UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

National Statistician's Inclusive Data Advisory Committee

Inclusive Data Taskforce Evaluation Plans

Purpose

1. This paper describes the plans for evaluating the impact of the activities undertaken in response to the Inclusive Data Taskforce (IDTF) recommendations. It also proposes draft baseline metrics for the evaluation.

Timing

2. We have committed to publishing details of our plans for evaluation by late Autumn 2022 and aim for sign off of the evaluation metrics by a new GSS Analysis and Evaluation Sub-Committee on Inclusive Data by the end of November 2022. We welcome feedback from Members on our plans, including the draft metrics, by the end of October 2022, so that they can inform the development of the Evaluation Plan.

Recommendations

3. Members are invited to:

   i. Review our plans for evaluation, including the identified impacts, and provide feedback;
   ii. Review the draft metrics and provide advice on their suitability and completeness, in particular identifying if they are the right metrics to be using and whether there are any additional metrics members could suggest, that would be feasible and proportionate to collect within the necessary timeframes.

Background

4. In response to [the recommendations of the Inclusive Data Taskforce (IDTF)](#), in January 2022 ONS published an [Implementation Plan](#), detailing a range of activities across the UK statistical system to improve data inclusivity. This included a commitment to develop an Evaluation Plan, to measure the impact of our collective activities on the inclusivity of UK data.

5. The Evaluation Plan has been developed by ONS evaluators with internal scrutiny provided by ONS's Programme Evaluation Group.

Discussion

6. Our plans for evaluation reflect our commitment to ensuring that the numerous varied activities that we are undertaking in response to the recommendations will have the effect of making the self-sustaining step-change in the inclusivity of UK data and evidence that is needed.

7. The evaluation will look to answer 3 main questions:

   - Were the recommendations of the IDTF implemented successfully?
   - To what extent have the implemented recommendations delivered their desired impacts?
   - To what extent can the observed results be attributed to the implementation of the IDTF recommendations?

8. Through our work to develop a theory of change (**Annex A**), we identified a number of outcomes and 4 main impacts, against which to evaluate the impact of the IDTF:

    Impact 1. Increased public trust in participation in government data collection and data sharing activities

    Impact 2. Broader public participation in government surveys and data sharing activities

    Impact 3. Government produces higher quality data through a collaborative, systemic approach including a wider range of groups more robustly and consistently, providing insights into the full UK population

    Impact 4. More data users, including the public and organisations, report that they are able to access the data and evidence they need from government and find it easy to use

9. An impact evaluation will be undertaken using mixed methods to assess each expected impact (see **Annex B** for details of the evaluation timeline). Impact evaluations focus on the changes that can be attributed to an intervention, measurable achievements which either are, or contribute to, the objectives of the intervention. The use of mixed methods will help to add insight and support analysis of how different factors contribute to outcomes.

10. A Task and Finish Group of stakeholders from across the UK statistical system has been set up to develop the detailed metrics that will be needed to provide a robust and meaningful evaluation. Based on their work to date, and aiming for an effective while proportionate approach, we have identified 3 to 4 proposed metrics to form the baseline to measure each impact (see **Annex C** for further details).

11. Baseline metrics for the evaluation will relate to 2021, when the IDTF recommendations were published. These will make use of the data that were collected as part of the consultation activities to inform the recommendations of the Inclusive Data Taskforce. This will be supplemented by additional data where necessary, including using the Public Confidence in Official Statistics Survey (PCOS) to measure trust. We are also considering how this source could be adapted to provide better metrics going forward to measure impacts.

12. We plan to commission mid-point and final evaluations during the three-year period of the Implementation Plan (2022/3-2024/5). Given the wider context and the importance of trust and transparency in this work, these evaluations will be externally commissioned, and their results published, providing independence and clear separation between ONS or government and the evaluation findings.

13. Alongside tracking of changes over time since the baseline, due to the complexity and scale of the IDTF implementation, we propose that these evaluations will also include contribution analysis. This will identify the likelihood and extent to which activities arising from the IDTF recommendations may account for any observed changes in the inclusiveness of UK data and evidence.

Conclusion

14. This paper has described our plans for evaluating the impacts of the IDTF recommendations. Members are asked to provide feedback on both the plans and proposed metrics. In particular members are asked to advise on the suitability of the proposed metrics and whether they would suggest any additional

or alternative metrics, taking into account the need to be effective while proportionate in our approach.

Paola Serafino, Statistical Coherence and Inclusion Division, ONS, 10 October 2022

List of Annexes
Annex A   Theory of Change
Annex B   Evaluation timeline
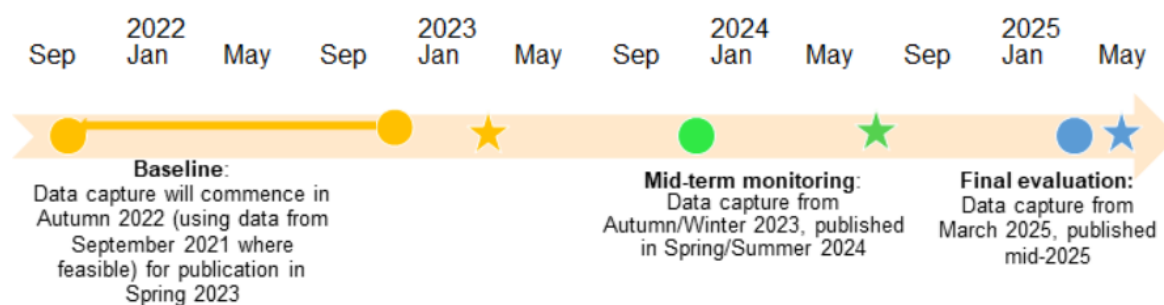**Annex C   Draft baseline metrics**

Annex A   Theory of change

	Summary
Current state	Inclusive Data Taskforce findings revealed that, while there are data available across the UK data infrastructure to explore the experiences and outcomes of a range of people with different characteristics, significant gaps exist. Some groups or characteristics are missing entirely from the data, for some groups there are insufficient data, and for some the data are not of good enough quality.
	Some of these groups include the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the UK, making it especially critical to address the lack of data reflecting their lives and experiences. Participants also identified gaps in topic coverage which can limit policy and explanatory insights.
	Even where relevant groups and topics are included in survey or administrative data, participants identified risks that data quality may be poor. Issues with data quality can produce a misleading picture, making it difficult to identify where discrimination and misrepresentation are occurring and people's life chances are being reduced, so we see addressing these gaps as a priority.
Goal	**To improve the UK's inclusive data holdings towards ensuring that our statistics and our workforce reflect the experiences of everyone in our society so that everyone counts and is counted, and no one is forgotten.**
Activities	**Building Trust:** • Establish Virtual Assembly • Develop workforce diversity strategies **Removing barriers to participation:** • Research on barriers and how to overcome them • Improve comms with research participants including under-represented groups **Improving monitoring and reporting:** • Develop appropriate governance to monitor and report on progress of implementation **Increasing stakeholder engagement:** • Develop engagement strategies for stakeholders outside government • Develop new stakeholder engagement groups to enhance existing networks **Increasing collaboration:** • Join up across existing initiatives • Identify opportunities for joint financing

	Summary
	- Participate in relevant international groups **Improving data quality:** - Join up across initiative to address under-representation - Evaluate and improve collection of personal characteristics in admin data - Explore feasibility of new large-scale surveys - Explore feasibility of adding relevant questions to existing surveys - Work together to enable secure and appropriate access to data for relevant purposes - Evaluate the coverage of non-private households in existing data sources - Develop methods to better capture data on non-private household populations **Improving harmonisation:** - Joint initiatives to improve harmonisation and comparability - Activities to understand user and respondent needs to inform development of harmonised standards - Activities to work collaboratively with international organisations to develop best practice **Increasing data granularity:** - Develop intersectional online tools - Carry out and publish intersectional analyses - Further activities to improve granularity of data **Developing new and improved data and methods:** - Activities to review and update conceptual foundations of measures - Activities to ensure clarity and coherence in concepts used in data collection - Activities to ensure clarity in concepts used when reporting - Activities to review and improve existing metadata - Use of a wider range of methods - Development of new data sources - Methodological improvements to existing methods - Activities to ensure appropriate governance and approvals mechanisms for implementation of methods **Improving use of admin data via activities to make relevant data more available and accessible** **Improving tools, products, and comms:** - Development of user-friendly and explorable online tools

	Summary
	• Review/testing of existing products and comms against standards to identify and implement improvements **Embedding IDTF recommendations in future work** • Improve user engagement via ongoing activities and strategies
Outputs	There are close to 100 proposed outputs as part of this programme of work covering contributions from multiple stakeholders.
Outcomes	• Improved diversity and representation in governance structures • Improved workforce diversity – attracting and retaining a diverse workforce that better reflects society • Improved participation in research leading to better response rates and greater representativeness • Use of appropriate governance controls and application of lessons learnt • Increased knowledge sharing with stakeholders outside of government • Sufficient coverage in UK data holdings of different population groups across key areas of life (work, health, education, living standards etc.) • Improved engagement with users and understanding of user needs • Robust disaggregated and intersectional analyses made available to users • Sufficient clarity in the concepts being captured to enable researchers, respondents, and users of data to have a consistent understanding of data collected • New insights into lived experiences of a wide range of population groups • Greater breadth of data available for a wide range of population groups • Improved data and evidence accessibility, whilst ensuring confidentiality of those included in data
Impact	• Increased public trust in participation in government data collection and data sharing activities • Broader public participation in government surveys and data sharing activities • Government produces higher quality data through a collaborative, systemic approach including a wider range of groups more robustly and consistently, providing insights into the full UK population • More data users, including the public and organisations, report that they are able to access the data and evidence they need from government and find it easy to use

Annex B   Evaluation timeline

| 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| Sep Jan May Sep | Jan May Sep | Jan May Sep | Jan May |

Baseline:
Data capture will commence in Autumn 2022 (using data from September 2021 where feasible) for publication in Spring 2023

Mid-term monitoring:
Data capture from Autumn/Winter 2023, published in Spring/Summer 2024

Final evaluation:
Data capture from March 2025, published mid-2025

We will capture metrics at three separate points, providing a snapshot at each point:

1. **The baseline**
   Where feasible, baseline metrics will relate to 2021, when the IDTF recommendations were published. These will make use of the data that were collected as part of the consultation activities to inform the recommendations of the Inclusive Data Taskforce, supplemented by any additional data where necessary. Given that this work was originally carried out by ONS, ONS will produce the baseline metrics, with progress measured independently thereafter.

2. **Mid-point (monitoring)**
   A mid-term evaluation is planned for between October 2023 and January 2024 to be carried out by external evaluators. This will be published in Spring/Summer 2024 and used to monitor the progress of the commitments made to ensure they are on course to deliver the expected impacts, enabling course correction if necessary.

3. **Final evaluation**
   The final evaluation will again be carried out by external evaluators and will be completed by mid-2025.

Annex C   Draft baseline metrics

Impact	Baseline metrics	Data sources
1. Increased public trust in data sharing activities across government and data sharing between government departments and private companies	Trust in ONS Statistics/NISRA	Public Confidence in Official Statistics Surveys (PCOS)
	Perceptions of trust/trustworthiness	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF
	Workforce Diversity statistics	Civil Service People Survey
2. More members of the public are responding to surveys and engaging in data sharing activities with government bodies	Representativeness of sources relative to Census 2021	Key UK data sources to be agreed
	Consent to share by source	As above
	Attitudes towards sharing personal data	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF
3. Government departments produce higher quality data through a collaborative, systemic approach that capture a wider range of groups more robustly and consistently, providing insights into the full UK population	Proportion of data sources missing key populations (e.g., non-private household populations, children) by area of life	ONS's Equalities Data Audit (an audit of the data that are available in the UK to explore the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010)
	Perceptions of robustness of population coverage	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF
	Attitudes towards harmonised standards and consistency	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF
	Perceptions of the conflation of concepts and the extent to which people feel represented by them	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF

4. Data users (including the public and organisations) report that they are able to access the data and evidence they need and that they are able to understand the data and evidence they are accessing	Perceptions of the accessibility of data and evidence	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF
	Percentage of people who are able to access all/some/none of the data they need	Consultation activities undertaken to inform the recommendations of the IDTF
	Metrics on accessibility standards being met	Suitable metrics to be identified

Note: wherever possible, metrics will be broken down by different population groups