

GIST stakeholder advisory group meeting

8th July 2021

Participants:

GIST Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG): Aberash Tariku (Ethiopia), Marina Gandolfo (Italy), Ayano Yoshinaga, Satoko Kouga, Chika Haruna (Japan), Eric Manuel Rodrigues Herrera (Mexico), M. Samir Issara, Hasna Tabarani (Morocco),

GIST board: Mitali Sen (GIST chair), Makoto Shimizu (GIST task team lead, SIAP), Elena Proden (GIST task team lead, UNITAR), Mamadou Cisse (GIST task team lead, IDEP), Vibeke O Nielsen, Zhaowen Wang (GIST secretariat, UNSD)

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Reintroduce GIST and status update followed by a brief Q&A
3. Discussion around questions to SAG on sustainable statistical training

Discussion

1. Welcome and introductions

Mitali Sen (GIST chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief background on GIST and its overall areas of work. The rest of the GIST board then briefly introduced themselves and highlighted a couple of additional elements. Following this, all members of the SAG present at the meeting also briefly introduced themselves.

2. Reintroduce GIST and status update followed by a brief Q&A

Vibeke gave a short introduction of GIST and provided a status update. Among others, she spoke about:

- The GIST homepage: <https://unstats.un.org/gist/>
- The work of the three task teams
 - o Task team on online gateway and e-community of practice.
 - o Task team on statistical literacy
 - o Task team addressing NSO needs
- General update on UNSDG: learn, microlearning functionality, big data, outreach, Wiki page, and advisory group

More details are also available in the brief summary circulated ahead of the meeting.

Ms. Marina Gandolfo (Italy) suggested that UN SDG:learn is used as an open space where course participants could leave comments and star ratings for the courses that they take. The secretariat responded that this had been discussed in the task team and would be a good solution, but that there were challenges in how to manage it as UN SDG:learn mainly serves as a hub. It is therefore difficult to verify if a reviewer actually has taken the course and the task team agreed that it may be more suitable to have course reviews on the website of the content provider. That being said, the task team has also worked on a more elaborate review system

similar to an expert book or movie review. This is still work in progress. It was also added that there is a feedback collection system on UN SDG:learn which can be used.

Mitali suggested that a GIST group is set up on the Yammer Global Network of Data Officers and Statisticians. It may serve as a platform for both outreach and communication.

3. Discussion around questions to SAG on sustainable statistical training

The GIST secretariat had prepared a few targeted questions for the SAG members and these were briefly presented. SAG representatives were asked to respond and comment under the topic of sustainable statistical training.

Ms. Aberash Tariku (Ethiopia):

- She agreed that the reports shared provide findings and recommendations that are in line with the thoughts and understanding for statistical training in Ethiopia.
- She believed the main incentives for staffs to be trained is to get promotion and advance further in their career.
- She regarded the documents as a helpful starting point and all of them as relevant. She expressed appreciation for the work done by GIST.
- She believed that UN SDG:learn/statistics platform will serve as a useful tool but Statistics Ethiopia has not started using it yet. More work should be done to increase the use of the platform.
- She also expressed strong willingness to work with members of GIST to pilot some of the recommendations by the consultants on sustainable statistical training.

Mr. M. Samir Issara (Morocco):

- He appreciated the GIST reports in general and expressed the interest in implementing some of the recommendations provided.
- He believed the motivation for staffs to receive training is to advance on their career paths, while the main obstacle is the limited funding and budget. He also mentioned the challenges in applying the knowledge and skills to real tasks after the training ends.
- He mentioned the plan to produce elearning materials within his organization. After testing it out on their own website, he would like to include it on the UN SDG:learn platform. He would also want to link to the platform from their own pages.

Ms. Marina Gandolfo (Italy):

- She agreed that the reports shared provide findings and recommendations that are in line with the thoughts and understanding for statistical training in Italy.
- She believed the main incentives for staffs to be trained is linked with the career development.
- She pointed out the importance to assess training needs and evaluating whether the training should be carried out in an in-person or online manner.

Mr. Eric Rodriguez (Mexico):

- He believed that the GIST reports are useful and important in his organization, National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico.
- He expressed his interest in the UN SDG:learn platform, especially in courses that focuses on SDG indicators. However, there are challenges to further promote it in Mexico, since people are more comfortable with Spanish than English.

The task team leaders left comments after the discussion between countries.

Mr. Makoto Shimizu (GIST task team lead, SIAP):

- He was encouraged by positive feedback from countries and highlighted the importance of elearning and blended learning.

Mr. Mamadou Cisse(GIST task team lead, IDEP):

- He believed that statistical training are very much related to the strategic plans of the NSOs.
- He pointed out the importance of training of trainers so that the trainings could be carried out in a sustainable way.
- He emphasized on collaboration and coordination between countries so that experiences could be shared.

Summary:

The meeting was summarized with the following main points:

- Thanks to the SAG members for the positive feedback and specification that the work GIST is currently doing is useful.
- Acknowledgement that further outreach work needs to be carried out, working closely with the task teams and SAG.

SAG members were encouraged to provide thoughts and input after the meeting. The next SAG meeting is expected to take place in fall.