

# Background information for GIST Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting



## Overview

This document provides a brief and updated overview of the work of the GIST work for the areas to be discussed during the GIST SAG meeting in April 2023.

### Task team 1: Addressing specific NSO demands/Sustainable statistical training (Co-leads: Mitali Sen, US Census Bureau and Dag Roll-Hansen, Statistics Norway)

This task team has in the last 1-2 years focused on how to support NSOs with weak training mechanisms in-house in how to set up and maintain sustainable training programs. In this context, the need for NSOs to have a tool and guidance on how to understand and assess the training needs of their staff has been highlighted as a need. A second need is to evaluate the learnings from the needs assessment and based on that prioritize trainings to be provided based on resources available.

A consultant, brought in by UNSD, has helped substantially progress this work. A set of draft questionnaires have been developed which are aimed at i) individual staff, ii) managers and iii) staff in agencies that are part of the NSS. Along with this comes a guidance which explains the training needs assessment questionnaire, provides suggestions on how to prioritize training needs. It further provides an overview of different types of trainings and provides suggestions on how to better explore facilitated training in-house. A list of links to relevant e-learning is also included. Materials will be shared with GIST members for input and review in the first half of 2023 and subsequently be made available on the GIST webpages.

Two countries, Ethiopia and Ghana, have in parallel worked on improving their training programs. Ethiopia worked with GIST members (primarily Statistics Norway) on making trainings and establishing routines for running an in-house training program.- From there, work was also further developed, but has been paused due to change of management and revision of priorities for the NSO. GIST will explore further interest in 2023. Ghana has also progressed its work after initial engagement with GIST members in the area.

Malawi and Nepal have also shown interest in the work in 2022 and may be pilot countries for the new questionnaires and guidance developed.

#### Tentative plans for 2023:

- Continue work on sustainable statistical training programs, exploring ways to set up the self-assessment questionnaire for training needs in survey platforms.
- Engage with pilot countries to test the new tool and guidance
- Based on testing, consider further developing the materials.

## Task team 2: Online gateway and e-learning community of practice (Co-leads: Shailja Sharma, UN SIAP and Sophie Didlecadet, FAO)

In 2020 GIST published a statistics gateway or hub for statistical training materials on UN SDG:Learn; [www.unsdglearn.org/statistics](http://www.unsdglearn.org/statistics). It provides information on courses and trainings provided by different actors in the statistics community, specifying who the training provider is and has link to where the course can be found. During the past year, the task team and GIST members continued to expand the number of courses available. The gateway now includes over 140 courses and microlearning materials on official statistics. It continues to serve as an entry point for those interested in training courses on official statistics.

A key factor to the expansion was the initiation of a collaboration with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (IAEG-SDGs). At the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission, member states encouraged the IAEG-SDGs to share all capacity-building and training programmes and materials on SDG monitoring on a common platform for all to benefit. Based on this, GIST offered the IAEG-SDGs to also make use of the UN SDG:Learn platform which was agreed by IAEG-SDGs member in the second half of 2022. The IAEG-SDGs secretariat has since reached out to custodian agencies and some have already started adding their materials to the platform. The work will be continued in 2023.

UNITAR, who co-leads the overall development work of the UN SDG:Learn platform with the UN System Staff College, also continued work to further develop and improve the platform to make it even easier to navigate for users. They have also committed to continued support moving forward.

Of new developments, the task team worked on i) an initial assessment and potential template for certification of courses, and ii) approaches and recommendations to effective online trainings. The paper can be a useful resource/starting point for GIST members and others working on statistical capacity building on the two topics mentioned.

Based on discussions held during meetings of the task team, a paper has been drafted on the types of credentials offered and the certification processes/ practices employed by a selection of statistical training institutes that are members of GIST. It captures their practices in relation to the certification of their courses with a view to identifying best practices that can help define standards and set quality assurance procedures for use by statistical training institutes. GIST members will continue the work on this in 2023 and expect to make the materials generally available on the GIST website later in the year.

GIST member institutions have relied extensively on online trainings since the beginning of the pandemic. Task team members discussed approaches and recommendations to effective online trainings and have drafted a paper on this topic. The paper covers common challenges faced by training institutions in conducting online trainings and discusses lessons learned/recommendations on how to meet these common challenges. This paper is expected to be made available on the GIST website once finalized.

Tentative plans for 2023:

- Continue work related to UN SDG:Learn statistics hub.
  - Continue work to include more courses
  - Continue collaboration with IAEG-SDGs

- Update GIST platform, in particular the Courses Inventory page (<https://unstats.un.org/gist/resources/courses-inventory/>) which contains information from 2018
  - Assess possibility of translating overall content of UN SDG:Learn
  - Define easily understood categories/types of microlearning and archive old materials
  - Review alternatives to the archiving by default of all courses after one year of inactivity
- Continue work on course review and evaluation
- Potentially start working on a guidance on how to provide trainings in a virtual and remote format

### Task team 3: Statistical Literacy in the context of the 2030 Agenda

(Co-leads: Pedro Campos, ISLP and Bianca Walsh, IBGE)

The task team seeks to motivate the international statistical system to promote statistical literacy initiatives recognizing that NSOs in particular have a special role in promoting this type of literacy. Work of the task team has benefitted from an enlarged membership in 2022, including the new partnership with the International Statistical Literacy Project (ISLP).

In 2022, a concept note for a guidance document for NSOs on statistical literacy has been produced as part of this work. The purpose of the document is to provide a guideline for statistical agencies on how to approach the implementation of statistical literacy initiatives, including sections dedicated to the scope of statistical literacy, the identification of target audiences and key partners, a possible diagnostics approach and a matrix to examine the specific situation and conditions under which each NSO operates, as well as the recommendations on actions NSOs could promote. The recommendations are expected to be formulated based on the results of the above country diagnostics and by drawing on good practices available in the GIST statistical literacy inventory and other related sources. The outline of the guideline also includes a section on the evaluation of statistical literacy initiatives, an area where the task team also completed some initial methodological work in 2022.

The task team had earlier developed an **inventory of materials on statistical literacy** relevant to official statistics. A template for initiatives in statistical literacy had been developed and piloted through drafts by task team members. The literacy materials are classified using a few key dimensions. The first key dimension considers the main recipients of the statistical literacy materials: school children, students, media, decision makers or others. Other dimensions are type of guidance or learning materials, language of the material, etc. Both the US Census Bureau and the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) have for example statistical literacy programs and practical toolkits for schools, to be used by teachers in lessons. Another example is the international poster competition of the International Statistical Literacy Project (ISLP), which has reached more than 50,000 school students across more than 30 countries. In 2022, follow-up has been made to further enrich the inventory. In particular, the ISLP representatives collected a range of initiatives from national coordinators. As a result, in 2022, 14 cases of statistical literacy were added, and the group is constantly aiming for more cases. Currently, the inventory can be found [here](#).

This task team was initiated in 2018 when GIST conducted a survey among policy makers on their overall statistical literacy level. The insights from the survey and from SAG members have led to the

development of an **e-learning course on statistical literacy** led by UNITAR where UNSD and UNECA also provided input and that is currently available on UN SDG:learn [here](#). The course as well as several learning videos were developed subsequently by UNSD and UNITAR serve as resources that NSOs can use and promote among data users to help increase their statistical literacy. Furthermore, the work on competencies and methods to address the statistical literacy of policy-makers is further disseminated through publications by the task team members.

Tentative plans for 2023:

- Continue work on the statistical literacy initiatives inventory, adding more entries, and promoting awareness
- Further develop the guide for NSOs and NSS on how to engage with the population around statistical literacy
- Continue to engage with IAEG-SDGs on further dissemination of capacity development materials through UNSDG Learn

#### Making materials available in more languages

It is a priority of GIST to work on translation of learning materials. A meeting will be set up initially asking all who are interested in contributing to this to engage and discuss how the work can best be taken forward.

One initial task is to identify the languages that we want materials/tools to be translated to and then reach out to members and ask for help. Besides English, Arabic, French, Spanish are the priority languages

Translation could include materials that GIST develops, but also courses available on the UN SDG:Learn platform. For the latter, we need to ensure that we have the permission of the owner of the course/material to translate the original production and there needs to be a discussion on how to practically implement/ensure the quality of the translation. It may therefore be worth starting with the low hanging fruit which is translation of materials that GIST has produced e.g. the training needs assessment tool and the statistical literacy initiatives. At the same time, prioritization of translation should also follow prioritization of needs and we need to identify what is most important to translate.

GIST could also explore if partnerships can be explored with other agencies to cover the translation of materials. Another avenue to explore is to make use of AI and automated translation tools.