Statistics SWEDEN ACTION





SDGs in action



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Statistics IN ACTION

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ACTION

MONITORING THE SDGS presupposes robust and capable National Statistical Institutes and National Statistical Systems. Statistics Sweden supports the development of statistical capacity throughout the world, with a particular focus on SDG targets 17.18 and 17.19 on data, monitoring and accountability.

This issue of Statistics in action shows some snapshots of our partnerships and connections to various SDGs.

However, Statistics Sweden can do more to contribute to SDG monitoring. In connection with the recent IAEG-SDG meeting in November last year (see pages 8–9), Statistics Sweden brought together representatives from partner agencies around the world to look further into this issue. An impressive group, including a number of Directors General, met for a one-day workshop.

The conclusion of the workshop discussions was that there are common challenges, such as capacity development of new statistical stakeholders, metadata and the widening of the statistical community, budget constraints and the coordinating role of NSIs. We see this meeting as a starting point for a process of learning from one another.

Since I took up the position as head of International Cooperation Office in February last year, I have had the opportunity to engage directly with the global statistical community at, for instance, the UN Statistical Commission meeting and the UN World Data Forum. Statistics Sweden has actively hosted and co-hosted sessions and events together with other development partners and our project partners. Themes have included building strong national statistical systems based on register data, capacity development and coordination, and innovative approaches to capacity development. What stands out at these events is that Statistics Sweden lies at the forefront of statistical capacity development.

One success factor in our efforts is how we share our expertise in a peer-to-peer model that builds on devoted Statistics Sweden staff. Much of this devotion is based on the insight that Statistics Sweden, as an institution, learns and develops from working with our partners globally (see article on Statistics Sweden DG Joakim Stymne on page 7).

Last year, the Swedish Government decided on a 'Strategy for capacity development, partnership and methods that support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. This strengthens Sweden's role as a global enabler of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Statistics Sweden remains committed to contributing to this endeavor and in playing its part to make progress towards the SDG agenda.



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Training and networking for gender equality

Achieving gender equality is one of the key cross-cutting issues in the Agenda 2030, as well as having an entire dedicated goal, SDG 5, with some six targets to be achieved.



From the right: Chum Puthivan (NIS), Kem Keothyda (Parlament Institute of Cambodia), Thak Socheat (CWCC), Yit Viriya (NIS), Johan Tollebrandt (Statistics Sweden)

TO HELP IMPROVE gender equality across the world, Statistics Sweden offers a training programme in gender statistics, which provides participants with a new outlook and tools to further examine data and identify gender gaps, the International Training Programme (ITP) in gender statistics. Here is some of the feedback received from participants in the programme.

"Before attending the ITP, we were communicating all statistics indiscriminately, without paying attention to how these statistics impacted women and not highlighting gender gaps that are present in our society. Going forward, in communicating statistics, we can point out the gaps and propose how they can be corrected", says Ivan Mafigiri Kanyeheyo, Information Officer at the Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

One of the exercises in the programme includes establishing a network of various actors to secure continued cooperation between users and producers of statistics. In Tanzania, the "Network for Gender Equality Statistics Tanzania Chapter", a registered national network for gender statistics, was set up inspired by the National Bureau of Statistics' participation in the ITP. The network's stated purpose is to continue to strengthen capacity in order to build Tanzania's ability to produce gender statistics.

This type of network facilitates cooperation between users and producers of statistics, and connects the participating organisations with a large number of stakeholders.

Vit Viriya, Bureau Chief at the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) in Cambodia, points to the Sustainable Development Goals as a motivator at government level. In this light, capacity developed in NIS after participating in the ITP becomes highly relevant. "Currently, Gender Statistics plays a very important role in the line Ministries. They are very eager to add gender statistics indicators, and to produce more comprehensive data for user needs in their Gender Equality Plans. Gender Statistics indicators, in particular, are essential for following up the sustainable development goals in the 2030 Agenda."

The last stage of the programme includes the task of communicating the results of change projects as a statistical product. This can take the form of training materials, or a booklet with disaggregated statistics for women and men, which allows for broader analysis of gender equality issues. This stage also emphasises communication methods that highlight the statistics in national media, in order underscore these issues, and engage policy-makers. In Cambodia, for example, the launch of the booklet "Women and Men in Cambodia – Facts and figures 2018" in April 2018, attracted a large audience of policymakers, stakeholders and three TV channels.

With support from Statistics Sweden, knowledge of gender statistics, and communication and management skills, ITP participants can help bridge the gap between men and women in Sweden's partner countries, leading to more equal societies – a priority in Swedish development cooperation for many years. Martin Hansen

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The International Training Programme in Gender Statistics runs in the period 2016–2021. The aim of the programme is to develop capacity and develop methodology around gender statistics. Mentors come primarily from Statistics Sweden, and there are also lecturers from other Swedish government agencies and organisations, as well as international organisations such as the UN. Participating countries in the current programme are Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Palestine and Bangladesh. Countries invited to apply for the programme in 2019 are Cambodia, Myanmar, Zambia, Liberia and Ethiopia.



Georgia on my mind

In June 2018, the cooperation project between Statistics Sweden and Geostat was finalised after seven years. The project has been very fruitful and it is safe to say that Geostat has improved its capacity to develop and produce quality statistics. This is important for the ability to produce and disseminate statistics in all SDG areas. The project focused in particular on Sustainable Development Goals related to environmental statistics and gender equality. This is particularly apparent in Georgia's ability to report on its progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals



THE NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE of Georgia, Geostat, produces official statistics and coordinates the national statistical system in Georgia. Geostat's headquarters are located in the capital, Tbilisi, with several regional offices around the country taking care of much of the data collection.

The cooperation project with Statistics Sweden started in May 2011, and was initiated by the then Executive Director Zaza Chelidze. The objectives

"A key factor for the successful outcome the ambitious and dedicated staff of Geostat."

of the project were to help improve the competence of the staff at Geostat and to develop of the project was the overall functioning of Geostat. In the second phase, which started in 2015, the objective was broadened with an increased focus on producing statistics in line with the EU and

> international standards. During the last two years of the project, the SDGs also palyed an important role.

> The project has, on the whole, delivered results in line with the overall objectives and Geostat is now ready to continue its journey without support from Sweden. A key factor in the successful outcome of the project was the ambitious and

dedicated staff of Geostat, who worked hard to achieve good results and to learn from the Swedish experts. Another positive factor has been the flexibility in steering the project, which meant that, faced with new circumstances, it was possible to adjust the direction of the project to adapt to the current situation.

Increased focus on quality assurance

The project has supported the establishment of a new subdivision with responsibility for methodology and quality at Geostat. Thanks to the subdivision's hard work, the awareness of and focus on quality has increased substantially. A Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) has been implemented that provides guidance and evidence for the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice when developing, producing and disseminating statistics.

This subdivision is also responsible for the SDG indicators. As the main authority that produces official statistics, and as the coordinator of the national statistical system, Geostat plays a key role in monitoring the implementation of SDGs in Georgia. The SDGs are relevant for all areas



covered by the project and have influenced the development of new statistics, not least within environmental and gender statistics.

Gender equality on the agenda

Gender statistics (measuring SDG 5 Gender equality) was not initially included in the project, but was introduced in 2014 and subsequently became one of the key components of the project. The primary goal has been to remake the booklet "Women and Men in Georgia" with new indicators and improved approaches to presenting gender

statistics. This development has been successful and two editions of the redesigned booklet have been published, with a large number of a new user-friendly

"Awareness of Geostat's work on *gender statistics* has increased and gender-related issues have been new indicators and more highlighted."

layout. Gender statistics have been promoted, in order to increase usage and to put gender equality on the national agenda. Interest in gender equality has increased in Georgia, and there was great interest from media and other users when Geostat published its booklet in 2015 and in 2017. In recent years, a number of gender seminars have also been organised, with participants from the parliament, several ministries, NGOs and media.

One could definitely say that awareness of Geostat's work on gender statistics has increased and gender-related issues have been more highlighted in Georgia.

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Environmental statistics the Malian way

During a chilly week in November last year, a delegation from Mali visited Statistics Sweden, the Swedish Environmental Research Institute and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences for assistance in producing statistics on emissions to air from various sectors.

In order to meet the demands for environmental data needed to follow up the many environment-related goals in the 2030 Agenda, many countries are starting to develop their systems for environment statistics. As many as six of the Sustainable Development Goals have a focus on various aspects of the environment (see SDGs 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15).

In Mali, just as in Sweden, statistics on emissions to air are produced by various different institutions. This is why the delegation included representatives of the National Institute of Statistics, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture.

During their five-day working visit, the delegation reviewed the international standard on emissions statistics and examined the level of compliance in existing Malian data material. Issues that were discussed included other data sources and how to design indicators based on data from different sources. Next in line is a mission on emissions to air from the waste sector that will take place in mid-2019.

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The success story of Somali price statistics

As specified in SDG Targets 17.18 and 17.19, capacity-development support to the least developed countries is a priority. Since 2016, Statistics Sweden has had a three-year cooperation project with two Somali statistical departments and a directorate: the Directorate of National Statistics (DNS) in the Federal government of Somalia, the Central Statistics Department (CSD) in Somaliland and the Puntland Statistical Department (PSD) in Puntland state of Somalia.



Data collection for the CPI

THE PROJECT'S MAIN OBJECTIVE is to strengthen the statistical capacity in the country, with the aim of facilitating decisionmakers' awareness, understanding and trust in statistical data. The project specifically supports improved production of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), improved quality of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), production of gender statistics, the analysis of social statistics, as well as the process of making all these statistics accessible for all users. The project touches upon many of the SDGs, such as Goal 5 and Goal 8. Statistics Sweden also supports improved management of the statistical departments.

Have the goals been achieved? The answer, given by Somali partners, the external and independent evaluation, and other statistical users, is "yes". One prominent area with successful results is the production and improvement of the CPI.

The Somali CPI has been produced regularly for the past 15 years. Before the start of this project, the African Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund provided various kinds of support to the DNS, the CSD and the PSD to improve the quality of the CPI. So the essential knowledge was already available to the departments. Nevertheless, support was still needed to increase knowledge among the staff and to improve compliance with international standards.

Statistics Sweden supported a review of previous CPI publications, the introduction of new price weights, and the development of a CPI manual for the three statistical directorate/ departments. New publication templates were also developed and, most importantly, the entire CPI series from the past five to six years was recalculated, especially for the DNS and the PSD, using new weights from last year's household survey, the High Frequency Survey, wave 1.

Now, Somali statistics departments proudly publish monthly, quality-reviewed CPIs that comply with international standards, and in the near future, steps will also be taken to improve the entire production process, from the data collection phase to the publication of final results.

For more information, see the latest CPI publications from DNS, PSD and CSD on the websites below:

- http://www.dns.org.so/
- http://pl.statistics.so/
- http://www.somalilandcsd.org/

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Teaming up with a third party – study visit by a Somali delegation to the Statistical Institute of Turkey (TurkStat)

A HIGH-LEVEL STUDY VISIT was made by a Somali delegation to the Statistical Institute of Turkey (TurkStat) from 17 to 20 September 2018 with the support of Statistics Sweden. The delegation included representatives from the Directorate of National Statistics of the Federal Government of Somalia and from the Puntland Statistical Departments.

The study visit was rich in experience and provided inspiration for the Somali statistical authorities on how to effectively organise and manage the different Somali statistical departments.

The study visit focused on TurkStat's management set-up, statistical production and coordination processes as well as communication and dissemination.



The Turkish experience shows that it takes a lot of time and work, but also that the necessary human, material and organisational resources must be put in place to build a national statistical production system that is efficient and meets the needs of users.

The study visit also offered an opportunity to discuss the potential involvement of TurkStat in the upcoming second project phase. Jean-Pierre Ntezimana jean-pierre.ntezimana@scb.se

Director General Joakim Stymne in Kenya and Somalia

IN JUNE 2018, Statistics Sweden's General Director Joakim Stymne visited Kenya and Somalia as part of an ongoing cooperation. In addition to meeting with direct partners – the Directorate of National Statistics in Somalia and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics – he also met with other actors in the National Statistical Systems, including users like civil society and media. Here, he shares some of his impressions from the visit.

"My first spontaneous impression is how much benefit we are providing through our institutional cooperation. The fact that we help bring about results is indisputable, and our Statistics Sweden staff, both long-term and short-term experts, are tremendously appreciated by our partners. It was also clear that we are much appreciated by the Swedish embassy – both the Kenya and Somalia sections – as a government agency providing Swedish development cooperation.

Another impression was how taking part in our development cooperation, besides contributing to societal benefits in other countries, also contributed to capacity development among our staff. Taking part in



Director Stymne in newspaper interview in Somalia

development cooperation exposes you more broadly to Statistics Sweden's operations, and cooperating with and training colleagues in developing countries helps you hone your own skills and offers new unique impressions and experiences.

I believe such experiences make you better equipped to have an overall perspective on Statistics Sweden's operations once you return home, and boosts your capacity for some excellent work."

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A week in Stockholm – IAEG-SDG from the inside

Viveka Palm from Statistics Sweden represents Sweden in the IAEG SDG. As of 2019, Sweden will co-chair the IAEG-SDG together with Tanzania. Below, Viveka gives her reflections on the global follow-up.



In the panel: Heather Page and Francesca Perucci, UNSD, Enrique Ordaz Lopez, INEGI, Mexico, Angela Me, UNODC

IN NOVEMBER, Statistics Sweden co-hosted the 8th meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG). The meeting was co-hosted together with the UNSD and Sida.

One of the main aims of the group is to ensure that the follow-up process is underpinned by some national statistics. This will enable countries to be in the driver's seat of development and follow up.

Discussing definition and method maturity

An important item on the meeting agenda was to discuss which indicators are ready for use. Once the indicators are defined and adequately transparent they can be applied. Once indicators can be calculated in a sufficient number of countries, they can be used in a global follow-up.

Working groups for tricky issues

The goals are inter-connected in many ways and expressing this with statistical analyses is still a work in progress.

The Working Group on Interlinkages presented its first findings at the meeting and showed some examples of such analyses. That work will continue and go more into depth.

There are separate working groups to address other areas that also need more attention. One group describes best practices on how geospatial data can combine with statistics to produce some of the indicators. Another group discusses how the follow-up can identify data to represent vulnerable groups to meet the pledge of leaving no one behind.

2020 overview

The process of the 2020 overview of the indicator system was discussed and some criteria were proposed. In 2019, the group will assess the system to review any need for improvements. No major changes are expected. The purpose of this overview is to take stock of what we have learned so far during implementation. There are still goals with no indicators, notably the climate goal, as the targets under that goal are fairly difficult to follow up. However, there will be other opportunites to address that goal.

Who was there?

The IAEG-SDG includes statisticians from 28 countries. At the meeting, the group also welcomed a large number of observers and cooperating organisations. Roughly 80 countries, 60 international organisations and 20 civil society organisations, as well as researchers, teamed up to advance the 2030 Agenda followup. Thanks to financing from Sida and a very dedicated team, the meeting was an excellent opportunity to exchange more knowledge on how efforts to implement indicators was progressing.

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Reflections from the IAEG-SDG Working Group on Geospatial information

THE 2030 AGENDA pledges to leave no one behind. When applying this pledge to a geographic location, it is important to be able to show, for example, how the situation of people living in cities differs from that of people living in rural areas. This challenge can be resolved by asking questions in traditional sample surveys. However, a more cost-effective way to link people to a place is to build on the integration of existing statistical and geospatial data sources.

More and more countries are using a flexible approach for setting up statistical production in the integration of statistical/administrative data with geospatial data. This makes it possible to monitor accessibility more accurately, whether it is access to green space, all-season roads or public transport. The United Nations provides a global framework on statistical and geospatial integration, developed under the UN Global Geospatial Information Management, which countries are starting to implement.

Many indicators also describe the condition of the planet: land degradation, water resources and forests. Some of the data for these indicators comes from various global reporting mechanisms, but countries are also starting to use Earth Observations to monitor national conditions. These questions and more will be discussed when the group holds its meetings in 2019.

Marie Haldorson

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2030 Agenda – Swedish perspectives

WHEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the governments of the Member States of the United Nations committed to take bold and transformative steps that are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path.

At the same time, they committed to assuming the primary responsibility for the follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels, in relation to the progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets over the coming 15 years. This commitment led the Swedish Government to commission Statistics Sweden to propose a structure for the statistical follow-up and review in Sweden.

This assignment, given to Statistics Sweden in February 2017, also included the production of a baseline report to serve as one of the primary inputs for the national voluntary report to be submitted on behalf of Sweden at the High-level Political Forum in mid- 2017.

The final report of the assignment sparked great interest among stakeholders in Sweden and, in June 2018, Statistics Sweden was issued the responsibility of coordinating the development, production and availability of the statistical follow-up of the Swedish 2030 Agenda implementation in a national and global perspective.

Coordination and collaboration are key in a well-managed decentralised statistical system. As responsibility for the necessary data and statistics is distributed among 30 agencies and organisations, a strong coordinating role is required. However, this role also needs to emphasise collaboration, as there are very few tools for authoritative coordination available.

Statistics Sweden is currently in the process of coordinating the statistical follow-up. In a first step, all the relevant stakeholders were invited to a kick-off meeting to discuss common goals, responsibilities and challenges. The aim is that this will lead to greater understanding on what the system can achieve when we work together, looking beyond our individual tasks and responsibilities.

Statistics Sweden looks forward to building a trustful partnership with data producers and users to make a vital contribution toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to maximise and track progress to ensure that no one is left behind.

Sara Frankl, 2030 Agenda coordinator at Statistics Sweden. Cochair of the UN Economic Commission for Europe CES Steering Group on Statistics for SDGs sara.frankl@scb.se In early 2019, Statistics Sweden will embark on a new type of cooperation project, which will focus on improving statistical capacity in the Regional Economic Communities in Africa. This project aims to bring about key improvements in migration statistics across the African continent, and recognizes the key role of regional organisations in accomplishing these changes.

"LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND" is one of the overarching principles underlying the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Nowhere is this principle more apparent than in the area of migration.

Migration is one of the key development perspectives on the African continent today, with more and more countries being affected by significant flows of migrants. However, migrants, and the effects of migration, have not been systematically measured in the past.

At least five of the Sustainable Development Goals touch on migration, making it one of the most cross-cutting issues within the Agenda. Migration is also unique, because it affects a wide variety of domains, such as population development, the economy through remittances and funds, labour markets and exploitation of natural resources, human rights and conflict management. Migration crosses country boundaries and organisational jurisdictions. Policy-makers are recognising that they cannot implement their policies and achieve their goals without a grasp of the current status of migration, and its progression over time. This has led to increased focus on developing migration statistics, in order to make progress in policy implementation, to follow up on these initiatives, and to understand the issues even better.

However, there are any number of challenges when it comes to measuring migration flows. Disparate definitions, data access, the challenge of combining data from different sources, data collection from countries and regions where there is little or no information, and the dissemination of data at national, regional and international level.

To meet these challenges, Statistics Sweden,

the Swedish International Development Agency and the African Union Statistics Unit have discussed how they could help improve the capacity of selected Regional Economic Community organisations to develop regionally harmonised statistics on migration. The proposed project recognizes that Regional Economic Community organisations have an

important role to play in building regional consensus and in helping member states improve their national networks for compiling migration statistics. The project aims to improve and spread knowledge about migration at national and regional level, as



Interview in small enterprise in Kenya.

well as at the international level.

Three on-site advisors will provide support to the selected regions, assisted by local statistical officers to be recruited within the project. At the same time, the project will work to coordinate the various initiatives, and will cooperate closely with other stakeholders such as UN ECA, the IOM and the ILO in its efforts to achieve results.

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The project will focus on

- developing regional and continental capacity;
- establishing guidelines and structures;
- building networks and forums for discussion, and
- identifying new methods, new data sources, new ways of acquiring the data that is needed.

From awareness to action – bilateral partnership with Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

A bilateral cooperation between the national statistical institute in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), and Statistics Sweden will start up in early 2019. The project will directly address Sustainable Development Goals 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15.



Swedish project manager Muhanad Sammar meets with the Director-General of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Dr. Krishna Gayen.

THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE is to enhance access to good quality statistics from BBS to other institutions and the general public, and thus support BBS in its role as the national statistical institute in Bangladesh. With our partnership, we hope to help further strengthen BBS's legitimacy and authority in the national statistical system and, in turn, increase the credibility of and reliance on statistics among the public, as well as awareness of good quality statistics. This may lead more decision-makers in Bangladesh to base their decisions primarily on statistics provided by BBS. Good quality statistics are vital for evidence-based decisionmaking, and can help improve living conditions for people in Bangladesh and further enhance trust in decision-makers and institutions.

This project will focus on three subject matter areas with links to SDGs – gender, labour market and environment, as well as two cross-cutting areas – management and statistical methodology. The project will also involve designing and implementing a communication strategy, with the primary goal of highlighting statistics produced by BBS.

To help prevent information from being shown in a false light and provide ammunition to critics, the project will strive to increase access to metadata. This, in turn, will help build trust in BBS, as hopefully more data users will reach out to BBS for statistics.

To further improve the quality of the statistics and make them more attractive, the project will set up user and donor coordination groups.

Are you interested in statistics, or how to use them in your research? Contact BBS, www.bbs.gov.bd, or the project. Statistics help highlight inequality in the world and hopefully lead to actions to improve, for example, living conditions.

From the experts' point of view

At Statistics Sweden, many employees work not only with their daily tasks, they also take part in short-term missions in our partner countries. This is an intrinsic part of Statistics Sweden's peer-to-peer capacity development model. Here, we hear from three short-term experts about their missions, and why the missions are important.

How does it feel to work as a short-term expert on a project for just one week?

Victoria Granström works at the Register Unit at the Economic Statistics Department, and her main focus lies in business databases and the VAT Register.



Victoria has worked on short-term missions to Albania to contribute her knowledge on the VAT Register. "I have just completed my second mission. There is a sense of adventure in not knowing exactly what is expected of you and in not knowing what is already available and what really needs to be addressed. My first mission was good – it was exciting, even though it was unclear in advance how the week was going to progress. Even if I didn't have any particular expectations, or a clear idea of what was expected of me in the beginning, the mission went very well." Economic Statistics mainly deals with Sustainable Development Goals 8, 9 and 12.

What was the interaction like with the Statistics Sweden representative who had worked on the project for some time? Jerker Moström works on geographical information systems at Urban Management and Tourism, at the Regions and Environment



Department. Jerker's main focus is on geographical analyses and statistics on land use, which sometimes means helping other departments and units on information using coordinates. "It would be incredibly difficult to accomplish the current excellent outcome without a long-term consultant on the ground. In some cases and in some countries, capacity and ideas abound in the country's organisation, which leaves things in the hands of the long-term consultant and their ability to work with the staff in the organisation. In the long run, responsibility regarding personal chemistry lies with the long-term consultant.

The long-term consultant is our bridgehead in a country and an organisation. Without a long-term consultant, many contributions would probably be slow, or pointless. It is also important that the long-term consultant has good timing, social skills and a sensitivity in shaping tasks and the level of ambition for shortterm consultants." Geographical information is important for many indicators across most of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Why do we need more people to work as short-term experts? Thomas Helgesson works at the Population and Welfare Department, at Social Welfare. For the past five years, he has been Product Manager for the Surveys on Living Conditions, and has also been a subject matter expert for the past year. "Previously, I took part in



Statistics Sweden's 2030 Agenda group as a subject matter expert. The SDGs inform more or less all projects, regardless of whether you work on statistics on individuals, health indicators, poverty indicators, or anything else. This makes ICO short-term missions a practical way of contributing to efforts towards achieving the 17 Global Goals."

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