



“Leveraging Data and Technology to Accelerate SDGs Implementation, Monitoring and Follow-up”

Co-hosted by the National Economic and Social Development Council of Thailand and the Ministry of Economy and Planning of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Co-sponsored by ESCAP, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) of DESA, Federal Republic of Germany, and Republic of South Africa

Side Event at the 2025 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

23 July 2025, 13.15 – 14.30 hrs.

Conference Room 3, UNHQ

Background

Over the past decade, the global community has made significant efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The role of data has become increasingly important in SDG monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes, including Voluntary National Reviews. Data is essential for governments to make informed policy decisions to effectively implement the Goals. Yet, challenges remain such as limited data availability, inter- and intra-agency coordination, data classification and storage, as well as human and financial resource constraints. To illustrate, the Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2024¹ by ESCAP indicated that only half of the SDG indicators have sufficient data for regional progress assessment. This existing data gap presents a major obstacle to our joint endeavor to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

Utilizing technology in the data processes can be a game changer. It improves data accuracy and inclusivity which further strengthen and accelerate SDG implementation. For instance, artificial intelligence (AI) has the capability to analyze vast amount of data from diverse sources to identify trends, correlations, and disparities, while geospatial tools such as satellite imagery and Geographic Information System (GIS) enable precise monitoring of environmental changes and resource distribution. Countries can broaden the range of information by integrating geospatial with AI-generated data that improve policy processes and decision-making for SDG-related measures.

In line with the 2025 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) theme ‘**Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind.**’, this side event will be a platform for knowledge exchange and discussion, focusing on the role of data and technology in advancing SDGs, including utilizing them in Voluntary National Review processes (VNR).

This event aims to deliver actionable strategies, strengthen collaboration, and share best practices to enhance SDG implementation. Targeted participants include member States across regions and relevant stakeholders, ensuring diverse and inclusive participation to foster meaningful dialogue and cooperation.

¹ <https://unescap.org/kp/2024/asia-and-pacific-sdg-progress-report-2024>

Objectives

- **To create an open platform to discuss science- and evidence-based solutions to SDGs implementation** by sharing knowledge and experiences on integrating science, technology, and data into SDG implementation, while addressing the unique challenges faced by each country in achieving sustainable development.
- **To highlight inclusive solutions for SDGs attainment** by presenting best practices and innovative policy solutions as well as instruments that have effectively advanced SDGs implementation.
- **To strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration on data** by fostering partnerships among the countries to exchange and drive impactful and sustainable solutions for SDGs implementation

Tentative Program

Time	Program
13.15 – 13.24	<u>Opening Segment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Danucha Pichayanan, Secretary General of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) of Thailand • Opening Remarks by Ms. Hajar Algosair, General Supervisor, Assistant Deputyship for Sustainable Development Affairs, Ministry of Economy and Planning (MEP), Saudi Arabia
13.24 - 13.28	Special Remarks by the representative from United Arab Emirates (TBC)
13.28 – 13.30	Photo Session
13.30 – 13.40	<u>Scene-Setting: “Global Best-Practices and Data Tools for SDGs Monitoring and Evaluation”</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Perspective by Mr. Daniel Eshetie, Statistician, United Nation Statistics Division • Regional Perspective by Ms. Juliet Braslow, Sustainable Development Officer, Office of the Executive Secretary, ESCAP
13.40 – 14.30	<u>Panel Discussion “Country Experiences in Leveraging Data and Technology to Accelerate SDGs Implementation, including for Voluntary National Reviews”</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms. Sorraya Yosyingyong, Director of National Strategy and Country Reform Division, NESDC, Thailand ○ Ms. Yara Sindi, General Manager for Sustainability Analytics and Policy Integration, and Director of Corporate Sustainability, MEP, Saudi Arabia ○ Mr. Stefan Bauernfeind, Head of Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Product Policy Division, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany ○ Mr. Solly Molayi, Acting Deputy Director-General for Population and Social Statistics, Statistics South Africa ○ Ms. Sabina Alkire, Director of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) (TBC) • Moderator: Dr. Thuttai Keeratipongpaiboon, Director of International Strategy and Coordination Division, NESDC, Thailand