



**Sustainable Development Solution Network (SDSN) Public Consultation on  
Indicators for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

**NORRAG commentaries related to livelihoods and skills for employment in the  
proposed indicators**

March 2014

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**Commentary # 2. By Santosh Mehrotra, Institute of Applied Manpower Research,  
Planning Commission, New Delhi, India**

**Re. Indicator 24: Percentage of young people not in education, training, or  
employment.**

It claims to be a measure of the 'proportion of youth who are either unemployed, work in the informal sector, or have other forms of precarious jobs'.

This leaves unanswered the question: how are we defining the informal sector? If it is defined differently in different countries, then there will be no way to measure progress, since the indicator will mean different things for different countries. There is therefore no escape, if this indicator is to have any meaning at all for either inter-temporal or inter-spatial comparison, to have a simple and consistent definition for the informal employment built into the rationale.

It may be useful to think of informal employment as such employment where there is no social insurance provided. If we have too many conditions attached to the definition, it will become impossible for countries to report consistent data that might be comparable across countries, even if it is inter-temporally comparable for the same country.

**Re. Indicator 25: Tertiary enrollment rates for girls and boys.**

Tertiary enrolment is fine, disaggregated by gender. But if we are really serious about Target 3c (Ensure that all youth transition effectively into the labour market) then the fact is that Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) of women, and of young girls especially, must be monitored carefully. Women's participation in work outside the home, for a wage, outside of agriculture, is known to enhance women's autonomy and agency. But most low-income and even low-middle income countries have very low female LFPRs, and in some cases they are even falling (partly because over-15 year old girls are continuing in school at a growing pace). So monitoring whether girls are getting non-agricultural jobs will enable countries to establish whether youth are truly transitioning into the labour market effectively.



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On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) released [a draft report for public consultation](#) on proposed indicators for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We asked several NORRAG members to comment on these proposed indicators; these commentaries are the views and opinions of individual NORRAG members and are not intended to represent the view of all NORRAG members.

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