



SUPPORTING DOCUMENT 1

## Lessons on Monitoring and Reporting from the MDGs and Other Major Processes

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IRF2015 is a collaboration of 11 leading research institutes from across the globe that responds to the need for independent, rigorous and timely analysis to inform the evolution of the post-2015 development agenda and the concurrent intergovernmental process on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed to at Rio+20. IRF2015 partners envision a post-2015 development agenda that is universal in scope, takes an integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of global development challenges, and can lead to more sustainable and equitable development outcomes for all.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of IRF2015 partner organizations.

## Introduction

This paper provides an overview of strengths, weaknesses and lessons from monitoring and review processes to support the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the UN Human Rights Commission's system of Universal Periodic Reviews (UPR).<sup>1</sup> The paper aims to provide highlights from these processes that can inform the design of similar frameworks in the post-2015 development agenda. The paper includes:

- Section 1: Overview of key lessons and themes from across the four selected processes;
- Section 2: Literature review of strengths and weaknesses of each process with regards to monitoring, reporting, and use of results to improve implementation;
- Section 3: Conclusions and key questions to consider for post-2015.

### **Overview of Monitoring Frameworks**

The following provides a brief overview of the relevant components of the monitoring and review mechanisms of the four selected processes.

#### **MDGs**

Monitoring and review of the MDGs has occurred through a combination of data collection and reports at the national, regional, thematic, and global level prepared by national governments, regional commissions, multi-stakeholder coalitions and the UN system. The most visible of these reports has been the annual MDG Report and progress chart, starting in 2005, and the MDG Gap Task Force Report, beginning in 2008. An overview of UN system-related reports is available in Annex 1. Official statistics on progress against indicators are contained in the MDG Indicator database maintained by the UN Statistical Division and based on both country-level data reported by national statistical agencies as well as extrapolations or other estimates where recent data is not available. In addition, periodic global reviews from the Secretary-General have served to highlight new commitments as well as gaps in implementation.

#### **UNFCCC**

The climate regime is monitored primarily by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). The SBI and SBSTA work together on cross-cutting issues such as capacity building and Kyoto Protocol mechanisms (Clean Development Mechanism, Joint Implementation, and Emissions Trading), while more specialized bodies – each of which produce regular reports and technical papers to measure progress – have been created to track items such as finance and technology transfer. The SBI is transitioning towards monitoring, reviewing and verification (MRV) functions, which began with the launch of the international assessment and review (IAR) and international consultations and analysis (ICA) processes in 2013 and 2014 respectively, to manage national communications submitted by Annex I and non-Annex I parties. The Kyoto Protocol's monitoring procedures are based on current reporting requirements under the UNFCCC, but entail additional review and compliance mechanisms. Looking ahead to the next Conference of Parties to be held in Paris, countries are submitting Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) that outline their plans for limiting emissions, among other commitments.

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<sup>1</sup> See additional discussion of accountability under each of these frameworks in the accompanying Background Paper by Kitty van der Heijden, *From Count-ability to Accountability: An overview*.

## WTO

Monitoring and review of the international trade system takes place under the auspices of the WTO, which collects data, reviews trade policies, and mediates disputes. Information on tariff analyses, regional and preferential trade agreements, and other trade policy measures is available in multiple databases maintained by the Economic Research and Statistics Division, which provides technical assistance to Members in conjunction with other WTO institutions. A Trade Policy Review Board (TPRB) conducts regular reviews of Members' policies and actions (known as TPRs), however TPRs are distinct from enforcement and compliance processes. The separate dispute settlement mechanism consists of a Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), ad hoc panels and an Appellate Body for appeals. The WTO also produces comprehensive annual overviews of international trade statistics, trends and country profiles, based on notifications, official reports from Members and other external sources such as the OECD and UN regional commissions.

## Universal Periodic Reviews under the UN Human Rights Commission

The UN Human Rights Commission Universal Periodic Reviews (UPRs) are a mechanism to evaluate country performance against the treaties to which they are signatories as well as other human rights commitments and criteria. UPR cycles take 4 years, with 48 states being evaluated each year. Each state under review provides its own self-evaluation, and member states as well as NGOs and the UN Human Rights Commission staff can present recommendations to the State. The state can respond by accepting, rejecting, explaining, or ignoring the recommendations. The UPR system began in 2008, with the first cycle completed in 2012. Subsequent cycles are intended to follow-up on commitments made during the reviews in addition to overall adherence and implementation of obligations.

## 1. Key Lessons

The MDGs, UNFCCC, WTO, and UPR all provide examples of global (or nearly global) agreements with important implications for economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development – both domestically and globally – although their primary areas of focus (poverty eradication, climate change, trade and human rights) necessarily differ. Success for each requires multilateral cooperation, and thus assessing progress under each regime requires globally comparable information and a common reporting framework.

The review mechanisms for the four frameworks profiled below have different scopes and structures, driven in part by their different areas of focus and legal forms. Most notably, MDGs are voluntary whereas UNFCCC and WTO are binding agreements, while the UPR relates to binding treaties, but the process itself is voluntary. Nevertheless, reviews of these mechanisms point to common lessons and messages such as the following:

**Requirements for globally consistent and comparable data have been challenging for many countries, resulting in a heavy reliance on estimates.** The volume of information and technical capacity required for annual reporting – especially for the MDGs and UNFCCC – were not readily available in most countries at inception, and data may be collected or estimated using methods that can vary within and across countries. For example, given the limited resources of national statistical agencies, global MDG reports have often estimated values for country-level indicators based on data from previous years or on extrapolations from peer countries. In some places, calculations from international agencies have contradicted other data from national sources, leading to questions about legitimacy of the MDG progress reports. Further, national estimates are often not disaggregated to local levels where many services are provided, or by gender, race, or other vulnerable groupings. Data that is only presented as a national average mask inequalities, both in where progress is achieved and for whom. UNFCCC reports have faced similar challenges: many countries have had to rely on

average emissions expected from various activities or uses of energy when calculating national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories.

**However, data availability and capacity to analyse it can increase over time in response to international and domestic efforts.** In all cases, while initial data availability was sparse, this has improved and support systems have been developed to provide funding and capacity building. For example, the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics and the Paris21 partnership have both helped to mobilize support to improve national statistical capabilities, including for monitoring MDGs.<sup>2</sup> According to the UNFCCC, 147 non-Annex I countries have submitted an initial GHG inventory and national communication as of October 2014, while 108 have submitted a second as of April 2015.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, as of 2013 the WTO has conducted a total of 384 trade policy reviews covering 147 of 159 members, with those responsible for the largest shares of world trade being reviewed every two years.<sup>4</sup> All countries have gone through the first round of the UPR process, with the Human Rights Index providing a searchable resource for country reports and activities across a wide range of activities.

**Local context matters: baselines and target values have a significant impact on whether a country is seen to have made progress.** While seemingly ‘technical,’ selection of baseline years and, in the case of MDGs, assumptions about rates of change, have at times obscured actual progress or lack thereof. For example, ability to achieve some MDG targets depended largely on where countries started (i.e. how far they had to go to reach the target). Some were almost guaranteed not to meet certain targets regardless of their ability to accelerate progress. For example, the Africa Regional report on MDG progress for 2014 notes that “... *the pace of progress on the MDGs in Africa has accelerated since 2003. Indeed, an assessment of performance based on effort reveals that eight of the top ten best performers (i.e. those experiencing the most rapid acceleration) are in Southern, East, Central and West Africa. Burkina Faso ranked the highest in MDG acceleration.*” However, a significant number of those countries considered most ‘off track’ are also in Africa.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the inherent patterns of change in the indicator (e.g. whether the rate of change is likely to be linear or will change over time) has also played a role. Finally, the selection of targets focusing on relative improvements (e.g. % change in X or Y) provided an incentive for governments to focus on those easiest to reach, at times at the expense of those with greatest need.

**The focus on attaining numerical targets (which may not always be locally appropriate) can come at the expense of more holistic perspectives on progress and can limit input and review from non-state actors.** Selecting indicators and targets (often based somewhat on feasibility of data collection) and focusing only on quantitative measures can lead to an over-emphasis on factors that are easier to measure and a downplaying of other important issues (governance and human rights are two examples). While the focus on outcomes has been cited as a strength of the MDGs, a more integrated and participatory approach can lead to improved implementation as well as more appropriate target levels. For example, the focus of MDGs on duties of recipient governments and, to a lesser extent, donors left CSOs and other non-state actors with more context-specific expertise out of the process. The technocratic approach to reporting in many countries prevented deeper discussions with non-state actors and affected populations about what was needed to address the highest priority challenges to improved well-being. This gap can reduce the legitimacy of the framework in the eyes of affected individuals and miss essential elements of human development. For example, recent community-led studies to define poverty lines in Thailand, Nepal, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka, and the

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<sup>2</sup> IEG (2013). “Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics, Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, and Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building.”

<sup>3</sup> UNFCCC Website: “Submitted National Communications from non-Annex I Parties.” Available at [http://unfccc.int/national\\_reports/non-annex\\_i\\_natcom/submitted\\_natcom/items/653.php](http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/submitted_natcom/items/653.php)

<sup>4</sup> World Trade Organization Annual Report 2014

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Union, African Development Bank and United Nations Development Programme. *MDG 2014 Report: Assessment of Progress in Africa towards the Millennium Development Goals*, 2014.

Philippines indicate that the \$1.25/day target for extreme poverty used in the MDGs and many other reports and analysis does not reflect an appropriate awareness of the local context, by incorporating housing, transport, and health costs, among other elements.<sup>6</sup>

**Reporting can raise public awareness and enhance the legitimacy of an international process.** Progress reports can serve as a tool for government and advocates to highlight the urgency of an issue, the need for policy change, and how and where to more effectively target resources. Though multiple factors were likely at work, success in attracting funding and attention to the HIV/AIDS pandemic has been linked to increased reporting under the MDGs. A transparent reporting process can also help to legitimize a framework for the participating countries by ensuring that members know their achievements will be recognized and their shortcomings will similarly be open to scrutiny and criticism. Under the UPR, recommendations made by peer member states and stakeholders create a record against which states under review can later be requested to report. Some states, such as Brazil and the United Kingdom, have also invited stakeholder input on their self-reports in advance of release to the international community. In the WTO, transparency practices in reporting serve multiple purposes, as country notifications and the ensuing discussions provide information while also improving or clarifying interpretations of trade rules,<sup>7</sup> strengthening the effectiveness of and faith in the regime as a whole.

**Reporting can also foster learning by governments and stakeholders to improve policy and implementation.** With sufficiently robust or disaggregated data, countries have been able to use reporting to inform poverty reduction strategies and national and sectoral development plans. For example, in its 2013 MDG report, Cambodia was able to include region-specific data on poverty rates, identify specific groups that were most at risk, and identify bottlenecks and impediments to implementation by goal, allowing for better identification of next steps and integration with the existing national development plan.<sup>8</sup> However, investment in analysis on what works and what doesn't (or barriers to progress) is required to make this work. The ability to improve policy and implementation on the basis of reports has been especially limited in places where data relies heavily on interpolations or extrapolations. Furthermore, as seen in the UNFCCC, financial and technical assistance for national reporting has often been given on a project basis, allowing for timely, complete reporting, but perhaps limiting the government's ability to build long-term capacity.

**Providing an avenue for recommendations as part of the monitoring process can engage a broader range of stakeholders and help to link monitoring, review, and learning.** While often separate, connecting monitoring with recommendations from a wide range of stakeholders can help turn data into concrete changes more rapidly than might otherwise be the case. For example, the UPR provides a formal avenue for recommendations on concrete actions from fellow states as well as non-state actors as part of its review process. Although observers have noted a need for greater stakeholder involvement,<sup>9</sup> one study found close to half of recommendations examined were partially or fully implemented in the years following review, including, for example, preparation of action plans for the advancement of women in Georgia, Greece and Myanmar, among many others.<sup>10</sup> Both the UNFCCC and WTO give non-state actors accredited observer status and allow participation in the process. In the UNFCCC, Expert Review Teams (ERTs) –external professionals nominated by member states – conduct in-depth country reviews to further stimulate implementation by allowing for increased country comparability. It has been noted that TPRs may benefit from similar group reviews, as some have criticized the WTO Secretariat on the depth and level of scrutiny of Trade Policy Review Board reports.

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<sup>6</sup> Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, *How the Poor set their own Poverty Lines*. (2014).

<sup>7</sup> Halle, M. and R. Wolfe, *A new approach to transparency and accountability in the WTO*. Entwined (2010).

<sup>8</sup> Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Planning (2013).

<sup>9</sup> McMahon, Edward. *Universal Periodic Peer Review: A Work in Progress* (2012).

<sup>10</sup> UPR Info, *Beyond Promises: The impact of UPR on the ground* (2014).

### 3. Literature Review of Strengths and Weaknesses of Each Framework

	Monitoring	Reporting	Learning
MDGs	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Data availability and capacity improved over time.</b> Compared to 2003 when only 2 percent of the 163 countries had two data points (over time) for 16 or more of the 22 MDG indicators, by 2009, 72 percent of the countries had at least two such data points. Initiatives such as MAPS and Paris21 have drawn attention to the importance of measurement (OECD, UN, OIOS).</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Collecting and analyzing data required for monitoring has not been feasible for many countries.</b> Problems include inconsistent data collection practices leading to inaccurate estimates, data gaps, capacity and financial resource constraints (Commonwealth, Manning, Prabhu, UNOIOS UNTT, UN(a)).</li> <li>- <b>Selecting indicators based on available data necessarily narrowed the types of things that could be measured.</b> This meant that priorities within the Millennium Declaration (e.g. human rights, good governance) were not prioritized and instead indicators favored a human needs agenda (Fukuda-Parr &amp; Greenstein).</li> <li>- <b>Use of common definitions to enhance standardization can come at the expense of capturing local specificities.</b> The need to match global definitions has meant that monitoring often misses locally important information or disaggregation, or diverted attention from national priorities (Prabhu, Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, UNOIOS).</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Monitoring reports have helped to improve public attention and support for development expenditures.</b> For example, success and focus on AIDS research and investment improved public support (Fukuda-Parr &amp; Greenstein, Manning, UN(b)).</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The classification of ‘on track’ or ‘off track’ does not account for different rates and patterns of progress.</b> ODI has found that some indicators do not follow linear trajectories of progress, so projections of linear rates of progress were unrealistic. (Rodrigues et al, Fukuda-Parr &amp; Greenstein).</li> <li>- <b>Use of relative measures of progress advantaged or disadvantaged certain countries.</b> The starting points of countries as well as their demographic make-up impacted on their ability to attain targets, and failed to reflect instances where progress in absolute terms had improved over expectations (UNTT, Fukuda Parr et al.).</li> <li>- <b>Global estimates used for global reporting do not always match national estimates and national data has often not gone into global reports.</b> estimation has obscured actual country data; leads to conflict with national policy makers and confusion when these contradict national estimates (Prabhu, OECD).</li> <li>- <b>While information on MDG performance is regularly produced, it is often dispersed and may not be accessible to those who need it</b></li> </ul>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Indicators were people-centered and drew attention to the poorest.</b> Widespread adoption and profile given to reports has changed the development discourse and in some cases allowed for advocates to make more effective cases for assistance (Manning).</li> <li>- <b>Some countries have used data to improve effectiveness of public programs.</b> Examples include Cambodia, Tanzania, Viet Nam, and Albania where information on progress was fed into poverty reduction strategies or allowed for better targeting of existing programs (UN(b), Manning).</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Use of indicators in generating reports led to emphasis on improving the numbers rather than a deeper examination of what works.</b> (Commonwealth, Fukuda-Parr &amp; Greenstein)</li> <li>- <b>Country data is rarely disaggregated below national level, where it could inform development strategies at the local level as well as allocation of national resources.</b> In areas where this information is available, civil society has been able use the information to advocate for resources (Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, Manning).</li> <li>- <b>Limited space for including CSOs in the MDG framework has limited their ability to provide input or independent verification.</b> The focus on nation states embedded in MDGs has not provided sufficient space for CSOs to engage (Commonwealth).</li> <li>- <b>Indicators selected did not always remain</b></li> </ul>

		<p><b>most.</b> While there has been a proliferation of reports, this information does not necessarily reach subnational levels (Boex).</p>	<p><b>relevant over time.</b> For example, connectivity to landlines was eclipsed by the significance of mobile technology. A future framework may need to maintain flexibility (UN(a), UNTT).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Evaluation frameworks were not agreed at the outset of the MDGs.</b> While hundreds of reports are available, there has not been a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities to facilitate evaluation (UNOIOS).</li> </ul>
UNFCCC	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Annex I parties prepare annual inventories in a comparable format.</b> These inventories use a standardized IPCC methodology, feature three-part expert review, and cover 6+ specific GHGs, allowing for in-depth data analysis (Fransen; Dagnet).</li> <li>- <b>All registries are publicly available.</b> Countries' Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), INDCs, national communications, and vast quantities of data have led to increased transparency.</li> <li>- <b>A variety of bodies and mechanisms exist to review commitments, goals and corresponding information.</b> Convention bodies such as the Standing Committee on Finance, and Kyoto Protocol bodies such as the Compliance Committee are responsible for monitoring and implementing various aspects of Convention agreements.</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Annual inventories may not accurately reflect emissions, and there are significant gaps in data.</b> Measurements are estimated via activity data (i.e. quantity of fuel burned), while Non-Annex I countries also lack activity data in a number of key areas, causing them to rely on averages (Fransen).</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Annex I parties (developed countries) are required to go beyond data in their national inventories.</b> Annual reporting must also include measures to facilitate mitigation and adaptation, education, training, awareness, and other initiatives (Fransen).</li> <li>- <b>Non-Annex I parties are able to meet multiple objectives with reduced reporting.</b> National communications include country inventories and can be submitted as part of a biennial update report, which streamlines the MRV process. The vast majority of non-annex I parties have already reported at least once (Fransen; Dagnet).</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Differentiation of deadlines, reporting requirements and methodologies may reduce comparability and exacerbate data gaps.</b> Non-Annex I parties have less frequent deadlines without a standardized reporting format, which limits the tracking of progress, creates varying levels of transparency, and may disincentivize action (Fransen; Dagnet).</li> <li>- <b>Yet non-Annex I countries also need significant technical and financial assistance.</b> Financial support available has not been commensurate with the needs and demands of the existing MRV framework</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Systemic reporting with comparable data and verification standards is necessary and available to address transboundary challenges.</b> National MRV is required in three key areas: emissions, support and policies/impacts. The use of a common tabular format would increase coherence and enable greater specificity, and has already been agreed, but not yet implemented (UNEP and WRI; GIZ; Dagnet).</li> <li>- <b>Expert review teams (ERTs) are able to trigger the Kyoto Protocol's compliance mechanism.</b> Third party reviewers examine national reporting and inventories, and can raise questions of implementation in addition to the Parties themselves (Oberthur).</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The pace at which countries converge around common MRV requirements is slow.</b> Although successful, developed countries needed 15 years to reach current reporting levels, enabled by a voluntary testing period prior to the obligatory period of the Kyoto Protocol (Dagnet).</li> <li>- <b>There is a gray area between review and compliance, and a need to redress non-compliance.</b> International assessment and review and international consultation and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>A global accounting framework for emissions has not yet been agreed, and GHG data is generated by a number of different actors.</b> The UNFCCC website lists data reported by countries, data specifically related to the Kyoto Protocol, and information gathered by non-UNFCCC entities (Dagnet).</li> <li>- <b>Political sensitivities can intrude on technical discussions.</b> While the establishment of common baseline years harmonizes countries' emissions data, it can also alter perceived historical responsibility, and there are ongoing debates around the methods used to account for GHGs and track progress (den Elzen).</li> <li>- <b>There are inconsistencies between parties' INDCs.</b> Without a proactive approach to ensure comparability and utilize standard metrics, it will be difficult to verify whether submissions will add up to the ambition needed to limit warming to 2 degrees.</li> <li>- Note: The complementary issues of monitoring climate finance, data on financial flows, and financial accountability are beyond the scope of this document.</li> </ul>	<p>(UNEP and WRI; Dagnet).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Countries often receive funding to complete national communications on a project basis.</b> There is not necessarily investment in a system that supports future reporting, long-term capacity building, or institutional knowledge in developing nations (Fransen).</li> </ul>	<p>analysis by the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body on Implementation both aim to increase transparency by looking at countries' biennial submissions&gt; However, capacity to follow-up on their findings with the Parties in question is lacking (Oberthur).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The Kyoto Protocol's compliance mechanism and early-warning system have been underutilized.</b> While cases concerning reporting and data have been resolved by the Compliance Committee, Canada, for example, expressed disinterest in meeting its emissions target, as confirmed by their emissions data, yet the issue was not effectively addressed, and they withdrew from the Protocol (Oberthur).</li> <li>- <b>While compliance by all parties is vital for success, enforcement solutions should be tailored to country contexts.</b> Kyoto Protocol enforcement generally applies only to developed country obligations, as there is limited basis for raising questions related to developing country implementation (Oberthur).</li> </ul>
<p><b>WTO</b></p>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Data availability and monitoring capacity has increased significantly.</b> Databases compiled by the WTO Secretariat, such as the Integrated Trade Intelligence Portal, can prove useful to states without the capacity or ability to generate or monitor their own data (Wolfe (a); WTO).</li> <li>- <b>Transparency in the WTO refers to both generating information and to agreed interpretations of that information.</b> Right to know principles, review and surveillance measures, and the ability to analyze</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Trade policy reviews (TPRs) successfully examine country practices without politicizing negotiations or intruding on sovereignty.</b> TPRs are done by the secretariat in cooperation with members, and subject to expert review. Their frequency is determined by a member's share of world trade, and therefore is subject to change (Cecys; VanGrasstek; van Asselt, et al).</li> <li>- <b>All reviews are made public and feed into a broader annual report.</b> Increased external transparency enables stronger policy-making</li> </ul>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The trade system has proven flexible in reacting to global shocks.</b> The 2008 financial crisis led to the reviving of monitoring activities by the Secretariat, which worked with other international organizations to avoid backsliding by members and promote an open, predictable, non-discriminatory trading system (Roberts; VanGrasstek).</li> <li>- <b>The volume of cases brought to the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body indicates strong political buy-in to the process.</b> While roughly two thirds of trade disputes are notified as</li> </ul>



	<p>information all serve to enhance the WTO agreements (Halle and Wolfe).</p> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Some datasets require considerable expertise to analyze</b>, and therefore are not yet of use to small states and developing countries without significant technical assistance (Wolfe (b)).</li> <li>- <b>Members are required to submit notifications on their own laws and policies.</b> Although standardized to some extent – and strictly factual and narrow in focus – there is potentially wide variation in the quality of data and reporting based on a country’s capacity (van Asselt, et al).</li> </ul>	<p>and reduces the risk of regulatory capture by interest groups. By the end of 2013, the Trade Policy Review Board completed 384 reviews of Members’ trade policies and practices (Cecys; Halle and Wolfe; WTO).</p> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>TPRs do not link to compliance nor enforcement processes</b>, and do not provide sufficient information for dispute resolution, which remains in the hands of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism. They also do not shape domestic policies, and cannot yet allow for easy comparison of countries over time (Cecys; VanGrasstek; Halle and Wolfe).</li> <li>- <b>Group or independent reviews may enhance the depth of TPRB reports.</b> Accredited observers have noted that the Secretariat’s evaluations have been insufficiently critical (van Asselt, et al).</li> </ul>	<p>being settled out of court, the initial actions taken via the multilateral system shows Member preference towards a consultative mediation process that incentivizes participation (Laird and Valdés).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The dispute resolution process has a formal legal structure.</b> A four-stage process of consultations, third-party adjudication, an appeal institution in the form of the Appellate Body, and the possibility of a compliance panel allows for binding decisions, thereby encouraging parties to utilize the redress framework (Laird and Valdés).</li> </ul> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Dispute Resolution Mechanisms add a layer of authority to the trade regime, but the rulings technically may not set precedents for future disputes.</b></li> <li>- <b>Transparency may vary by subject matter.</b> There are differences in the level of detail of information submitted by Members, depending on the content. Some may not wish to disclose specific information if it bears on new obligations, may be questioned, can lead to a dispute or necessitate policy changes, versus more openness around notifications that concern the operation of the trade regime itself, or economic statistics on Member circumstances (Halle and Wolfe).</li> </ul>
<p><b>UN Human Rights Commission</b></p>	<p>Strengths:</p> <p><b>First round of evaluations has created a baseline to build from.</b> The first complete round of UPRs has generated considerable quantities of data on human rights performance as well as recommendations from stakeholders and member states (McMahon).</p> <p><b>Universal Human Rights Index website indexes all documents related to human rights treaty</b></p>	<p>Strengths:</p> <p><b>Reporting and review process has attracted high levels of member state participation and required that states go on record about their human rights records.</b> Nearly all states have submitted a written report for their review and 80% were represented at ministerial level during review process (McMahon).</p> <p><b>Reviews are conducted by other member states</b></p>	<p>Strengths:</p> <p><b>National report-preparation process helps states and other stakeholders to identify where additional capacity-building or other resources are needed.</b> In the first round of UPRs, states made 537 pledges for further action, though only 40% were found to be specific and verifiable (McMahon).</p> <p><b>Initial review indicate that as many as half of</b></p>

	<p><b>organizations and facilitates transparency and analysis by nation states and stakeholders alike.</b> This includes recommendations made to improve each country's performance (UNHCR(b)).</p> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <p><b>While reporting under the UPR has been a strength, information on compliance with existing Human Rights treaty obligations is often incomplete or out of date.</b> Over 2010 and 2011, only 16% of reports on treaty obligations were submitted on time (Pillay 2012), although recent initiatives for capacity building and harmonization of reporting requirements may alleviate this (UNHCR(a)). Lack of this underlying data can reduce stakeholder ability to evaluate compliance (UN Watch).</p>	<p><b>and stakeholders independently of the member state under review.</b> Recommendations from peer states provide an opportunity for states to receive feedback on performance. Over 20,000 recommendations were provided during the first round of reviews (UNHCR(b), McMahon).</p> <p><b>Recommendations (and state acceptance or rejection of the recommendations) creates a record for subsequent reporting.</b> The second and subsequent rounds of review will provide an opportunity for states to report on how they have implemented recommendations (McMahon, UPR Info).</p> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <p><b>Although states are due to include non-state actors in report preparation, adoption of this practice has been uneven.</b> Stakeholder engagement can help provide a more complete picture of human rights within a country. While stakeholders can also submit separate reports to the UPR, these are not presented during the review process itself and so may receive less attention (ISHR, UPR Info).</p>	<p><b>recommendations have been somewhat or completely implemented.</b> One review found up to 48% of recommendations were implemented or partially implemented within 2.5 years of the review (UPR Info).</p> <p>Challenges or Weaknesses:</p> <p><b>Studies have characterized the peer review as "mutual praise society" where states are not inclined to speak against peers.</b> This has been noted particularly amongst regional groups, where states are least likely to offer criticism of peers (McMahon, ISHR, Human Rights Watch).</p> <p><b>Recommendations from peer states are often quite broad or repetitive, allowing for lenient interpretations by the States under Review.</b> As a result, states may appear to accept recommendations (or assert that the recommended actions have already been completed) based on a self-interested reading of the requirements (McMahon, IHSR).</p>
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### 3. Conclusions and Some Key Questions for the Post-2015 Development Agenda

The universal and integrated nature of proposed post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals implies unprecedented challenges for an effective monitoring and review framework. Even with growing technological capabilities, other capacity and resource constraints will require careful choices and creativity to improve data collection and availability, and to more effectively translate data into decision-relevant information to promote progress. A few key questions include:

- How can global monitoring and review frameworks be designed in order to generate information that can be readily incorporated into regional, national or subnational planning in addition to fulfilling global-level needs?
- Can a robust and complete global monitoring and review framework be developed that also allows space for tailoring and adapting indicators to best fit local circumstances and effectively support marginalized communities? How might such a framework be allowed to evolve over time?
- What is the role for non-state actors and local governments in supporting official reporting processes? How can this improve the quality of information available? And how can this link to deeper review and evaluation at multiple levels?
- Proposed post-2015 SDGs are more integrated than their predecessors – how can a monitoring and reporting framework best reflect and reinforce this integration, e.g. through integrated monitoring and reporting with respect to all dimensions of sustainability?
- How can the existing synergies between the post-2015 SDGs and related frameworks (e.g. Finance for Development, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change and other thematic frameworks) be maximized, including in their reporting requirements?

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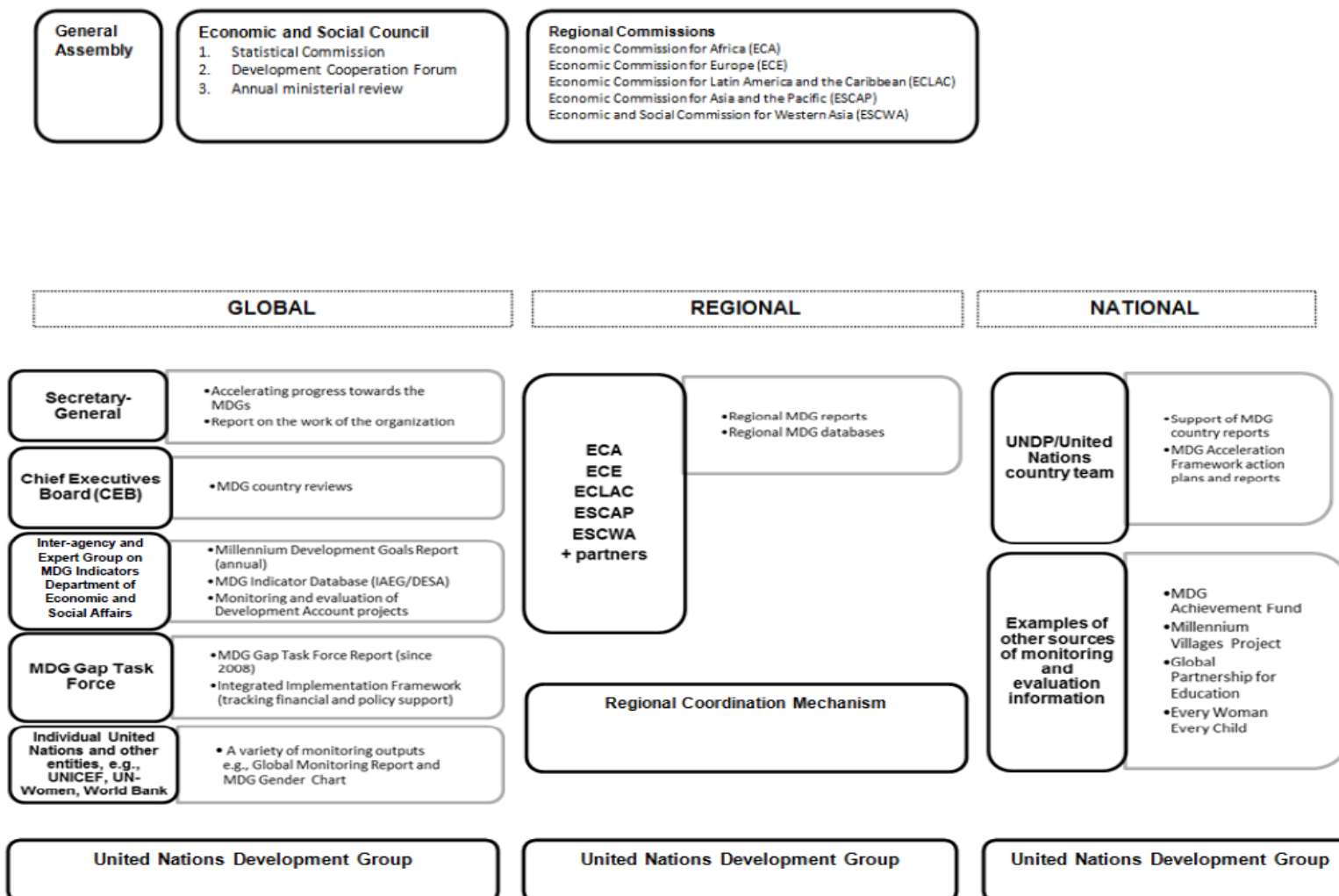
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## Annex I

### Map of the United Nations system framework for monitoring and evaluation of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals — Overview



Source: United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Service (UNOIOS) (2015). Thematic evaluation of monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals: lessons learned for the post-2015 era. Prepared for the UN Economic and Social Council. E/AC.51/2015/3. March 18 2015.