

Report of the Regional Workshop on Strengthening Coordination for Measuring Progress on Responsible Consumption and Production and Policy Coherence 07 - 09 December 2021 Venue: KUDO, VIRTUAL

Background

The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development has elevated the profile of the environmental dimension of development and how we monitor this dimension. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has implemented Phase I of the project on Enhancing Capacity for Measuring Progress towards the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Phase I focused on the methodological development of SDG indicators under UNEP's custodianship and the reclassification of these indicators into Tier II or Tier I. Due to the nature and complexity of some environmental indicators, further capacity building is needed to equip member states with the necessary tools and knowledge to put in place the necessary data collection systems.

UNEP is currently implementing Phase II of the project (2020-2022), funded by the European Commission, that focuses on enhancing national capacities to measure SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production and strengthening policy coherence. One of the project's activities focuses on conducting workshops to enhance the capacities of member states through hosting data producers and users together to emphasize the need for cooperation, as well as improving the understanding of the efforts made to collect data and the need for data for evidence-based policymaking. The Regional Workshop on Strengthening Coordination for Measuring Progress on Responsible Consumption and Production and Policy Coherence serves as one of the tools of development and training capacity under the project's activities.

Day 1, Tuesday 07 December 2021, 10:00 – 13:00 EAT

Session 1: Opening session

Ekaterina Poleshchuk, Programme Management Officer, Science Division, UNEP opened the workshop and welcomed the representatives of the various countries to the 3-day regional workshop. She then introduced Tomas Marques and invited him to provide his opening speech. The workshop was attended by 63 participants from the following countries (in alphabetical order): Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, North Macedonia, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. A full list of participants is presented in Annex I.

Tomas Marques, Programme Management Officer, European Regional Office, UNEP welcomed the participants and focused on how circular economy is being adapted across the region and the globe due to the SDGs and international treaties such as the Paris Agreement. He pointed out that the circular economy model is aimed at using natural resources and materials



effectively while minimizing waste generation. He focused on how to rethink e-waste in the European region by having efficient waste management systems in place to ensure proper e-waste disposal. Improved technology, effective policies, and quality data were pointed out as ways through which the region can explore the benefits that come with recycling e-waste. It was highlighted how countries pledged at UNEA-4 to scale up efforts in addressing environmental challenges in a balanced and integrated manner through sustainable resource use and management. His speech also focused on identifying available data, understanding measurement gaps, and the importance of developing evidence-based policies and sound policy-based management strategies to advance SCP and waste management. His remarks were concluded by highlighting the importance of policy coherence to foster synergies and maximize benefits across policy areas.

Ralf Heidrich, Associate Programme Manager, Science Division, UNEP gave a summary on the European Commission project on Enhancing capacity for measuring progress towards the Environmental Dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals – Phase II. He explained the objectives, needs, and outcomes of the project, as well as activities that were implemented to date and upcoming activities. He also provided an overview on the scope of the project, which has a global, regional covering Africa and Asia, and national scope including six beneficiary countries where activities will be implemented in 2022 (Ghana, India, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Senegal, and Uganda).

Session 2: WASTE SDG INDICATORS: DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY IMPORTANCE

Dany Ghafari, Programme Management Officer, Science Division, UNEP presented the respective internationally adopted methodologies of the seven waste-related SDG Indicators (11.6.1, 12.3.1.a, 12.3.1.b, 12.4.1, 12.4.2, 12.5.1, and 14.1.1.b), including a high-level overview on how to calculate these indicators, their institutional custodian agencies and the level of data availability.

Dany Ghafari gave a presentation on the importance of policy instruments and how the seven waste SDG Indicators can be used for evidence-based policies and their contribution to the circular economy approach. The presentation highlighted how sound waste policies contribute to a reduction in natural resource exploitation, waste generation, and pollution concentrations while improving human health and reducing adaptation costs related to environmental damages, health care, infrastructure, agriculture, freshwater, and marine ecosystems.

Q&A Session

A representative from Kazakhstan's CSD Center inquired where participants can access the methodology used in calculating the waste-related SDG indicators.

UNEP highlighted their efforts in preparing and publishing the Global Chemicals and Waste Indicator Review Document (<https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/36753>) that include the methodologies to calculate the respective waste-related SDG indicators. The report 'Understanding the State of the Ocean' (<https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/35086>)



was published in February 2021 and contains the methodologies for SDG indicators related to marine, of which 14.1.1 on plastic debris density.

A representative from Armenia's Armstat highlighted that the Eastern European Countries United Nations University (UNU) suggested a methodology for calculating e-waste, based on the electronic products imported and exported and not waste, and inquired whether it has been compared to the standardized methodology of calculating waste.

UNEP worked with UNU during workshops on e-waste. The methodology uses level I data (estimated data) and level II data. If level I data does not exist, data is estimated based on activities such as trade. For standardization, non-estimated data on e-waste is collected directly from countries to ensure accuracy, through the distribution of the UNSD/UNEP waste questionnaire every two years.

Session 3: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION: DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY IMPORTANCE

Dany Ghafari presented the twelve SCP SDG indicators (7.3.1, 8.4.1/12.2.1, 8.4.2/12.2.2, 12.1.1, 12.3.1.b, 12.5.1, 12.6.1, 12.7.1, 12.c.1 and 17.7.1). A high-level overview of the internationally adopted methodology and the level of data available for each indicator were highlighted. He further pointed out that the three main objectives of SCP are to decouple environmental degradation from economic growth, to apply life-cycle thinking, and to seize opportunities for developing countries.

Therese El Gemayel, Programme Management Officer, Science Division, UNEP gave a presentation on the relevance of the twelve SCP SDG indicators to sound policy-making. The presentation highlighted the importance of SCP in transitioning to circular economy, which aims at keeping products, materials, and resources within the economy for as long as possible. She also provided examples of how these indicators could be used in developing national policies.

Session 4: SDG POLICY COHERENCE

Hyun Sung, Programme Management Officer, Law Division, UNEP presented a comprehensive summary on policy coherence in the SDG context. The presentation highlighted the methodology of SDG indicator 17.14.1: Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development. She emphasized the importance of institutionalization of political commitment to ensure the achievements of the objectives of policy coherence. She presented steps taken by various countries such as Finland, Bangladesh, and Burkina Faso in ensuring proper monitoring, reporting, and financing towards policy coherence.

Day 2, Wednesday 08 December 2021, 10:00 – 13:00 EAT

Session 5: DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS

Llorenç Milà I Canals, Programme Management Officer, Life Cycle Initiative, UNEP gave a presentation on the SCP Hotspots Analysis Tool (SCP-HAT) (<http://scp->



hat.lifecycleinitiative.org/), which is an online tool to provide science-based support on key areas in the economy that are driving unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and therefore generate more impacts (hotspot-areas). The tool is based on a multi-regional input-output model and highlights two perspectives: Domestic production and consumption footprint. It is not targeted at providing reporting but can help set priorities and can be used to inform in policy areas such as resource efficiency and climate action. The presentation was concluded with a live demonstration of the SCP-HAT tool and selected one country as an example to analyze decoupling of the economy from material use.

Q&A session

A representative of Croatia's Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development inquired where users of the SCP-HAT can access the necessary data and what data sources were used.

The data used in the tool is compiled on the website under 'Technical documentation' (http://scp-hat.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/SCP-HAT-2.0_Technical-documentation_Oct2021_final02.pdf) and under the 'Methods & Data' tab (<http://scp-hat.lifecycleinitiative.org/methods/>). Data is collected and compiled from different databases depending on environmental pressures such as land use, air pollution, etc. A specialist on water from the Kazakhstan's CSD Center stated that water use, energy use, and water pollution could not be found under 'Country Profile'.

Llorenc explained that he was showcasing the beta version of the SCP-Hat, which is intended to go live in a few days. So the link that participants were using was the first version of the tool and the new information will be available shortly.

Sofie Clausen, Monitoring and Reporting Analyst, One Planet Network, UNEP presented the SDG 12 Hub (<https://sdg12hub.org/>), which is a one-stop-shop for progress on SDG 12. It is the result of a UN inter-agency collaboration for more coherence across SDG indicators and aims to raise the profile of SDG 12 and encourage its implementation, streamline, and simplify reporting processes for member states, and inform voluntary national reviews and policy interventions. Links to other platforms and initiatives that are of help in the implementation of SDG were also provided. In 2022, a dynamic country report and toolboxes to support member states and UN Country Teams in implementing SDG 12 will be introduced. The presentation concluded with a live demonstration of the SDG 12 Hub.

Q&A session

A representative of Austria's E-Control inquired about who is considered as national contact or actor, which are expected to report on the SDG 12 Hub.

Sofie explained that there are plans to add an overview of national focal points to contact when data is not publicly available in the future. However, this can be different for each indicator –



some are very scientific and statistical and data will be requested officially by UNEP or other custodian agencies, while others are more qualitative, such as 12.1.1 and 12.7.1, and ministries will be national focal points. On data visualizations, data sources are displayed, whether originating from ministries, national statistical offices (NSOs), or estimated.

The representative of Austria's E-Control further inquired about the possibility of having national contact persons for measurement gaps.

UNEP highlighted that the SDG 12 Hub is a first step to coordinate between countries. UNEP connects with NSOs and encourages them to nominate focal points, and sometimes they are also nominated by various line ministries. UNEP also sends a request for the ministry of foreign affairs that circulates the information. In some countries, there are SDG focal points with whom UNEP mainly connects, which are responsible for the internal communication and are in contact with all relevant agencies. In other countries, separate focal points for different indicators exist.

Session 6: WORKING GROUPS

This session focused on having moderated working groups with the objectives of discussing challenges faced by data producers and data users in the respective countries, as well as opportunities to improve the current situation. The moderators guided the discussions with a set of questions that focused on encouraging countries' representatives to share their experiences. The main discussion points were then collected and disseminated to representatives through an online whiteboard tool, "Mural", and are presented in Annex III.

Day 3, Thursday 09 December 2021, 10:00 – 13:00 EAT

Session 6 continued: WORKING GROUPS

Countries' representatives were presented with a summary of Day 2 discussions and continued to discuss the implementation of a framework for collaboration at the national level, where all stakeholders might be involved, its structure, and its objectives. The findings of the discussions were also introduced on Mural and are presented in Annex III.

Session 7: WORKING GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Judy Ngungi, Intern, Science Division, UNEP presented the findings of the Group 1 discussion. One of the most significant challenges faced by data producers is the lack of sufficient human capacity, with some environmental departments having a limited number of staff. Additionally, data from different institutions is not aligned, while different methodologies for certain environmental indicators need to be harmonized to ensure quality data is collected. Emerging of new environmental topics makes data availability in all the topics difficult.

In terms of opportunities, close collaboration between data producers, both local and international, and users needs to be advocated to ensure quality data is made available. The



methodologies used at national level need to be unified while improving technical capacity. Legislations need to be implemented and enforced with the aim of securing data and its privacy.

Participants discussed the potential of a collaboration framework to advance environment statistics. Setting up a circular economy board is considered a great step in ensuring a smooth transition to circular economy. Developing accessible websites/platforms with easily available data needs collaboration between statistical offices and ministries.

Ekaterina Poleshchuk presented the findings of the Group 2 discussion. Statistical data for some of the SDG indicators are unavailable. A lack of consistent methodologies used at the national level to calculate some of the indicators has been highlighted, and global methodologies need more clarifications and explanations. Data collection for the generation and disposal of different types of waste is not easily available. In Armenia for example, organizations that recycle waste exist, but the data is not available/transmitted to the National Statistical Office. Not all respondents who have available data are covered by statistical reporting, while the data quality needs further refinement. Furthermore, capacity building for data users on how to use different open data tools is needed. Lastly, data reporting frequency should be increased from annually to monthly. Additionally, further data disaggregation is needed for targeted policy-making.

The enhancement of dialogue between data producers and data users poses an opportunity for closer collaboration, especially for organizations that produce analytical reports. Furthermore, the use of internationally agreed classifications facilitates data collection. International organizations should be transparent in sharing information on data collection and validation, and data tools should be available in different languages. There is a need for capacity building on data collection, and on how to adopt international methodologies at the national level. Finally, it was highlighted that online meetings create an opportunity for many people to join discussions, but that a balance needs to be found between online and face-to-face meetings.

Communication between state organizations, NGOs, academia, and other stakeholders should be established, with possible rules and agreements between national organizations. The communication could take place within a national network, which should be open-source for the information to be easily accessible. A framework for collaboration could also include the exchange of experience and information between countries.

Ralf Heidrich summarized the main highlights of the discussions. In general, many of the challenges in data collection were related to a lack of certain capacities, may that be technical, financial or human capacity. Participants also stressed the importance of data disaggregation for sound environmental accounting but also sound, targeted, and inclusive policy-making. It was evident in both groups that further capacity building in understanding the SDG methodologies and indicators is necessary. Human capacity in terms of skilled and trained personnel remains a challenge for most participating countries. However, most stringent seemed to be the need for harmonized methodologies, definitions, and data collection processes. This also includes the need for closer coordination and collaboration among different governmental institutions to avoid double-reporting, collection and additional workload.

Enhancing interoperability among different stakeholders could solve this issue. Some issues were very specific. Participants mentioned that data on municipal waste collection is available, but data on waste generation is not.

Data users on the other hand seemed to face challenges related to the quality of available data or sometimes even lack certain environmental data or experience for relatively new environmental topics such as SCP. A lack of human capacity to adequately present and prepare data for end-users is a fundamental problem that also includes training on how to make use of open-source data. Data disaggregation is also essential for data users for sound and targeted policymaking. Lastly, closer collaboration between data producers and data users is needed to fine-tune data quality and match data production with data users demands.

Participants mentioned several times that an opportunity most evident seemed to be improving stakeholder collaboration to ensure sound data collection and data sharing. The benefits of technical training or capacity building dedicated to SDGs and data reporting were also mentioned. In a similar vein, collaborating and working together with other international support systems will improve data collection on national levels. Participants stressed the importance of transparency of international organizations to share information on data collection and validation. As a last point for the opportunities, internationally agreed statistical classifications provide an opportunity for closer collaboration but also for a higher quality of data and comparability.

The discussions also dived more into a specific framework that can be used for collaboration among various national institutions to enhance the quality and quantity of data collection, but also data sharing. Participants stressed that the communication between state organizations, international organizations, NGOs, academia, and other stakeholders may act as a vehicle for improved data reporting and quality.

In Croatia, SCP indicators and waste data collection is done by two different Regional Statistical Offices and the communication seems to work well which proves as a good base for meaningful collaboration. Additionally, a circular economy board that covers employees from various institutions was implemented recently. Lastly, an online platform that covers various indicators related to circular economy, waste, energy and SCP is under development.

In Georgia, inter-ministerial communication is already in place, however, the communication and frequency of exchanging information could be improved. A collaborative website is being developed to enhance communication and coordination among the different stakeholders.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the statistical office is responsible for collecting and disseminating environmental data. Collaboration among statistical offices is good, however, there seem to be many different environmental institutions with no official exchange of information between the ministries. A framework for collaboration exists but closer partnership and capacity building is necessary. It is promising that some data for SCP already exists.

Participants mentioned that a framework for collaboration could include rules/agreements between national organizations and institutions but it could also include countries' experiences and hence knowledge exchange on how the collaboration is organized in different countries. Different players (for example data users and producers from NGOs, academia, businesses, ministries) need to be identified to form national networks for communication and exchange within countries and with international organizations. More specifically, focal points, requested by international organizations, need to seize the opportunity to collaborate between organizations to enhance knowledge and communication flows. Finally, the sound collection and sharing of data is the basis for informed and targeted policymaking.

Therese El Gemayel presented the main recommendations and action plans based on the outcomes of the working group discussions. She pointed out that individuals at the national level do a lot of effort to have access to data that is available in other national institutions, hence explored the possibility of having a national shared data system between institutions. Furthermore, participants voiced their concerns about having different statistics for the same indicators, and there is a need to enhance the alignment between international and national methodologies. These challenges can be dealt with by receiving assistance in unifying national and international methodologies. It is, however, the NSOs decision to identify the applicability of international methodologies and to adopt them. She also pointed out that the technical skills to develop new indicators within the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda need to be strengthened.

Finally, she highlighted UNEP's willingness in assisting Member States in capacity building. She advised countries that would like to receive capacity building to send an official request. Capacity building requests concerning the 25 environment-related SDG indicators under UNEP custodianship can be directed to UNEP, using the following email address: unep-science-sdgs@un.org. UNEP will then coordinate with the respective UNEP regional office and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) to agree with the country on the best-targeted approach to enhance the needed capacities. She also advised about directing requests for other SDG indicators to the respective custodian agencies, which can be found on the following link: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>

In terms of immediate needs, she pinpointed the available technical resources that UNEP recently worked or is working on. The Environmental SDG Indicators Online Course, which was launched earlier this year, provides users with 10 modules related to environment statistics. This free, self-paced online training material is accessible on the following link: <https://www.unitar.org/event/full-catalog/environmental-sdg-indicators>

She also advised participants to use the manuals that were developed by UNEP with the purpose of providing detailed information on how to collect data and calculate SDG indicators, specifically the Global Manual on Economy Wide Material Flow Accounting (<https://wedocs.unep.org/xmlui/handle/20.500.11822/36253>), and the Global Chemicals and Waste Indicators Review Document (<https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/36753>).

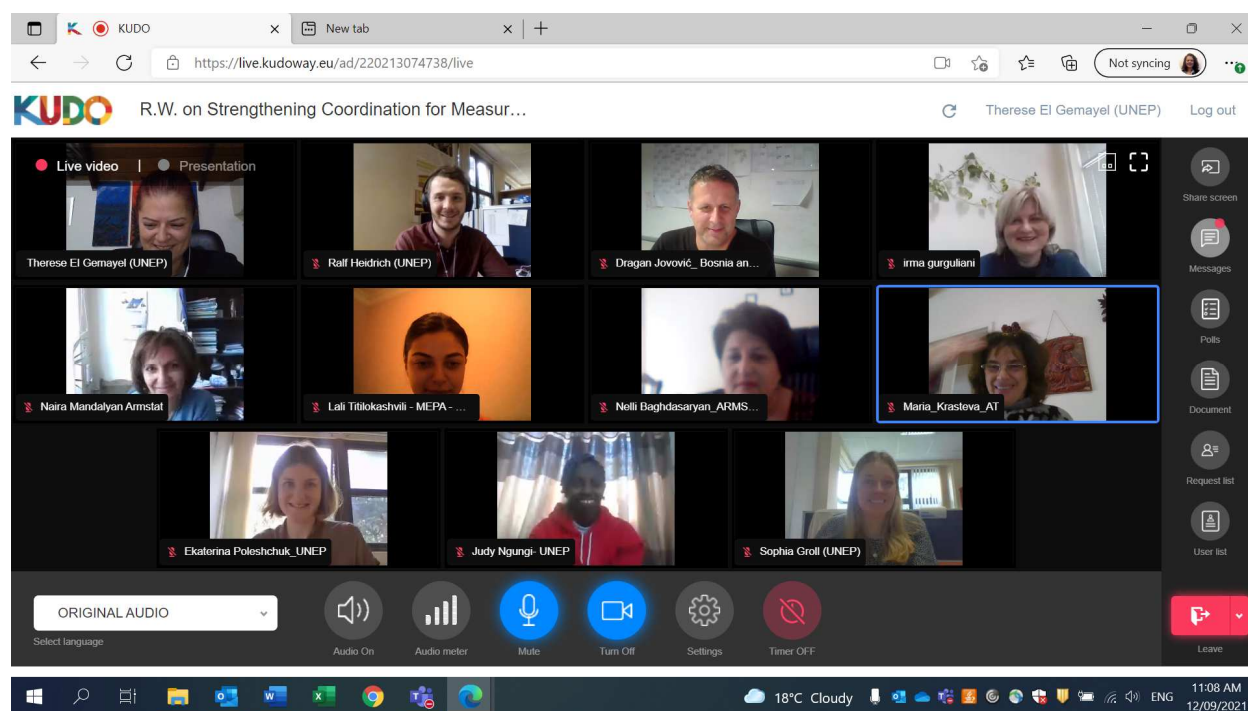


Q&A session

A representative from the Kazakhstan's CSD Center stated that they are interested in the initiation of a regional project on SDGs in Central Asia, as there are no representatives of other countries in Central Asia present in the workshop.

As Kazakhstan is a beneficiary country from Central Asia in the current EC project, it was pointed out that unfortunately not much of an opportunity currently exist to add more countries to the project. However, countries are encouraged to inform UNEP Europe Office of their interest in taking part in future projects.

Therese El Gemayel closed the workshop by thanking the representatives of the different countries and the presenters for their participation and the fruitful discussions. She also encouraged countries' representatives to fill the evaluation of the workshop that was sent after the workshop. A group photo was taken prior to closing of the sub-regional workshop.



Workshop evaluation

A total of 14 participants filled in the evaluation form of the workshop. 92.9% of participants evaluated the overall value of the workshop as excellent or good, and 85.7% rated excellent or good the extent to which the workshop objectives were reached. All respondents viewed the quality of material shared as excellent or good, and 92.9% of the respondents assessed the quality of the presentations to be excellent or good. 85.7% of respondents stated that the balance between discussed topics was excellent or good, and 92.9% stated that the clarity of the conclusions reached was excellent or good.

In terms of workshop organization, all respondents assessed the planning and organization of the workshop as excellent or good, while 92.9% rated the format of the workshop as excellent or good. All participants rated the video conferencing tool as excellent or good and 85.7% of the respondents considered the registration procedure as excellent and good. Lastly, 92.9% rated the timely distribution of materials as excellent.



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Annex II - Workshop Agenda

Tuesday 7 December 2021	
SESSION 1	OPENING AND INTRODUCTION
10:00 – 10:20	Welcome and opening addresses Tomas Marques, Programme Management Officer, European Regional Office, UNEP Project Overview and activities Ralf Heidrich, Associate Programme Manager, UNEP
SESSION 2	WASTE SDG INDICATORS: DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY IMPORTANCE
10:20 – 11:15	Sustainable Development Goals Waste Indicators, Methodologies, and data availability (Dany Ghafari, UNEP) Waste SDG Indicators – Policy importance (Dany Ghafari, UNEP) Q&A
11:15 – 11:20	BREAK
SESSION 3	SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION: DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY IMPORTANCE
11:20 – 12:30	SCP SDG Indicators, Methodologies, and data availability (Dany Ghafari, UNEP) SCP SDG Indicators – Policy importance (Therese El Gemayel, UNEP) Q&A
SESSION 4	SDG POLICY COHERENCE
12:30 – 12:55	Policy coherence in the SDG context (Hyun Sung, UNEP) Q&A
12:55 – 13:00	CLOSING OF DAY 1



Wednesday 8 December 2021	
SESSION 5	DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS
10:00 – 11:10	SCP-Hat (Llorenç Milà I Canals, UNEP) Q&A SDG 12 Hub (Sofie Clausen, UNEP) Q&A
11:10 – 11:15	BREAK
SESSION 6	WORKING GROUPS
11:10 – 12:55	<i>Moderated working groups</i>
12:55 – 13:00	CLOSING OF DAY 2

Thursday 9 December 2021	
SESSION 6 - <i>continued</i>	WORKING GROUPS
10:00 – 11:10	<i>Moderated working groups</i>
11:10 – 11:15	BREAK
SESSION 7	WORKING GROUPS PRESENTATIONS
11:15 – 12:15	<i>Presentations of each working group</i>
12:15 – 12:45	Main Recommendations and Action Plans
12:45 – 13:00	CLOSING OF WORKSHOP

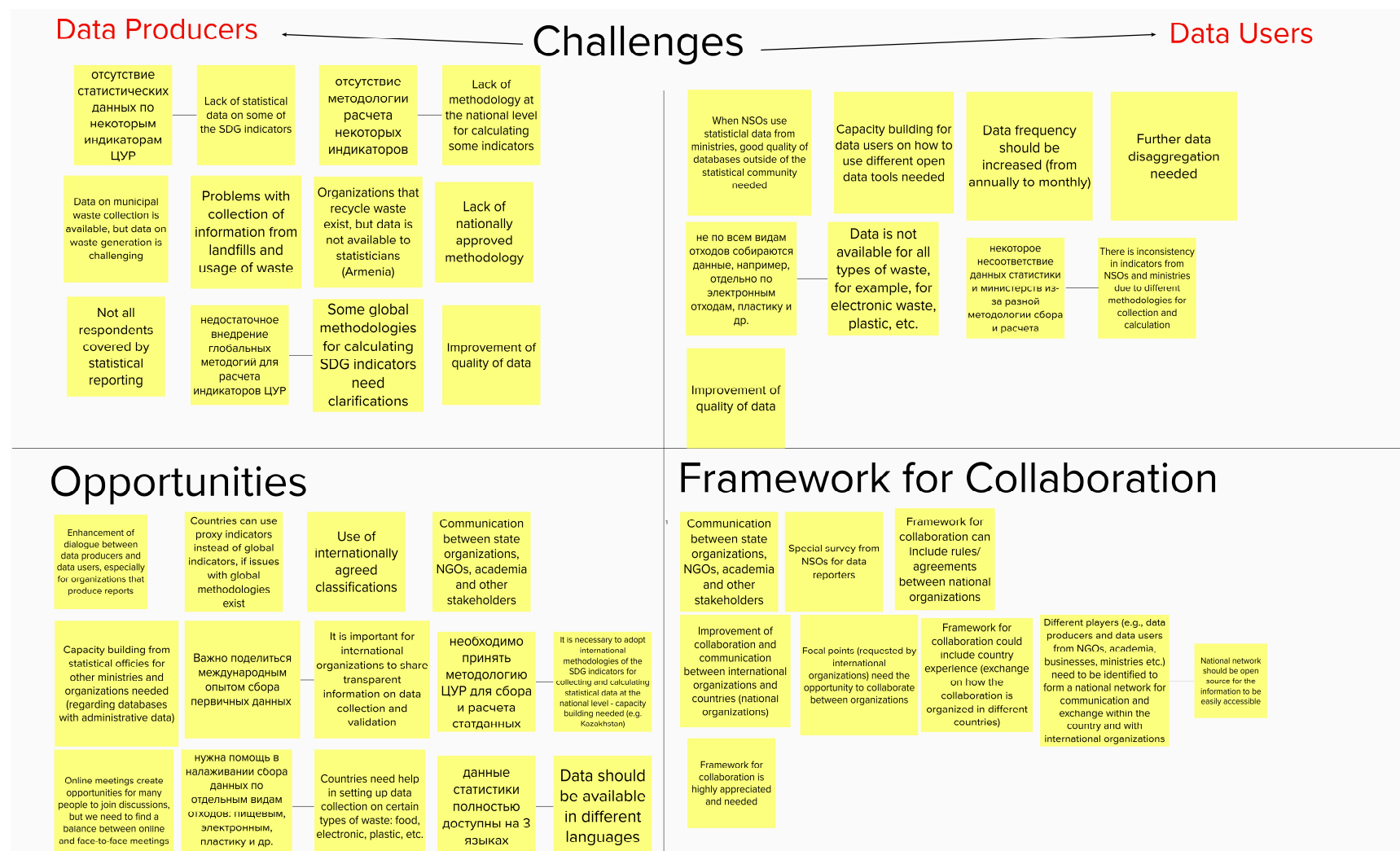


Annex III - Working Groups Discussion Outcomes (Mural)

Group 1 discussion points



Group 2 discussion points



With financial support from the Programme Cooperation Agreement between the European Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)



Annex IV – Detailed Evaluation Responses

1. Content and conduct of the workshop

Questions / Options	Excellent	Good	Fairly good	Unsatisfactory	Not applicable
Quality of material	9	5	0	0	0
Quality of presentations	10	3	1	0	0
Adequate time for discussion and participation	9	4	1	0	0
Balance between topics	10	2	2	0	
Clarity of conclusions reached	8	5	1	0	0
Extent to which workshop objectives were reached	9	3	2	0	0
Overall value of the workshop	9	4	1	0	0

2. Comments or suggestions on the content and conduct of presentation

- It was interesting. Sometimes the connection was interrupted, but this did not affect the quality of the seminar.
- Presentation content consistent with the theme of the Regional Workshop

3. Comments or suggestions on the content and conduct of break-out rooms

- Regular seminar with the opportunity to ask questions on a topic of interest
- technical problems with microphone, obviously some settings in app are not user friendly
- it was very interesting and useful



4. Organization of the workshop

Questions / Options	Excellent	Good	Fairly good	Unsatisfactory	Not applicable
Timeliness distribution of materials	10	3	1	0	0
Registration procedures	10	2	2	0	0
Duration of each session	10	2	2	0	0
Video conferencing tool	10	4	0	0	0
Format of the workshop	9	4	1	0	0
Overall planning and organization of the workshop	8	6	0	0	0

5. Comments or suggestions on the organization of the workshop

- The organization and conduct of the workshop was top notch
- There were not so many participants. Next time CSD Center would like to help you to collect more
- Better communication of the workshop timing and organization

6. Additional comments

- I liked very much that all the presentations (materials for the seminar) were sent to the participants. I was also glad to hear about the opportunity to study online.