

FOLLOW-UP TO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH
SESSION OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

Note by the United Nations Statistical Division¹

A. Areas of work of the (eight) Task Forces

1. The Commission gave specific guidance to each of the eight task forces on their areas and priorities for work. This included: emphasized the importance of implementing the 1993 SNA and requested a strategy paper defining criteria against which progress could be judged; restated the key role that the regional commissions had to play in promoting and monitoring the implementation; advised on steps to facilitate implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, Revision 3 in countries; requested a revision of the United Nations International Recommendations for Construction Statistics; agreed on the cessation of work at the international level on trying to adjust nationally reported international trade data to improve international comparability; endorsed a plan of action and outline to revise the United Nations Concepts and Definitions for International Trade Statistics along with a compiler's manual; decided that the Standard International Trade Statistics Classification, Revision 3 should not be revised.

2. The Commission also requested the Task Force on Price Statistics to carry out the fact-finding activities envisaged in its mandate and focus on those aspects of the consumer price index harmonization issue that were manageable within the given time frame and resources; endorsed the holding of a workshop by UNSD in cooperation with ECA on service statistics in the domestic sector; endorsed the plan to obtain an inventory of available data on trade-in-services as a first step towards data development in this area; approved a programme of international compilation of environmental indicators from national statistical services based on a core set of indicators; requested the Working Group to consider what further work, if any, should be undertaken in the field of poverty measurement; and asked the global statistical system to be prepared to respond effectively to the requirements for statistics on social issues emerging from the World Summit for Social Development.

¹ Some inputs were not available for inclusion in this report. They will be issued as an addendum.

to ACC, WG 4 Stat Comm.

3. Task Force conveners are expected to lead the efforts in response to the Commission's requests in their subject area, and to report their plans to the Subcommittee under item 2 of the Subcommittee's agenda: "Issues related to the work of the task forces, including coordination issues at the regional level".

UNSD is proceeding to convene the workshop on the domestic (within country) service sector in developing countries in cooperation with ECA (for more detail see the addendum). UNSD will carry out a first international compilation of environmental indicators from national statistical services. The set of indicators was specified by the Inter-governmental Working Group on the Advancement of Environment Statistics at its 4th session in Stockholm (6-10 February 1995). The Commission also recommended that the Task Force on Environment Statistics undertake efforts to develop a framework for activities in the area of environmental statistics, indicators and accounting, indicating their relative priority and links to the policy agenda of national and international environmental agencies, and providing milestones against which progress could be measured. The Task Force will explore possibilities of improving coordination and the setting of priorities within such a framework, following the advice by the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities on this matter (see document SA/1995/4 of item 2 of the provisional agenda).

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Covered under TFS.

B. International classifications

4. The Commission endorsed a strategic plan the development of international classifications and a specific plan for revision of the Provisional Central Product Classification through work of the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics.

5. As part of the strategic plan for the development of international classifications, UNSD in close cooperation with EUROSTAT is developing a conceptual framework for economic and social classifications which will be presented and discussed at the next meeting of the Expert Group on International Classifications, October 1995. The development of this conceptual framework of classifications is crucial for the development and analysis of national accounts and satellite accounting linking economic and socio-demographic analysis.

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C. Demographic, social and migration statistics

6. In the demographic social and migration fields the Commission endorsed the continued implementation of the International Programme for Accelerating the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems, the revision of the United Nations Recommendations on International Migration Statistics and completion of the Compendium of Human Settlement Statistics in time for the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in June 1996; welcomed the

issuance of the second issue of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics for the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995; requested that a draft classification of time-use activities be prepared by UNSD; agreed on the importance of further development of impairment, disability and handicap (IDH) statistics and requested the UNSD to prepare a minimum set of IDH statistics tabulation items and core tables, depending upon resource availability. The Commission also endorsed the proposed preparations for the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme including the necessary handbooks and training materials and recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft resolution on the Programme.

7. ^{see 13/Add.1} ⁽⁶⁾ In the vital statistics, migration and human settlements areas, see SA/1992/12/Add.1 on migration statistics and the addendum for the other subjects. ^{see 12/Add.1} ⁽⁷⁾ ^{see 13/Add.1}

8. ^{HH} In the gender statistics area, there will be an oral report provided at the Subcommittee meeting.

9. In the impairment, disability and handicap (IDH) area, UNSD proposes to finalize the Handbook for Statistics on IDH which was the subject of an expert group meeting in Voorburg, Netherlands in November 1994. A statistical training manual for collecting data on community based rehabilitation has been submitted for editing and publication by the United Nations. The work programme proposed by the Expert Group was endorsed by the Commission. UNSD is trying to determine resource availability to carry out that programme.

10. For action in relation to the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme, see SA/1995/12/Add.2.

D. Measuring and monitoring economic and social development (World Summit for Social Development)

11. ^{Considered} The views of UNSD are set out in document SA/1995/10, on both the implications of the Social Summit and the convening of an expert group on the follow-up.

E. Technical cooperation in statistics

12. ¹² After reviewing the situation of technical cooperation in statistics the Commission requested an analytical report for the Statistical Commission's Working Group, on the overall funding situation, priorities and allocation of funds, and an analysis of the impact of the new agency support cost arrangement at country level. The report will be prepared by November 1995.

F. Coordination of statistical data collection

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Completed

13. See document SA/1995/5 on the status and plans of coordination tools for the status of the updated Inventory of statistical data collection activities.

G. Coordination and integration of international statistical programmes and coordination

14. The Statistical Commission's Working Group is scheduled to meet in New York in April 1996. The agenda is as follows:

Implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts (1993 SNA).

Work of the inter-agency task forces.

Critical problems in economic statistics.

Social statistics - follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development.

International classifications.

Technical cooperation in statistics.

Role of the regional commissions.

Provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission.

Coordination of statistical data collection activities.

Gender-related topics for inclusion in national publications on a rotational basis.

Statistical support for policy analysis issues at the international level.

World Statistics Day.

H. Critical problems in economic statistics

15. The Commission added an additional topical issue to its agenda entitled "Critical problems in economic statistics". These included problems of production and dissemination of timely, relevant and accurate economic indicators, their interpretation and use, and the public perception of their accuracy. Dealing with these problems was considered crucial to the continued integrity of statistics and the Commission requested that studies be done by several international organizations and countries.

*14
Dates +
place
soon*

Meeting not held
a note with issues proposed
& contact being made with
the countries to decide & assign work.

(15) 16. UNSD intends to host a meeting during the Conference of European Statisticians (12-15 June 1995) with representatives of the United States, Czech Republic, Australia, India and the IMF. The outcome will be a work programme to carry out studies and prepare papers for the next Statistical Commission.

I. Action by the Subcommittee

17. The Subcommittee is invited to comment on the above proposals, and develop coordinated approaches where necessary.

