the corporate offer on providing support on similar processes for SDG 16 reporting in VNRs and other formats and platforms.

Times Higher Education Forum on SDG 16, 20-21 February 2020, Bilbao, Spain

This international forum was organized to analyse the role that universities, besides their essential knowledge generation and educational activities, can and should play in support of justice, peace and human rights to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. It took into account the universities' policies and their relationship with public entities, and collaboration and partnerships with other social agents. The event brought together leaders and experts on these issues from higher education institutions and leading organisations to share research, ideas and solutions to address issues around peace, justice and human rights; and understand how these pressing issues impact the implementation and development of effective, accountable and fair institutions. This was the first in the series of University Impact Forums based on the SDG's, however they have held a range of forums around the world focussed on different topics, that follow the same format and attract a similar audience.

Monitoring and Implementing SDG16+: The Relevance of Non-Official Data and Indices for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Thursday 5th March 2020.

The objective of this event was to advance the monitoring and implementation of SDG16+ with new data and guidance for policy makers and civil society and to provide an opportunity to share tools, approaches and knowledge products that have been developed and tested by civil society, by member states and by UN agencies that will help to fill critical evidence and data gaps in understanding progress on SDG 16. It was set against the background of unavailability of data which is a significant issue for SDG16 implementation including the paucity of data across most its global indicators. The session provided an overview of the types of data collected and shared through the interactive website SDG16.org, which allows users to compare progress across time and context, understand the strengths and weaknesses of different indicators and data sets, and identify gaps in data availability. The session also covered the role of partnerships that bring together both official and non-official data to measure and monitor progress on SDG 16 focussing on challenges and opportunities to improve the quality, availability and use of governance, security and justice data.

High-Level Breakfast Panel: Voluntary National Reviews & SDG 16 - Why Reporting is Critical

On January 29th, the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations along with the Global Alliance on Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies hosted a high-level panel meeting on SDG 16 and VNRs. The event sought to explore and disseminate best practices with an aim towards maximizing the usefulness, reliability, and impact of VNR reporting on SDG16. Ambassador and Representative to ECOSOC at the Norwegian

Mission, Susan Eckey opened the event by highlighting the importance of SDG 16 and reporting, with Ambassador José Luis Rocha, Permanent Representative of Cabo Verde, following by noting Cabo Verde's VNR experience, emphasizing how VNR reports are not end in themselves - the findings must guide policy formulation and implementation moving forward.
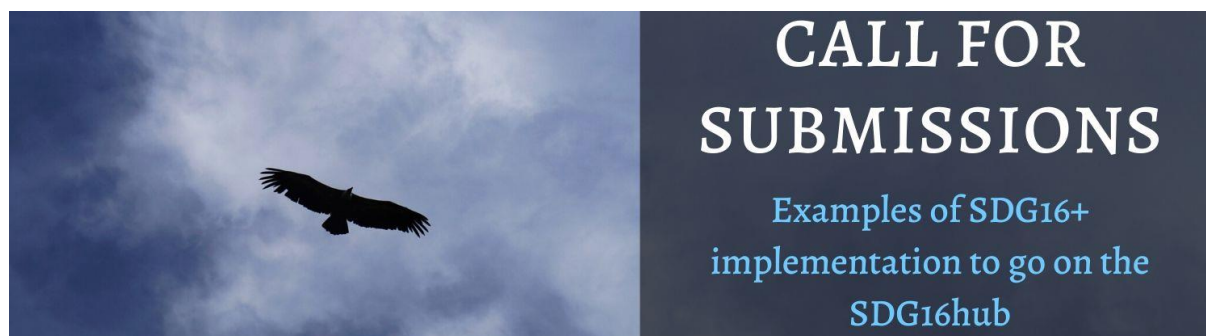
The event featured presentations of two evidence-based analyses of SDG16 VNR reporting: The first analysis was conducted by law firm White & Case, focusing on the VNR drafting process and its outputs. The second analysis, conducted by the Transparency, Accountability and Participation Network (TAP) with the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), compared civil society shadow reports of SDG16 with Member States' official VNRs. Together, these analyses yielded several specific and actionable insights to guide Member States in drafting future VNRs for the benefit of goal implementation. Following the Q&A, the Permanent Representatives of Russia and Afghanistan, as well as the Chair of the Group of Friends of VNR from Mexico, and UNOHCHR gave statements. Over 85 people attended the event, with an equal distribution of Permanent Representatives and delegates from Member States, academia, non-profits, business and UN agencies. This high-level breakfast was the first of several on VNRs that will be hosted by the Global Alliance and Member States in 2020.

SDG 16 projects and initiatives:

Update on the inclusion of a civil justice indicator in the SDG framework

Over the last year, UNDP has been working with the OECD and UNODC as well as civil society partners such as Open Society Justice Initiative and World Justice Project to secure the inclusion of a global indicator on civil justice in the global SDG indicator framework. The proposed global indicator SDG 16.3.3. that measures the accessibility of justice institutions and mechanisms (both formal and informal). complements the indicators currently under SDG 16.3 which are predominantly criminal justice focused. The indicator was considered by the IAEG-SDGs in October 2019 with UNDP, UNODC and OECD as co-custodians and recommended for endorsement by the UN Statistical Commission in its 51st session last week. Being officially adopted as part of the SDG framework, UNDP, OECD and UNODC as the joint custodians for the indicator have a role to support countries measure and monitor progress against the indicator.

Call for Submissions! New interactive online collection of SDG16+ examples:

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Examples of SDG16+ implementation to go on the SDG16hub

Do you, your organization or your company have a great example of SDG16+ implementation more people should know about? Do you want it to be featured on a multi-media online space to reach a wider audience? Do you want to connect with other SDG 16+ actors and initiatives? Now is your chance!

The SDG16hub are developing an online space to collect concrete examples of SDG16+ implementation, with the aim of creating a database of inspiration, awareness and knowledge-sharing on all the impressive work that has been and is being done on this critical goal. All examples are welcome with only a few minimum criteria:

- *Max.300 words or a short video (if available photos / visual content) explaining the example*
- *Its possibilities of scalability*
- *How innovative this example is*
- *How it brings stakeholders together in partnership.*
- *Contact details for more information*

Have something good in mind? Do not hesitate to send to the Global Alliance Secretariat at sdg16alliance@undp.org with text and any other content on the example. This online space is to be officially launched at the beginning of June (and will be continuously updated to keep it up to date)!

Timor-Leste: An update on the SDG16 implementation and Justice Sector reform

In mid-2019, the National Parliament of Timor-Leste initiated an ambitious and comprehensive project to reform the Justice Sector, to provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. To that end, recognizing the need to align the national targets defined in the National Development Strategic Plan 2011-2030 with 'The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', the national Parliament decided to allocate specific funds to reform the justice sector and invited UNDP to design a development project and implement the reform in an inclusive and participatory manner with active participation of Parliament and all political parties (potentially mitigating political risk).

In this regard, UNDP recruited several international specialists who, in a constant dialogue with the national authorities, relevant stakeholders, and the civil society, identified the areas of the reform: a new judicial organization, which will promote a better access to justice to all citizens; the need for continuous and time-based training for all judicial professions; the need to respond to the new and constant socio-economic changes in the country, resulting in the review of penal and penal procedure codes; and finally, the establishment of specialized courts and, as foreseen in the Constitution, the institutionalization of the Supreme Court of Justice. Two aspects worth highlighting are: the new judicial organization and the law and the new training programming in the justice sector law. The former, arises from the need to bring Justice closer to citizens, thus promoting their confidence in formal justice while simultaneously combating obstacles resulting from social inequalities. The proposed structure is flexible, providing for the creation of courts and jurisdictions, whenever demand exists, measured by demographic criteria in diverse regions of the country. These measures aim to restructure a static model that has not been following the evolution in the Timorese society over the past 20 years. The latter will be accompanied by the reinforcement of the means to support citizens in the access to Justice, namely through the Public Defender's Office. Another key element is the continued support for the training of the various judicial actors, both at an early stage and throughout their careers through ongoing training. To achieve this goal, UNDP developed a proposal for a Training Programming Law that aims to centralize the various training actions, creating economies of scale and coherence in the various contents that should accentuate the specificity of the country's legal matrix. In this sense, training actions are planned over 20 years, reviewed every five years, thus responding to the constant needs of the judges, prosecutors, public defenders, lawyers, amongst others judicial actors. For more information contact: Bruno Lencastre

Strengthening Post-VNR Best Practices on SDG16: Survey on country experiences, lessons learned, & best practices for SDG16 post-VNR processes

The Transparency, Accountability, and Participation (TAP) Network and UNDP are partnering to create a new resource for stakeholders involved in Voluntary National Review (VNR) follow-up activities for SDG16. This resource will focus on what happens after a VNR is presented; looking into key best practices and challenges, as

well as opportunities for countries repeatedly conducting VNRs. The development of the resource kicked-off with an online survey which aims to collect the experiences, lessons learned, and best practices of governments and other stakeholders working on post-VNR processes for SDG16. Specifically, it looks to learn how actors in countries are approaching the implementation and mainstreaming of SDG16 in their own contexts (guided by the VNR findings and consultations) and, in turn, how they are preparing to report on SDG16 again in future years.

The call for survey[1] replies are still open, so please click [here](#) ***if you would like to contribute.*** *Insights gained from this consultation – which engages governments, youth, civil society, businesses, national statistics offices and human rights institutions, UN agencies, and others – will feed directly into the development of the TAP Network and UNDP post-VNR guide. This guidance will serve as an important opportunity to realize the potential of the VNR process, including its follow-up and review, and in doing so put SDG16 into action and drive progress.* ***A webinar is also being planned on the 10th March (details in the 'Upcoming Events' section).***

RESOURCES – publications, tools, blogs:

> **Tools / Platform/ Resources:**

SDG16 Hub

The SDG 16 Hub has a new global team! Since its launch in July 2018 there has been an increase in activity on the community side of the Hub that facilitates collaboration on this important global goal. The curated content-side of the Hub is also growing, with an ongoing large resource upload, ensuring the Hub is updated with the most important and relevant resources. The [SDG 16 Hub Community](#) *has increasingly grown thanks to the participation of a vast number of users who actively engage by sharing content, comments, posts and events on the community stream and on the designated groups' pages. To stay up-to-date on SDG 16 activities and other news, join The Hub community* [here](#)*. To ensure the best and most accessible experience to all its users, the SDG 16 Hub now also offers the possibility to share* [Feedback](#) *and to take part to an anonymous* [survey](#) *that will help improve the community.*

[Evaluation to connect national priorities with the SDGs](#)

This 'real life' introduction to evaluating progress on the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is based on a global emerging country experience, as well as wider past learning on sustainable development evaluation. Rather than a one-size-fits-all manual, this guide seeks to support evaluation commissioners, managers and professional evaluators to create tailored plans and approaches to SDG evaluation. It argues that a successful evaluation must be both built around existing national context and underpinned by the principles of the 2030 Agenda.

To support customised local or national journeys towards sustainable development, this guide: lays out the main steps involved in scoping, designing and conducting an SDG evaluation; discusses the ways in which SDG evaluation processes and results can be used to support national progress on sustainable development; identifies key SDG evaluation characteristics and approaches, and looks at how SDG evaluation can be integrated into national monitoring and evaluation systems. This 48-page guide, has been co-created by IIED, EVALSDGs, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and UNICEF. With input from 33 government representatives and evaluation specialists from 22 countries, a strong theme emerged: that if evaluation is to assist in aligning national policy with Agenda 2030, it must be bespoke, built around existing political and assessment systems.

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[1] *All information collected in this survey will remain anonymous unless the respondent gives explicit consent for attribution. Interested respondents are encouraged throughout the survey to provide their consent to be contacted for* case studies *and other more detailed information from their country's experience, with the aim of publishing these accounts in the post-VNR guidance.*
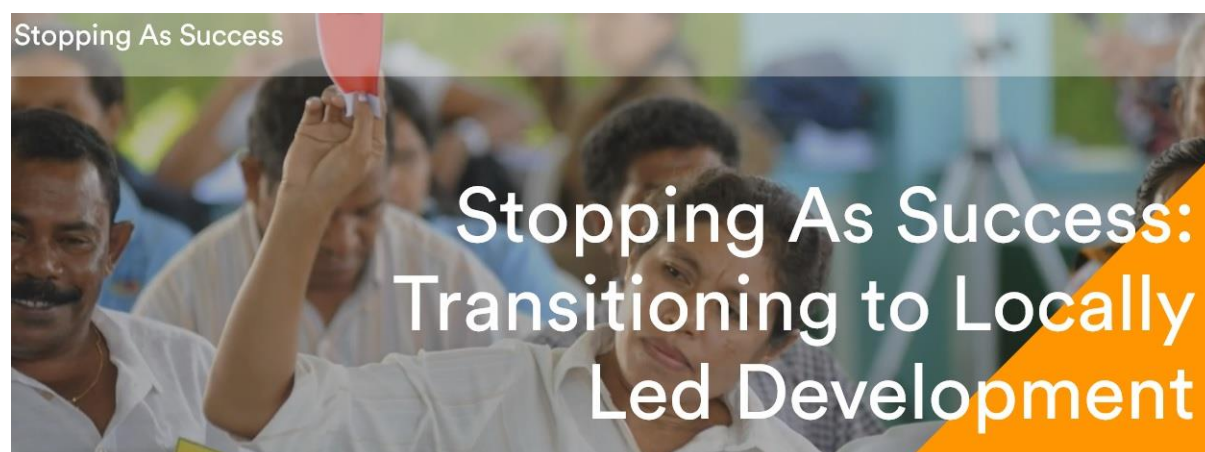
Leading the Charge on the SDGs: Best practices for CEOs & corporate leaders

This recent publication in January 2020 makes the case that effectively harnessing the power of business leaders for the SDG agenda is instrumental in meeting the targets by 2030.

Contained in it are details of Devex's online survey whose key finding is that 91% of development professionals believe that increased private sector engagement is critical to achieving the SDGs and that doing good can also be good for business. The ability to balance profitability and sustainability can become a competitive advantage, and leading companies have already proven a link between SDG engagement and business opportunity. Download and read this publication to find out what CEOs and other corporate leaders can do to better contribute to and advance the 2030 Agenda by successfully navigating the many paths to sustainability and the SDGs. The report contains details of the survey responses of the private and development sector professionals to uncover some of the most compelling best practices.

Stopping as Success (SAS)

SAS is a three-year collaborative learning project, led by Peace Direct, Search for Common Ground, and CDA Collaborative Learning, with support from USAID, dedicated to examining responsible INGO aid transitions. This global learning platform that highlights the project's 20+ case studies, research findings, tools and guidelines. This platform has: A Global Resource Library: The SAS Website features a detailed resource library that includes blogs, case studies, external resources, research findings, tools and guidelines on responsible INGO aid transitions; An Interactive Map of the World: The SAS project looked at over 20 INGO aid transitions around the world. Through our interactive map, you can locate case studies in your country or region of interest; Accessibility: We placed user accessibility at the heart of our design process. This website was designed to ensure that users around the world, no matter their location or internet bandwidth, can utilize the site's many resources and tools; and Connection: If you want to learn more about specific case studies, or the work of the SAS project broadly, we have set up a contact form and included the contact details from members of the consortium.

> ➤ **Op Eds., Blogs and articles:**

An Opportunity to Strengthen Inclusive Development by Measuring Access to Civil Justice : *by Peter Chapman, Independent expert on access to justice and governance reform, formerly with the Open Society Justice Initiative*

Read about the unresolved legal problems which are most likely to affect the populations and communities the 2030 Agenda seeks to reach. The UN Statistical Commission has the opportunity to strengthen inclusion by formally adopting the IAEG-SDGs' recommendations for the 2020 Comprehensive Review. The recommended new indicator is "proportion of the population who have experienced a dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution mechanism, by type of mechanism".

The domino effect of inequality: *by Ignacio Artaza, Resident Representative, UNDP Pakistan*
*Read about the potential effects of inequality on society and the situation in Pakistan and elsewhere and the potential links with corruption, drug use, violence, and crime and the fact that Inequality, unemployment and destitution also leads to resentments that often devolve into violence, unrest, and an 'us versus them' mentality. This piece also hightlights the recent UNDP Human Development Report (HDR) and the facts and figures related to inequality. The HDR reinforced the fact that inequalities have huge and far-flung repercussions for individuals and nations. The Report also spoke about the domino effect of inequality and how societal fault lines due to this influence everything – from politics to a country's development. **Read more…..here***

Op-ed: Most political unrest has one big root cause: soaring inequality: *by Michael Massing*
*Read about how most of the global popular unrests in recent times (from France and Spain in Europe to Hong Kong and India in Asia; from Chile, Colombia and Bolivia in Latin America to Lebanon, Iran and Iraq in the Middle East) have their roots in the prevaling inequalities that exist in those contexts. These far-flung unrests have lacked an iconic moment like the fall of the Berlin Wall, but have one thing in common: the all represent the rage at being left behind, furnished by the gross inequality produced by global capitalism. **Read more…..here**.*

The Future of Development is Local: by *Xavier Michon* and *Jaffer Machano*
*Read about why to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the world will have to shift its thinking from the national toward the urban. **Read more…..here**.*

Next generation urban planning: Enabling sustainable development at the local level through voluntary local reviews (VLRs): by *Anthony F. Pipa* and *Max Bouchet*
*Read about the innovations in next generation urban planning, through enabling sustainable development at the local level through voluntary local reviews (VLRs), set against the backdrop of the profound and fast paced urban challenges driven by urbanization, demographics, and climate change. This piece gives a detailed analysis and update on VLR as a process by which local governments confirm their commitment to the SDGs and voluntarily assess their progress toward specific targets in the 2030 Agenda. A VLR enables a city to present a holistic and coherent portrait of its social, economic, and environmental progress, offering a powerful storytelling tool that connects its local strategy to a global agenda. Given the SDGs' focus on measurement toward specific outcomes, a VLR can also be a tool for strengthening evidence-based policymaking, using data as a means to identify gaps and mobilize new policy, partnerships, and resources. The common frame of reference for the SDGs enables learning and exchange with counterpart cities across the world. **Read more…..here**.*

Accounting bodies call for urgent overhaul of corporate SDG reporting:
*Read about the recommendations made by a group of accounting and disclosure experts, for companies to urgently develop new, consistent standards for disclosing how business activities impact on progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to them, firms should shift away from reporting on how they are taking action to progress certain goals and towards disclosing how all business activities - including investment activity - impacts progress on the SDGs. The Sustainable Development Goals Disclosure (SDGD) Recommendations paper, which was drawn up by global accounting bodies in conjunction with the World Benchmarking Alliance, makes a number of recommendations setting out how corporates should improve SDG disclosure to drive more thorough assessment and action in support of the goals. **Read more…..here**.*

UPCOMING EVENTS:

TAP – UNDP online consultation webinar, 10ᵗʰ March, 2020 at 8am EST

*Related to the Transparency, Accountability, and Participation (TAP) Network and UNDP partnership to create a new resource for stakeholders involved in Voluntary National Review (VNR) follow-up activities for SDG16 and to collect further inputs, they will **host an online consultation webinar** entitled: Strengthening Post-VNR Best Practices for SDG16. Speakers will provide their insights and experiences of translating the VNR processes into political action, policy change, and how repeated VNR reporting can be linked to national development processes. Following the brief presentations, webinar participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and share their own achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.*

3ʳᵈ UN World Data Forum, 18 – 21 October 2020

The third UN World Data Forum will be hosted by Federal Statistical Office, of Switzerland with support from the Statistics Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, under the guidance of the UN Statistical Commission and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will be an opportunity for data and statistics experts from around the world to join together in this event with governments, businesses, civil society and the scientific and academic communities to explore innovative ways to apply data and statistics to measure global progress and inform evidence-based policy decisions on the 2030 Agenda to contribute to important discussions, data labs and interactive platforms aimed at improving the use of data for sustainable development; and launch new initiatives and solutions that will deliver better data for all.