



31 JAN 2017

Privacy of another: section 9(2)(a)



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Dear 

On 12 December 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *What advice has the Ministry of Social Development provided to the Interagency Group on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of halving poverty by 2030? Please release all communications, including emails, reports, memos, notes, correspondence, and text messages.*

Since 5 April 2016, officials from government agencies have met periodically to review issues related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to share information about relevant international developments, approaches from civil society organisations interested in establishing dialogue on the SDGs, and the preliminary analysis which individual agencies have undertaken on the SDGs.

The Ministry provided the following papers to this Interagency Group regarding the SDG of halving poverty by 2030:

- Briefing paper on Goal 1: 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere', 12 October 2016.
- Briefing paper on Goal 10: 'Reduce inequality within and among countries', 12 October 2016.
- An email, dated 31 August 2016, which sets out a range of comments from Ministry staff on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Information that does not relate to the SDG of halving poverty by 2030 has been withheld as out of scope.

No decision regarding measurements towards the SDG of halving poverty by 2030 has been made, and each agency is continuing to work through the details for how to implement, deliver, and report on their progress towards the SDGs.

You will note that the names of some individuals are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public after ten working days. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response concerning the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of halving poverty by 2030 with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Audrey Bancroft  
**General Manager**  
**Seniors, International and Disability**

From: 9(2)(a) - Privacy of another  
Sent: Tuesday, 27 September 2016 9:30 a.m.  
To: 9(2)(a)  
Subject: FW: FW: Interagency Group

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From: 9(2)(a)  
Sent: Wednesday, 31 August 2016 12:21 p.m.  
To: 9(2)(a)  
Cc: 9(2)(a)  
Subject: RE: FW: Interagency Group

Hi 9(2)(a)

Apologies for the delay in replying to your request. Set out below are a range of general and specific comments from my colleagues and I that we hope will be useful in further developing this work.

Out of Scope

**Specific comments**

Set out below are a number of specific comments that we hope will be useful in further refining the draft targets and indicators.

**1.2 By 2030, eradicate at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions**

We have a well-established infrastructure of data, analysis and publication to monitor low incomes and material hardship.

Out of Scope

Out of Scope

Kindest regards

9(2)(a)

| | Principal Policy Analyst | Seniors, International and Disability | Ministry of Social Development

9(2)(a)

Bowen State Building | Level 6 | Bowen Street | P O Box 1556 | Wellington 6140 | New Zealand

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**From:** 9(2)(a)

**Sent:** Friday, 26 August 2016 2:33 p.m.

**To:** 9(2)(a)

**Subject:** RE: FW: Interagency Group

Thanks 9(2)(a)

Tuesday will be fine for providing your feedback.

Best regards

9(2)(a)

*Principal Statistician  
Customer Strategy and Delivery  
Statistics New Zealand*

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**From:** 9(2)(a)

**Sent:** Friday, 26 August 2016 2:29 PM

**To:** 9(2)(a)

**Subject:** RE: FW: Interagency Group

Date: Wed 12 Oct 2016  
 From: MSD - 9(2)(a) - Privacy of another  
 To: SDG-15 Interagency Group

| Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere  |   |
|--|---|
| 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day                                      | 1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural) |
| 1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions | 1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age   |
|  | 1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions           |

Goal 1.1 is not relevant for richer countries such as New Zealand.

Goal 1.2 is relevant to New Zealand. The scope is made very large with the inclusion of "all its dimensions". Some narrowing of scope will be needed.

- Indicator 1.2.1 assumes that New Zealand has or will have a single poverty line. MSD's advice to the government over many years has been that a multi-measure multi-level approach to measurement is required and the current government agrees with that. Presumably therefore we will not report on Indicator 1.2.1.
- Indicator 1.2.2 specifies "all its dimensions according to national definitions":
  - This gives scope for reporting using a suite of measures.
  - MSD's annual Incomes Report and the companion Non-Incomes Report monitor poverty and hardship using a good range of measures, both overall and broken down by age group.

**The degree of difficulty in reaching the "reduce by at least half" target varies from measure to measure. For example:**

- It is much more difficult to halve rates for more severe hardship than for less severe hardship.
- It is easier ('cheaper') to reduce rates for more stringent low-income measures than for less stringent ones.
- It is easier to halve rates for anchored line income measures than for fully relative measures.

**In addition to monitoring indicators of the core experience of poverty and hardship (low income and hardship measures), there is value in also monitoring causes, consequences and correlates:**

- The correlates and consequences cover off some of the "other dimensions" of poverty, but for the sake of simplicity a small set of core measures (say, 4-5) may be preferable.

Date: Wed 12 Oct 2016  
From: MSD - 9(2)(a) - Privacy of another  
To: SDG-15 Interagency Group

**Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries**

10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average

10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population

10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status

10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities

Goal 10.1 and Indicator 10.1.1

- MSD's Incomes Report monitors this indicator (see p86 of the 2016 report).
- Since the mid 1990s New Zealand has shown Inclusive Growth in the sense that the share of total income received by the lower four deciles has remained steady at around 20%, but there has been no improvement as is required by this goal.
- A limitation of this UN target is that it simply commits individual countries to improve on their base position, but there are no guidelines or expectations about what an "acceptable" target range is for the ratio by 2030.

Goal 10.2 and Indicator 10.2.1

- The indicator is lightweight relative to the aspirational utopia expressed in the goal. It is in fact simply the low income measure used by the OECD for poverty measurement, though it is certainly more sensibly placed in the inequality section, as here.
- New Zealand can report on this for the whole population and by age and sex, but not for persons with disabilities ... using the same datasets.

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