

WORLD STATISTICS DAY

Prepared by UNSD

Background

On 4 September 2008, the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) requested countries, regional and international agencies to send their views on the proposal of observing a World Statistics Day on 20-10-2010. UNSD proposed that the World Statistics Day could focus on three sub-themes: service to the nation and the world, professionalism, and integrity. UNSD further invited suggestions on how to improve this theme and to operationalize it with core messages, and how international agencies could help the countries to launch this event.

The outcome of this consultation was an overwhelming support for this initiative, which was reported to the 40th session of the UN Statistical Commission in February 2009 in the UNSD Director's statement on programme issues. Around 70 countries and international agencies voiced their support confirming that the time has come to declare a special day to celebrate all the achievements of official statistics. In this regard, UNSD will work with the member states and the international agencies to put forward a paper to the 41st session of the Statistical Commission to officially endorse this event.

Objectives

The objective of World Statistics Day is to celebrate the many contributions of official statistics and, for 2010 in particular, the conduct of the population and housing census around the world. The day would raise awareness on various levels: in countries, in the regions and globally. As an ultimate goal, the celebration of the World Statistics Day would acknowledge the service provided by the global statistical system at national and international level, and hope to help strengthen the awareness and trust of the public in official statistics. It serves as an advocacy tool to further support the work of statisticians across different settings, cultures, and domains.

Overall Strategy

On World Statistics Day, activities at national level should highlight the role of official statistics and the many achievements of the national statistical system. International, regional and sub-regional organizations should help to make the national activities into a success.

The UNSD strategy for organizing this day will consist of

- Promotional activities to make the day well-known not only to the statistical community but to the public in general;
- Mobilizing NSOs and statistical organizations at sub-regional, regional and international levels to participate in this event, and
- Organizing a high-level ceremonial meeting in New York to mark World Statistics Day.

Promotional Activities

A logo has just been developed, which will be used in posters, calendars, banners and e-Banners, on letterheads, and on a dedicated website. This website is under construction and will be launched as soon as it is ready. The website will be the central piece in the promotional activities. Not only will it show a variety of issues linked to the World Statistics Day, it is also intended as a platform for NSOs to share information in relation to the planned national activities. In particular, there are ideas to use video (probably via YouTube), messaging (via Twitter) and calendar-like information which would be fed directly by countries and regional or international agencies. UNSD is also considering the possibility of having a Goodwill Ambassador for this one-off event.

Mobilizing Partners

UNSD will encourage NSOs to mobilize government and civil society in their own countries. With the help from other international and regional agencies, we are ready to work with the NSOs on the agenda of the event day. UNSD is considering the possibility of involving private sector technology partners, such as SAS, ESRI, Microsoft, or Google, to broaden the scope of options for making this day a success.

Ceremonial Event

To mark World Statistics Day, UNSD is also considering the possibility of organizing a Ceremonial Event at its Headquarters in New York with a press conference involving the Secretary General, the Under-Secretary General of DESA and maybe some other high-level officials.

Commemorative Book

Another idea would be to produce a commemorative book highlighting the impact of official statistics in a wide variety of areas and parts of the society over the last decade. The world's Chief Statisticians would be asked to write a statement about the promise, the message and the impact of statistics, and in particular about "Service, Professionalism and Integrity".