

Statistical Commission

Fifty-fifth session

27 February – 1 March 2024

Item 4(c) of the provisional agenda

**Items for decision: Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Background document

Available in English only

**United Nations Inaugural meeting on the Revision of the Handbooks related to Household Surveys**

**22 –24 January 2024, Shenzhen China**

**Report (draft)**

Prepared by United Nations Statistics Division

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## 1. Background

United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), under the guidance of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys (ISWGHS), has embarked on a project to revise and update the series of United Nations methodological publications on household surveys, as listed below:

- The [United Nations Handbook on Household Surveys \(revised edition\)](#), 1982
- National Household Survey Capability Programme:
  - [Survey Data Processing: A Review of Issues and Procedures](#), 1982
  - [No-sampling Errors in Household Surveys: Sources, Assessment and Control: Preliminary Version](#), 1982
  - [Development and Design of Survey Questionnaires](#), 1985
  - [Sampling Frames and Sample Designs for Integrated Household Survey Programmes](#), Preliminary Version, 1986
  - Household Income and Expenditure Surveys: A Technical Study, 1989
  - [Sampling Errors in Household Surveys](#), 1993
  - [Sampling Rare and Elusive Populations](#), 1993
  - Guidelines for Household Surveys on Health, 1995
- [Household Sample Surveys in Developing and Transition Countries](#), 2005
- [Designing Household Survey Samples: Practical Guidelines](#), 2008

On 22-24 January 2024, an inaugural meeting was carried in Shenzhen, China, which assessed what the revised Handbook would cover and how the revision could be carried out. More specifically, the experts:

- Discussed what will be covered by the revision and how to offer a practical guide based on sound theories, tested and backed up by academic work;
- Discussed topics to be covered by the revision and further steps to cover additional topics, given a wide range of topics that household surveys encompass;
- Agreed on the timeline and processes for the revision.

The meeting benefited from both logistical and technical support from the National Bureau of Statistics. The meeting is financially supported by the China Trust Fund Project on Statistics.

## 2. Preparation for the meeting

Before the meeting, a series of consultative meetings were held with experts and national statistical offices. Such consultation helped identify (a) changes in the survey landscape since the 1984 Handbook on Household Surveys and their impact on the revision; (b) challenges faced by national statistical offices and the guidance that would be useful; (c) information that has not been covered well in other guidance related to household surveys and that should be included in the revision; and (d) what format the revision should take to allow more frequent updates and ease to access. Information collected from these consultations fed directly into the meeting discussion.

Furthermore, two virtual preparation meetings were held with all the participants to explain the agenda and logistics of the inaugural meeting, where a space for questions from the participant was provided. This virtual preparation meeting was separated in two groups due to the time zones of the countries.

## 3. Meeting sessions

Key topics of the meeting included the necessity for practical guidance for countries, challenges and innovations in household surveys, and an overview of existing UN handbooks. Discussions delved into managing surveys, key issues to be considered for the revision, and detailed examination of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) stages, highlighting the need for guidance on challenges and innovations across all stages, from specifying needs to disseminating results. The sessions also addressed strategies for enhancing survey inclusivity, improving response rates especially for marginalized groups, and ensuring data interoperability. How to address emerging topics like climate change and social factors was also discussed, alongside practical considerations for revising the guidance to be more user-friendly and agile, including timelines and resources. The series concluded with a session on final conclusions and closing. The annotated agenda of the meeting is available in Annex 1.

#### 4. Participation

The inaugural meeting was attended by 37 participants, of which 23 participated in person and the rest virtually. The experts represented National Statistical Offices (NSOs), academia, and regional and international organizations. The list of experts is available in Annex 2. The meeting was also attended by observers from the National Bureau of Statistics of China.

#### 5. Recommendations

- The experts recognized the value of the UN handbooks on household surveys, emphasizing the benefits for countries from a revised “core” handbook. This updated guide will focus on the essential elements of household surveys, building on the foundation of the [1984 UN Handbook on Household Surveys](#).
- The scope of the surveys to be covered by the revision needs to be clarified, determining whether to focus solely on household surveys or to include population-based surveys as well.
- The revision aims to broadly follow the [Generic Statistical Business Process Model \(GSBPM\)](#) phases, incorporating specific guidance crucial for household surveys at lower levels of the GSBPM.
- The revision will introduce an overarching theme, covering the aspects related to survey project management and how a survey fits into the broader national data ecosystem.
- The overarching theme will also discuss the enabling environment for surveys, as outlined in the [Positioning Household Surveys for the Next Decade](#), and connect to the [Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organisations \(GAMSO\)](#).
- The revision is expected to balance theoretical principles with practical advice, organizing examples and tools, including those from national experiences, around core principles. It will distinguish established principles from emerging ideas still in experimental stage, advising caution based on the national context.
- The revision needs to take into considerations specificities in countries under or post-conflict and in small island developing states (SIDS), ensuring the handbook’s relevance to their specific needs.
- The revision should cover guidance on designing integrated household survey programmes; as well as the integration of survey with other data sources, including administrative data non-probabilistic surveys.
- The revision should make references to existing materials and work from other groups when possible.

- Regarding dissemination, the experts considered various modalities, including printed copies, checklists, a web-based platform with links to software and tools, and an AI chatbot. The effectiveness of these tools, such as the chatbot, will be assessed.
- National experiences will be gathered from countries that participated in the technical meeting, as well as from a more extensive selection of countries.
- A broad timeline was proposed:
  - 2024
    - January: Submit the report and recommendations of the meeting to the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) and solicit input.
    - February-March: consult with more countries; produce an annotated outline and a template for the collection of national practices; and agree on the drafting responsibility.
    - March-September: Prepare the first draft.
    - August: Provide the first set of training data and other existing materials for the AI chatbot testing.
    - October: Conduct the second technical meeting in Oslo, Norway to review the first draft.
    - October-December: Revise the first draft.
  - 2025
    - January: Submit the first draft to UNSC for input; and consult with countries.
    - February-October: Prepare the second draft.
    - October: Conduct the third technical meeting on the revision of the handbook and review the second draft.
    - October-December: Revise the second and finalise.
  - 2026
    - January: Present the final draft to the UNSC.

## Annex 1. Work programme (final)

**Monday, 22 January 2024**

<b>9:00-9:30</b>	<p><b>Session 1. Opening and introduction of the objectives and the work programme</b></p> <p><b>Moderator: Haoyi Chen, UNSD</b></p> <p>Opening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Jianhong Ruan, Deputy Commissioner, National Bureau of Statistics, China</i></li> <li>- <i>Stefan Schweinfest, Director, UNSD</i></li> <li>- <i>Jessamyn Encarnacion, UN Women and ISWGHS Co-Chair</i></li> </ul> <p>Introduction of the objectives and the work programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Haoyi Chen, UNSD</i></li> </ul>
<b>9:35 – 11:15</b>	<p><b>Session 2. The need for practical guidance for countries on household surveys.</b> The session will cover (a) the importance of household surveys; (b) challenges faced by NSOs and evolutions and innovations in household surveys; and (c) existing UN household survey handbooks. The above discussion will help frame the discussion in the next three days.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Talip Kilic, World Bank</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Icebreaker</i></li> <li>- <i>Presentations</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Haoyi Chen, UNSD</i></li> <li>o <i>Xiao Ning, NBS, China</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussants: national household survey programmes, innovations, challenges and expectations from the handbook revision</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Muhardi Kahar, BPS Indonesia</i></li> <li>o <i>Solly Molayi, South Africa</i></li> <li>o <i>Alice Trief, Vanuatu</i></li> <li>o <i>Charles Lau, GeoPoll (Virtual)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>11:15 – 11:30</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<b>11:15 – 12:15</b>	<b>Session 2 (Cont.). The need for practical guidance for countries on household surveys.</b>
<b>12:15-14:00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>
<b>14:00-15:25</b>	<p><b>Session 3. Crosscutting topics: managing a household survey and key issues to be covered in the revision</b></p> <p>The session covers areas that guidance is needed in managing a household survey and will also provide feedback to the list of issues raised by countries as areas needed for guidance.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Haoyi Chen, UNSD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Octavio Heredia Hernández, INEGI Mexico</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul>

	<p>Existing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Handbook of Household Surveys</a>, pages 10-12</li> <li>- <a href="#">Household Sample Surveys in Developing and Transition Countries</a>, Pages 53-66; Pages 279-300</li> </ul>
15:25 – 15:40	Coffee break
15:40 – 17:00	<p><b>Session 4. Specify needs and design: challenges, innovation and guidance needed: experiences and reflections</b></p> <p>The session covers challenges, innovations and guidance needed approaches in the first stages of the <a href="#">Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM)</a>, i.e., specify needs and design.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Muhardi Kahar, BPS Indonesia</li> <li>o Leesha Delatie-Budair, STATIN, Jamaica (ppt)</li> <li>o Octavio Heredia Hernández, INEGI Mexico (ppt)</li> <li>o Jessa Encarnacion, UN Women (ppt)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul> <p>Existing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Handbook of Household Surveys</a>, pages 13-41</li> </ul>

## Tuesday, 23 January 2024

9:00 – 10:30	<p><b>Session 5. Build and collect: challenges, innovation and guidance needed: experiences and reflections</b></p> <p>The session covers challenges, innovations and guidance needed approaches in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stage of the <a href="#">Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM)</a>, i.e., build and collect.</p> <p>Moderator: Talip Kilic, World Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Cilanne Boulet, Statistics Canada</li> <li>o Jiajia Lian, NBS China</li> <li>o Masrol Hafizal Ismail, DOSM Malaysia</li> <li>o Octavio Heredia Hernández, INEGI Mexico</li> <li>o Michael Frosch, ILO</li> <li>o Frauke Kreuter, University of Maryland at College Park</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul> <p>Existing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Handbook of Household Surveys</a> (1984), pages 42-50</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Development and design of survey questionnaire</a> (1985)</li> <li>- <a href="#">Sampling frames and sample designs for integrated household survey programmes</a> (1986)</li> <li>- <a href="#">Designing household survey samples: practical guidance</a> (2008)</li> </ul>
<b>10:30 – 10:45</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<b>10:45 – 12:00</b>	<p><b>Session 6. Process and analyse: challenges, innovation and guidance needed: experiences and reflections</b></p> <p>The session covers challenges, innovations and guidance needed approaches in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> stage of the <a href="#">Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM)</a>, i.e., process and analyse.</p> <p>Moderator: Jiajia Lian, NBS China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Cilanne Boulet, Statistics Canada (virtual)</li> <li>o Jianliang Di, NBS China</li> <li>o Frauke Kreuter, University of Maryland at College Park</li> <li>o Peter Lynn, Institute for Social and Economic Research</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul> <p>Existing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Handbook of Household Surveys</a>, pages 51-57</li> <li>- <a href="#">Survey data processing: a review of issues and procedures</a></li> </ul>
<b>12:15-14:00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>
<b>14:00-15:25</b>	<p><b>Session 7. Disseminate, evaluate and use: challenges, innovation and guidance needed: experiences and reflections</b></p> <p>The session covers challenges, innovations and guidance needed approaches in the remaining stages of the <a href="#">Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM)</a>, i.e., dissemination, evaluation and use.</p> <p>Moderator: Jessamyn Encarnacion, UN Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Leesha Delatie-Budair, STATIN, Jamaica</li> <li>o James Muwonge, Uganda Bureau of Statistics</li> <li>o Yan Jiang, Renmin University of China</li> <li>o Firman Witoelar Kartaadipoetra, Australian National University</li> <li>o Frauke Kreuter, University of Maryland at College Park</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul> <p>Existing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Handbook of Household Surveys</a> (1984), pages 58-69</li> <li>- <a href="#">Non-sampling errors in household surveys: sources, assessment and control</a> (1982)</li> <li>- <a href="#">Sampling errors in household surveys</a> (1993)</li> </ul>



15:25 – 15:40	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:40 – 17:00	<p><b>Session 8. Surveys to cover emerging areas: climate change, environmental conditions, conflict and violence, social connection, voice and agency, deprivation and wellbeing.</b></p> <p>The session discusses the need for developing survey instruments for emerging areas.</p> <p>Moderator: Talip Kilic, World Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Ismail Lubbad, ESCWA (virtual)</i></li> <li>o <i>Firman Witoelar Kartaadipoetra, Australian National University</i></li> <li>o <i>Haoyi Chen, UNSD (on behalf of colleagues working on climate change statistics)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>Existing materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Handbook of Household Surveys</a> (1984), pages 70-203 (topic/theme-focused)</li> <li>- Canberra handbook</li> </ul>

### Wednesday, 24 January 2024

9:00 – 10:30	<p><b>Session 9. Crosscutting topics: making surveys more inclusive</b></p> <p>The session covers challenges, innovations and guidance needed in relation to making surveys more inclusive. This includes strategies/guidance to improve response rate, especially from marginalized population groups.</p> <p>Moderator: Haoyi Chen, UNSD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Leonardo Trujillo Oyola, DANE Colombia</i></li> <li>o <i>Gabriella Fazzi, ISTAT (virtual)</i></li> <li>o <i>Ian O’Sullivan, UK ONS (virtual)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul>
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 12:00	<p><b>Session 10. Crosscutting topics: making surveys interoperable for data integration</b></p> <p>The session covers areas that guidance is needed to make surveys more interoperable to facilitate better data integration.</p> <p>Moderator: Jessamyn Encarnacion, UN Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Discussants: Experts will be invited to provide feedbacks on what needs to be revised/covered/added.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Afsaneh Yazdani, ESCAP</i></li> <li>o <i>Talip Kilic, World Bank</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul>
12:15-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>

<b>14:00-15:25</b>	<b>Session 11. Modality, timeline and resources needed</b> The session covers the how to make the revision more user-friendly and agile, timeline of the revision, the drafting process and workplan. Moderator: Afsaneh Yazdani, ESCAP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>A short presentation of different options. Haoyi Chen, UNSD</i></li> <li>- <i>Discussion</i></li> </ul>
<b>15:25 – 15:40</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<b>15:40 – 17:00</b>	<b>Session 12. Conclusion and closing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talip Kilic, World Bank, ISWGHS co-chair</li> <li>- Xiao Ning, NBS, China</li> </ul>

## Annex 2. List of participants

Type of organization	Name	Title	Role	Organization	Country	In-person/remote
Country, NSO	Cilanne Boulet	Ms.	Section Chief – Social Statistics Methods Division, Strategic Data Management, Methods and Analysis Field	Statistics Canada	Canada	Remote
Country, NSO	Xiao Ning	Ms.	Deputy Director-General	National Bureau of Statistics	China	In-person
Country, NSO	Lian Jiajia	Ms.	Director	National Bureau of Statistics	China	In-person
Country, NSO	Di Jianliang	Mr.	Director	National Bureau of Statistics	China	In-person
Country, NSO	Leonardo Trujillo Oyola	Mr.	Deputy Director	Colombian National Statistical Office	Colombia	In-person
Country, NSO	Abena Osei-Akoto	Ms.	Dir. Survey Org. and Census	Ghana Statistical Service	Ghana	Remote
Country, NSO	Muhardi Kahar	Mr.	Associate Statistician, Directorate Of Census and Survey Methodology Development	BPS-Statistics Indonesia	Indonesia	In-person
Country, NSO	Tania Cappadozzi	Ms.	Socio-demographic and Environmental Statistics Directorate	Italian National Institute of Statistics	Italy	Remote
Country, NSO	Gabriella Fazzi	Ms.	Researcher	Italian National Institute of Statistics	Italy	Remote
Country, NSO	Elena Cezza	Ms.	Researcher	Italian National Institute of Statistics	Italy	Remote

Country, NSO	Sante Orsini	Mr.	Senior Researcher, head of unit on Quality of Life and Wellbeing	Italian National Institute of Statistics	Italy	Remote
Country, NSO	Leesha Delatie-Budair	Ms.	Deputy Director General	Statistical Institute of Jamaica	Jamaica	In-person
Country, NSO	Masrol Hafizal Ismail	Ms.	Statistician	Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOSM)	Malaysia	In-person
Country, NSO	Octavio Heredia Hernández	Mr.	Deputy Director General of Sociodemographic Surveys	Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI)	Mexico	In-person
Country, NSO	Solly Molayi	Mr.	Statistician and Director	Statistics South Africa	South Africa	In-person
Country, NSO	James Muwonge	Mr.	Head of surveys	Uganda Bureau of Statistics	Uganda	In-person
Country, NSO	Ian O'Sullivan	Mr.	Head of Survey Strategy	UK Statistics Authority	United Kingdom	Remote
Country, NSO	Alice Trief	Mr.	Senior Statistician	Vanuatu National Statistics Office	Vanuatu	In-person
Research Institute	Charles Lau	Mr.	Chief Research Officer	GeoPoll		Remote
Research Institute	Firman Witoelar Kartaadiponetra	Mr.	Associate Professor	Australian National University		In-person
Research Institute	Frauke Kreuter	Ms.	Professor, Joint Program in Survey Methodology Co-director, Social Data Science Center	University of Maryland		In-person
Research Institute	Jiang Yan	Ms.	Associate Professor of the School of Statistics	Renmin University of China		In-person
Research Institute	Peter Lynn B52	Mr.	Director	Institute for Social and Economic Research		Remote

Research Institute	Wang Yafeng	Mr.	Associate Researcher	Institute of Social Science Survey, Peking University		In-person
Regional Commission	Xavier Mancero	Mr.	Senior Statistician	ECLAC		Remote
Regional Commission	Afsaneh Yazdani	Ms.	Statistician	ESCAP		In-person
Regional Commission	Nibal Idlebi	Dr.	Acting Director, Statistics, Information Society and Technology Cluster	ESCWA		Remote
Regional Commission	Ismail Lubbad	Dr.	Project Coordinator/Statistician	ESCWA		Remote
Regional Commission	Maria Musudroka	Ms.	Manager, Statistics Collection	SPC		Remote
International agency	Michael Frosch	Mr.	Senior Statistician	ILO		In-person
International agency	Jessamyn Encarnacion	Ms.	Inter-Regional Advisor on Gender Statistics	UN Women		In-person
International agency	Turgay Unalan	Mr.	Statistics & Monitoring Specialist, Data & Analytics Section, Division of Data Analytics, Planning and Monitoring	UNICEF		Remote
International agency	Talip Kilic	Mr.	Senior Program Manager	World Bank		In-person
International agency	Sailesh Tiwari	Mr.	Lead Economist	World Bank		In-person
International agency	Haoyi Chen	Ms.	Coordinator, Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys	United Nations Statistics Division		In-person
International agency	Yang zhao	Ms.	Fellow	United Nations Statistics Division		In-person

International agency	Daisy Loayza	Ms.	Consultant	United Nations Statistics Division		In-person
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