



UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Statistical Commission

Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics

GWG Bureau meeting

Eighteenth meeting – 28 November 2018, 09:00 EST

By video conferencing

Minutes

Participants

Canada	Tim Werschler
Denmark	Maciej Truszczynski
Netherlands	Matjaz Jug
Colombia	Maria Ximena Correa, Maria Char
UAE	Latifa Al Shehhi
AfDB	Momar Kouta
UNSD	Ronald Jansen, Ralf Becker, Ivo Havinga, Michael Smedes, Sean Lovell, Clarence Lio

Agenda

- Agenda item (1)** Minutes of Meeting 17 on 14 November 2018
- Agenda item (2)** Report to the Statistical Commission
- Agenda item (3)** Other Business

Action Points

- ⇒ UNSD to circulate the Commission report to all GWG members
- ⇒ GWG members, including the GWG members, to provide comments by Tuesday 4 December COB
- ⇒ UNSD to update diagram of the organization structure of GWG
- ⇒ UNSD to call meetings for the organization of the 5th International Conference on Big Data

Minutes

AGENDA ITEM (1) – MINUTES OF MEETING 17

UNSD gave update regarding the action points mentioned in the minutes:

- UNSD sent request for input to task team leaders. Canada replied. Rati Skhirtladze (ITU) is on leave until January. UNSD will fill as leader of the mobile phone task team until that time.
- TORs of task teams were circulated or referenced in the note on the organizational structure of the GWG. Updating is needed for several of the TORs. UNSD will be in touch with the team leaders.

AGENDA ITEM (2) – REPORT TO THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

A full draft of the report was submitted to the GWG Bureau. UNSD introduced the report, which consists of 4 sections. The first section recalls the requests of the Commission at its 49th session in March 2018; sections 2 and 3 show progress and achievements, which address those requests. Some explicit feedback loop could be added to the end of sections 2 and 3. Section 4 is forward looking.

Some specific points –

- (i) decision needed on including the Eurostat illustration or not,
- (ii) timing of the events in Next Steps needs to be added,
- (iii) streamlining of the diagram of the GWG structure is needed,
- (iv) Para 6 – clarification of division of work in the task team on satellite data (Canada and Netherlands will come with proposal for wording); the issue is
 - a. that Statistics Canada coordinates the work of the task team overall;
 - b. that the work is executed by three (or two) teams on Agriculture statistics (led by Gordon Reichert), on Land cover (led by Sjoerd Schenau) and on Water eco-systems (led by François Soulard and Jillian Campbell)
 - c. that each of those teams have deliverables, including one or more projects
- (v) Para 9 – DANE will propose different wording as the projects are only in pilot phase

It was agreed that it would be useful to provide further detail on the structure of the GWG by indicating, for example, the members of each team. UNSD will put this together and add it as a background document to the Commission report. It does mean that this (second) background document will need to be referenced in the text of the GWG report.

The draft report will be circulated to all GWG members to provide comments with a deadline of Tuesday 4 December COB.

AGENDA ITEM (3) – OTHER BUSINESS

UNSD (Ivo Havinga) met with NBS China (led by the Deputy Commissioner) in Beijing recently, which was a follow-up to earlier communication, involving NBS China, ONS UK and UNSD, regarding closer cooperation of NBS China with the UN Global Platform, especially as it concerns Alibaba Cloud and possible global data sets of Alibaba. NBS China reacted very positively and mentioned to Ivo that it will build a Data Center (for innovation of official statistics) in Hang Zhou next to Alibaba Headquarters. They would like to establish it as a UN-NBS China Data Center. In the overall architecture of the UN Global Platform, this could mean that such UN-NBS institute would be the Asian Hub of the platform.

AfDB inquired on progress regarding the Conference in Kigali. UNSD promised calling meeting with the organizing and programme committee before mid-December. Further UNSD will contact AfDB on the so-called Third-Party Agreement.

UNSD (Ronald Jansen) had a few additional points:

- ⇒ ONS and UNSD will meet with the deputy Executive Secretary of UNESCAP next Monday in London to discuss cooperation between UN Global Platform and the Pacific Oceans Data Platform.
- ⇒ ONS and UNSD will visit UNEP-WCMC (see <https://www.unep-wcmc.org/>) next week to gather more details on the institutional set-up of UNEP-WCMC, which could function as a model for the set-up of the UN-GP
- ⇒ Statistics Poland leads the task team on Training, Skills and Capacity development and will send revised TOR soon. They also informed about Dominik Rozkrut's participation in a new expert group on Business to Government Data Sharing, see <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/commission-appoints-expert-group-business-government-data-sharing>
- ⇒ While Rati Skhirtladze (ITU) is on leave (until January 2019), UNSD will lead the task team on use of Mobile Phone data. A few points on the work of the task team
 - The project on Measuring Human Mobility in Georgia will have its first physical project meeting on 21-25 January 2019 in Tbilisi with all national and international stakeholders. Preparatory work is ongoing.
 - A training workshop is planned for the second week of June in Jakarta (led by BPS Indonesia and Positium)
 - UNICEF would like to collaborate in the work of the GWG and specifically on the use of mobile phone data. They have gathered experience in this domain over the last few years (see <http://unicefstories.org/magicbox/>), where the school mapping project could be of particular interest to the GWG (<http://unicefstories.org/magicbox/schoolmapping/>)

- UNDP Venezuela would like to execute a project on use of Twitter data for (sentiment) analysis of poverty and its various related dimensions. The GWG task team on Social Media has been mobilized to support this.
- Some other initiatives for potential collaboration with GWG, which may come up over the next few months:
 - UNCDF <http://www.uncdf.org/article/4068/doing-a-better-job-with-access-to-big-data>
 - UNTIL would like to work with us, see <https://until.un.org/>
 - UNIN as well, see <https://www.uninnovation.network/>
 - UNICEF, FAO and WFP in Malawi, see <https://mw.one.un.org/drone-images-help-farmers-to-predict-crop-yields-in-malawi/>