

Status update



Global Network of Institutions
for Statistical Training (GIST)

24th August 2020

The GIST homepage provides general information on the Network, including its overall goals and objectives, current members and strategic action areas. Please visit the page here:

<https://unstats.un.org/gist/>

The work of GIST is currently carried out in three task teams:

- Online gateway and e-learning community of practice
- Statistical Literacy in the context of the 2030 Agenda
- Addressing specific NSO demands

Below an update of the work of each task team in brief:

Online gateway and e-learning community of practice

The task team has established a **statistics gateway** or hub for statistical training materials **on UN SDG:learn**: www.unsdglearn.org/statistics. It provides information on courses and training provided by different members of GIST and others and gives the link to where the course can be found. The hub was launched at the UN Statistical Commission in March 2020 and now has around 50 statistics courses available, mostly e-learning. Courses are categorized through three different aspects: i) SDGs, ii) type of learning (e-learning, face-to-face, etc.) and statistical theme or category, loosely following the Classification of Statistical Activities (CSA). The task team continues efforts to improve the gateway and add courses from additional partners. There is also a plan to add microlearning as a selection option. Linked to the work, the task team has discussed what the criteria should be for a course to be uploaded, both in terms of quality of learning and relevance for statistics. At present, course information needs to be added manually by the course provider, which may reduce the willingness to add courses. UNITAR who is co-leading the overall work of UN SDG:learn is therefore looking into how course information can be extracted more automatically from different agencies, with their consent and approval before formally uploading them.

Aim: to make it easier for users to find and explore statistical training materials and avoid duplication

In addition, the task team is focusing on **exchanging experiences across agencies on development of e-learning materials**. This also feeds into the work of the statistics learning hub. The current focus is on

processes for peer feedback, course evaluation and participant's learning and benefit from the trainings. The different agencies in the task team an interest to learn from each other to improve and also to share this with a wider group of training providers. The task team has agreed to develop some guidance material and templates linked to course evaluation by participants. The task team has also developed a template for external reviews of courses, in the format of movie or book reviews. The idea is that GIST members could use this to evaluate courses and place it for information on UN SDG:learn, with the consent of the course provider. That way, potential students get more input on what the course is about.

Aim: To facilitate knowledge and improvement of training materials through mutual experience exchange. Guidance materials are also expected to be made generally available.

Statistical Literacy in the context of the 2030 Agenda

The task team is in the process of developing an inventory of materials on statistical literacy relevant to official statistics and posting it on the GIST homepage. A template for initiatives in statistical literacy has been developed and trialled through drafts by team members. It is now in place and members will soon be asked to provide more examples. The materials could be used by partners and by NSOs who want to reach out to users to help increase statistical literacy. The plan is to structure the literacy materials along a few categories. One key category would be the main recipients of the statistical literacy materials: school children, students, media, decision makers or others. Other categories would be type of guidance or learning materials, language etc. One example of such materials is the toolkit for schools that the US Census Bureau is providing to children and teachers in the US. 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. These have been used as templates for development of materials in other countries.

Aim: To make it easier to find statistical literacy materials

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 provide input. Two of five modules are now available on UN SDG:learn [here](#).

Aim: To increase statistical literacy among important user groups

Addressing specific NSO demands

The task team has spent time discussing how to best approach the work, looking at the earlier created inventory of courses, which can be found on the GIST homepage, and assessing results from the needs assessment a consultant carried out for GIST in 2018. Through these conversations it became clear that GIST could play a role in helping better coordinate statistical training activities. While there are areas where there are many actors and a risk of overlap in training provided (more supply than demand), there are other areas where very few if any partners are providing support, although there is a clear

need for it (more demand than supply). The task team developed four case studies that showcase challenges in coordination of statistical training with a focus on balancing supply and demand. At present, the task team has decided to first move forward with two case studies where there is a strong demand from NSOs and the NSS for more training and guidance and not sufficient support provided at present. One is linked to coordination of the National Statistical System and one is linked to NSO's managing, planning and implementing continuing professional development of their staff through sustainable in-house training programmes. For both of these, development of soft skills is a key element and should be integrated in the training programmes.

The task team is currently preparing a Terms of Reference for a consultant who will help the work move forward. The idea is to do a proper assessment of materials already available, as well as to work with a few pilot countries that will provide their views of needs. Staff at different levels will be interviewed. Based on this, the plan is to develop guidance and tools to help countries in better addressing the challenges faced. If needed, GIST will also aim at bringing in members of the network to potentially develop target trainings, mentoring or peer-exchange programs.

Aim: Improve coordination of statistical training provided and help fill clear gaps in training. The ultimate outcome would be better functioning NSOs and NSS and a more relevant skillset of its employees.