

GIST board meeting

26 April 2021

Participants:

Mitali (USCB), Elena (UNITAR), Makoto (SIAP), Mamadou (IDEP), Francesca and Vibeke (UNSD).

Agenda:

Proposed agenda ahead of meeting

1. Sustainable statistical training programs
2. Planning for next SAG meeting
3. Outreach (WDF webinar, IAOS papers and sessions and other work)
4. AOB

Vibeke informed that UNSD now has an intern who will support GIST. Ms Zhaowen Wang will start working with us from 17th May for up to 6 months.

1. Sustainable statistical training programs

Mitali provided some background on the work on sustainable statistical training programs in countries, specifying that the most recent work had two parts, development of guidance on how to set up sustainable statistical training programs and a proposal for a set of standard courses that an NSO would aim at providing to their staff. A key question being how to make such systems sustainable in low resource contexts. Recent increase of availability of online resources may help in the context.

Following the introduction, it was discussed how to move the work forward. USCB has some funds to test this. They will try to identify 1-2 African countries to see if what is proposed is really relevant to those countries. If not doable face to face, maybe online. An approach to get started could be to first meet on process for how to develop a standard set of courses. Running a needs assessment could be an important input to this. Statistics Norway may also be able to test some of the resources in their partner countries. The board and task team should also see if other partners could be involved to get a wider scope.

It was highlighted that the situation can be very different region by region and sub-region by sub-region. Different levels of development and different priorities and this needs to be taken into account.

In line with overall idea of having more demand driven statistical training system, it was proposed to also select countries based on their demand and interest. The work with the initial countries could then be an exemplar, which can be used as a framework which then is adjusted for each country based on their priorities. A priorities grid (thematic area skills, soft skills and skills based on experience) could be used to define – and then develop a specific plan in each country. It was proposed to use the pilot overall as a learning experience for GIST to then further refine and adjust.

It was further proposed to consider how this could be integrated properly in NSDS development processes. Overall it was agreed that it is important to see training as part of the whole capacity

development as it is difficult to address and ensure sustainability separately. The work should also be linked to the Cape Town global action plan

In any case the work is expected to be useful as there currently has not been defined any real guidance on statistical training and how countries themselves can provide this. Practices and approaches vary widely and just to have an overview of potential approaches can be useful. GIST can with its current work provide a potential framework, move to institutional training thinking

2. Planning for stakeholder advisory group meeting (SAG)

There is a need for a new round of inputs from the SAG. The board particularly highlighted the following areas where input from the SAG would be useful:

- Their view on the sustainable statistical training programs work
- Their input on the statistical literacy inventory
- Involve them in outreach work
- Ask them how COVID-19 affected their trainings? Have they adapted? Before asking, this can partially also be extracted from the UNSD-WB survey as a starting point. The intern may help with this.

It was agreed to start preparing materials and questions and plan for the meeting to take place mid-June.

3. Outreach

The next World Data Forum (WDF) webinar series will cover the question on what will be the next normal of statistical training. The webinar takes place 20th May and will bring GIST speakers and cover some of the issues that GIST is working on.

The GIST proposal to the ISI world statistics conference has also been accepted and UNSD will follow up with speakers to prepare the event.

The next board meeting should take place ahead of the next SAG meeting to jointly prepare and agree on structure and questions.