

# Statistical review focusing on the principle of Leaving no one behind

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Statistics Sweden is tasked by the government of Sweden to coordinate the development, production and availability of the statistical follow up of the implementation of 2030 Agenda in Sweden. Within the frame of the assignment Statistics Sweden should to compile an annual statistical review. The first review within this assignment was published in October 2019 (a baseline report was published in April 20127 within a previous assignment).

When signing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, countries committed to make every effort to ensure the agenda is realised for all people, regardless of location, age, income, gender, ethnicity, religion or disability. The complexity of practically implementing the pledge to leave no one behind (LNOB) is often insufficiently acknowledged. This is also true of the compilation of the corresponding statistics in order to measure it.

For this reason, Statistics Sweden has decided to focus the Statistical review 2020 entirely on the principle of leaving no one behind. It was felt that with scarce resources and considering the complexity of the issues, all efforts should be focused on this specific task this year rather than trying to incorporate the principle further into a regular annual statistical review. The work will be carried out by a network of experts at Statistics Sweden that have been active since the spring of 2017. For the purpose of this particular review, a few additional experts have been called on to contribute and a reference group has been established and includes representatives from government agencies and ministries that produce statistics or possess particularly topical subject matter expertise.

The aim of the efforts is twofold; firstly to present a comprehensive overview of the situation for those who are furthest left behind in Swedish society; and secondly to identify sources, break downs and specific indicators that can then be incorporated in the regular statistical reviews in the future.

In order to make sure the report becomes more thematic than the regular annual reporting the report will not be ordered by goals and targets but rather on areas where we have population groups that are at risk of being left behind. The areas are more or less loosely tied to the relevant goals, but some cover only part of the goals while some cover more than one goal.

It was also decided that the focus should be on describing the situation for groups that are already identified as potentially left behind in different dimensions rather than on identifying groups by means of statistical analyses. However, the intent is also to identify, using what is already known, those furthest behind and those that are affected by several of the dimensions of potential vulnerability.

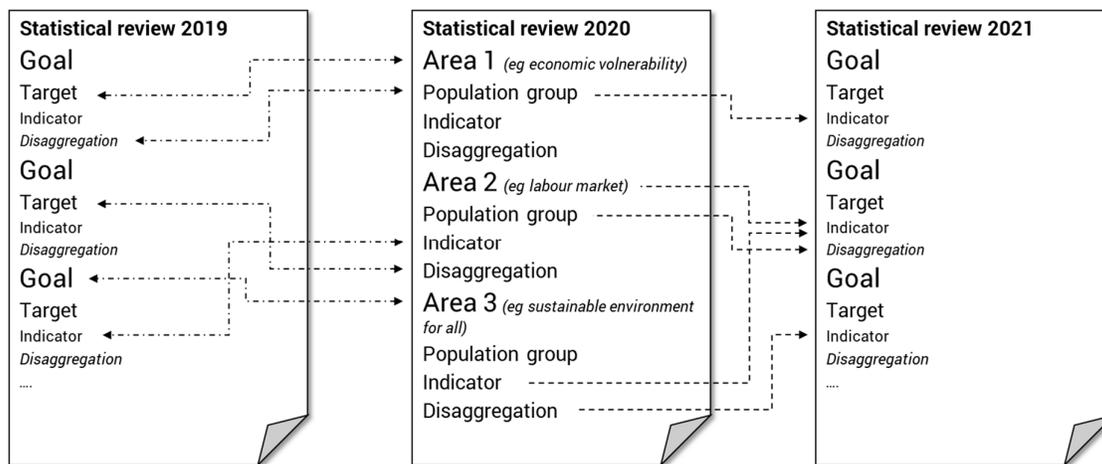


Figure. Conceptualisation of links between annual statistical reviews in Sweden 2019-2021

## Implementation

Implementation of the project is by necessity incremental. With limited in time, staff and resources we learn as we go along. As of mid-April 2020 a number of steps towards the final product has been identified:

- 1) Initial identification of vulnerable groups by analysing the agenda, the IAEG-SDG's work and the draft road map chapter
- 2) Consultation with statistics producers and civil society organisations to identify data sources, obtain ideas on relevant analyses and gaps in our initial list of vulnerable groups
- 3) Identification of potential theoretical frameworks (multi-dimensional poverty, better life index)
- 4) Identification of relevant chapters to include in the report
- 5) Identification of relevant indicators, statistics and break-downs
- 6) Identification of gaps in data availability
- 7) Collection of data and statistics (using templates) and metadata
- 8) Present results (text, graphs and tables)
- 9) Present analyses of data gaps and make proposals
- 10) Integrate results into the national indicator list and disaggregation in the regular statistical review of goals and targets

### Initial identification of vulnerable groups

The implementation began with an analysis of what has already been done in the area. A small group of experts in social statistics and SDG statistics analysed background documents to identify which groups would be relevant to include in the analyses. The group relied heavily on the draft chapter on Leaving no one behind for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the CES Road map on SDG statistics, as that is already a compilation of work done in the area. The draft chapter provided a chance to start structuring ideas and begin the thinking on population groups to include and possible methods to be used. On the basis of the analyses and some slight adaptations to the Swedish context, a list of vulnerable groups was put together. Some initial ideas on sources of information were also noted in the list.

Some groups can be identified using breakdowns of register data (women and men, children (some aspects), the elderly (some aspects), persons with different educational attainment, migratory status (partially) while some groups can be identified from survey data (persons with disability, victims of violence etc.). Yet other groups cannot be fully captured in existing official statistics (national minorities, undocumented refugees, the homeless etc) but possibly in information from civil society organisations or in special studies already made.

## Consultation with statistics producers and civil society organisation

The list of potential vulnerable groups, together with ideas on sources and some analyses that could potentially be relevant to include in the statistical review was then sent to government agencies that produce statistics or that may have relevant knowledge, to some ministries and to a relatively large group of civil society organisations. The organisations were asked to: comment on the list of potentially vulnerable groups/population groups at risk of being left behind, sources of statistics/other information and on analysis that might be relevant.

A lot of useful information was received in the consultation. Not least in the form of concepts and perspectives that helped the project group to move forward in the conceptualisation phase. Many links to existing reports and studies were also provided and tips on organisations to contact to find more information.

Further, many comments were received on the fact that the groups identified were heterogeneous and that it was important to study layers of risk in order to find and study those most at risk of being left behind. Another comment was that it would be more useful to apply the approach of the phenomena (social challenges) as outcomes to which different population groups could be more or less likely to be subjected to.

## Identification of conceptual framework

In the consultation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida provided a concept note describing the conceptual framework the agency uses to assess multidimensional poverty. Sida suggested that a translation of the framework could be used as a framework tool in the analysis of the concept of leaving no one behind in the Swedish context.

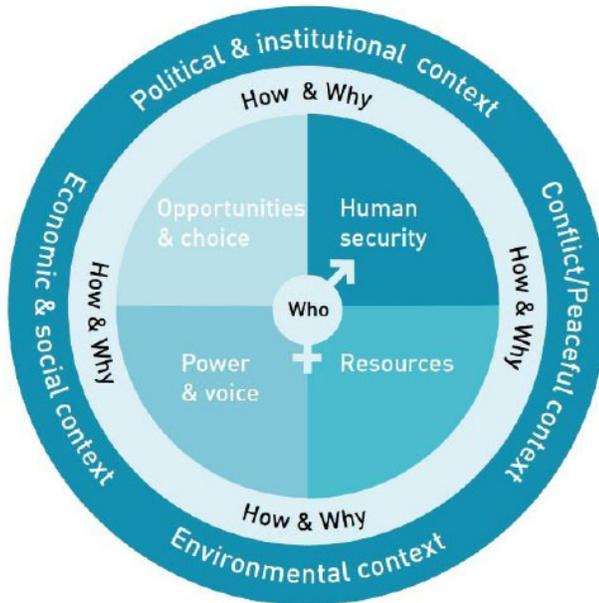


Figure. Sida's framework for multi-dimensional poverty analyses (MDPA)

This suggestion sparked an investigation in other theoretical or conceptual frameworks that could be of interest. The 'capabilities approach' developed by Sen and Nussbaum in the mid-80s was one of the approaches studied as were well-being or living conditions approaches applied by the OECD and Eurostat.

In the end it was decided to use the Sida framework with its four dimensions as the analytical tool, but to complement it with dimensions and factors that were felt to be missing and that did not fit into the existing framework.

## **Identification of relevant chapters to include in the report**

In the next step, the project group held a workshop to identify domains or areas that would be relevant to form the chapters of the report.

“Framework chapters” will include reflections on phenomena and theoretical and conceptual foundations as well as a chapter on quality and methodological challenges concerning groups that are hard to reach in data collections. It was also decided to include a chapter on the possible impact of the crisis caused by the new corona virus on already vulnerable population groups.

The “results chapter” will include statistics and analysis of people being at risk of being left behind in the different domains identified.

### **Planned results chapters**

- Financial vulnerability
- A Sustainable environment for all
- Gender equality
- Segregation
- Equal health
- Equitable education
- Decent working conditions
- Freedom from violence
- Participation in decision making

Further, children and youth and people with disabilities will be of particular importance for cross-cutting analyses.

## **Identification of relevant indicators, statistics and break-downs**

The next step will be to identify relevant issues that we want to shed light on in the report. Next, the work will continue with the identification of the indicators to be used from the national indicator list<sup>1</sup> and the disaggregation to be applied. Also, complementary indicators, proxies and other data based information will be identified. This exercise will also provide the basis for the analysis of gaps in data availability in relation to groups at risk of being left behind.

The basis for the work will be the national indicator list, the results from the previous consultation and contacts with subject matter experts at Statistics Sweden and in other government agencies that produce statistics and data-based information.

## **Collection of data and statistics (using templates) and metadata**

In the next step, templates will be constructed for the collection of data and statistics from producers within or outside of Statistics Sweden. A template previously produced for the collection of metadata for the SDG indicators will also be sent out for the producers to fill in.

## **Present results**

The report will include tables and graphs and analytical text, in the same way as the regular annual statistical reviews. Tables will also be published separately on Statistics Sweden’s website. Text will focus on what the results shown in the graphs and tables actually mean and what they do not mean to assist in interpretation and use. As all, or nearly all, statistics presented in the report will have been already published in one way or another the aim of the report is not to be able to present something that is not known before. The added value of the report is rather, as are SDG statistics in general terms in the Swedish context, that it will provide an overarching overview of vulnerability and risks of being left behind in a wide range of areas presented together.

The reference group has stressed that the explicit identification of gaps in data availability with regard to population groups at risk of being left behind is of particular importance. There are known gaps on,

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<sup>1</sup> The Swedish SDG indicator list contains the global indicators and complementary national indicators.

for example, people with disabilities and children and youth. This exercise is seen as a possibility to send an important signal to the government of the need to make sure these gaps are filled.

### Integrate results into national indicator list

One of the aims of the special review is also to identify relevant indicators and disaggregation that will support the analyses of risks of individuals and population groups to be left behind. After finalising the review, the work will therefore continue with the updating of the national indicator list, including on the relevant disaggregation of indicators.

### Find the report

The review is planned to be published 1 November 2020 on Statistics Sweden's website [scb.se/agenda2030](https://scb.se/agenda2030)<sup>2</sup>. Translation into English is planned, but no date for publication is set as of mid-April 2020.

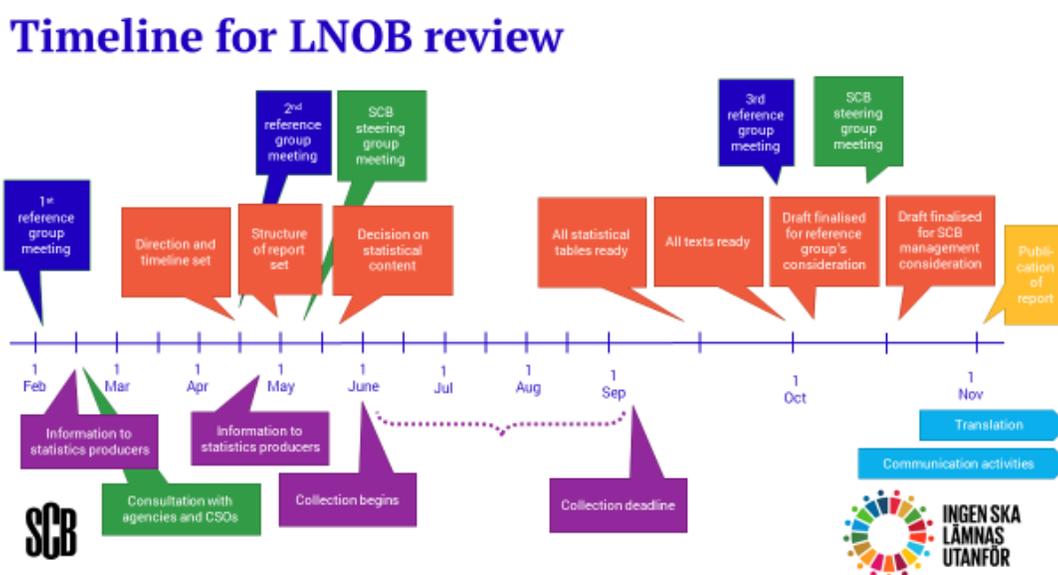


Figure. Timeline for statistical review of the principle of leaving no one behind

<sup>2</sup> Direct link to statistical reviews: <https://scb.se/om-scb/scbs-verksamhet/agenda-2030/statistisk-uppfoljning/>