

Minutes of the GIST Board Meeting



Date: 27 March 2025

Time: 10:00 – 11:00 EDT (14:00 – 15:00 UTC)

Attendees

Secretariat/Chair:

- Elena Proden (UNITAR, Chair of GIST)
- Vibeke Oestreich Nielsen (UNSD, outgoing GIST Secretariat)
- Gabriel Gamez (UNSD, GIST Secretariat, Statistical Capacity Management Section)
- Alexander Loschky (UNSD, GIST Secretariat, Statistical Capacity Management Section)
- Clarence Lio (UNSD, GIST Secretariat, Statistical Capacity Management Section)

Task Team 1 - STAT:

- Julieth Alejandra Solano Villa (Co-lead, DANE Colombia)
- Tawheeda Wahabzada (Co-lead, Open Data Watch)
- Pietro Gennari (La Sapienza, IAOS)
- Alexandra Jane Simpson Silva (DANE Colombia)
- Sara Florez Hincapie (DANE Colombia)

Task Team 2 - Learning Culture and Sharing:

- Dag Roll-Hansen (Co-lead, Statistics Norway)
- Elizabeth Baffoe-Bonnie (Co-lead, Ghana Statistical Service)

Task Team 3 - Statistical Literacy:

- Bianca Walsh (Co-lead, IBGE Brazil)
- Pedro Campos (Co-lead, Statistics Portugal)

Translation Group:

- Ziad Abdulla (Lead, AITRS)

Action Points

1. Secretariat (UNSD):

- Set up onboarding meeting for new Task Team 1 (TT1) co-leads + new Secretariat team (Gabriel, Alexander, Clarence) + Vibeke, Elena, and potentially Mitali Sen
- Share the template for Task Team (TT) work plans, publish workplans on GIST website
- Schedule regular board meetings and share calendar with all GIST members
- Update the GIST member list and share with everyone
- Look at options for supporting more countries on STAT implementation (e.g. Djibouti)
- Add minutes of most recent TT meetings to Board invitations

2. All Task Team Co-Leads:

- Reach out to their TT members to set up meetings to develop work plans
- Share TT work plans with Secretariat
- Provide information about planned TT meetings to Secretariat
- Share TT minutes with Secretariat for redistribution to all Board members
- Consider cross-TT collaboration where appropriate
- **Task Team 1:** Co-leads to participate in onboarding call
- **Task Team 2:** Discuss the potential development of culture for learning indicators
- **Translation TT:** Set up TTT meeting and include Secretariat to discuss structure and plans for Translation Group
- All members interested in joining additional TTs: notify Secretariat and respective TT

Key Discussion Points

Secretariat Changes

- Vibeke announced her departure from UNSD and from the GIST Board and introduced Gabriel (UNSD) and his team (Alexander and Clarence) as the **new Secretariat of GIST**
- Alexander will lead most of the GIST activities in the future
- **Thanks to Vibeke for her GIST leadership:**
Vibeke was thanked for her leadership of GIST, with members expressing appreciation for her work in creating and developing the network. Gabriel confirmed the Secretariat's commitment to continuing to support GIST, emphasizing that the purpose is to help Member States and training institutions.

Funding and in-kind support for GIST

- UNSD and the UN as a whole are going through restructuring, which may impact available support
- GIST has no dedicated budget, though in the past UNSD had secured small amounts
- UNITAR has funded the [UN SDG:Learn platform](#) and other contributions
- Gabriel mentioned a Development Account project on digital transformation that could possibly provide minimal funding
- Board members are encouraged to explore fundraising opportunities within their networks

Information about Structure and Function of GIST Board

- The board meetings are kept informal to facilitate information sharing across task teams
- Board ensures coordination / information sharing between task teams to avoid duplication
- Board promotes GIST work collectively through newsletters and events
- Board meetings have historically been held 5-6 times/year, scheduled as needed
- Agenda of Board determined by Chair + Secretariat, suggestions for agenda items from all task teams are very welcome

Role of Task Team Co-leads

- Co-leads are responsible for calling team meetings and setting up TT calls themselves
- Co-leads are responsible for taking minutes and sharing them with the Secretariat (UNSD)
- Co-leads should divide responsibilities fairly (leading meetings, taking minutes)
- Task teams should involve all members in decisions, not just the co-leads
- Task teams should meet 3-5 times per year, depending on workload, meetings should be scheduled as needed

Task Teams and their work plans

- Secretariat noted importance of having work plans for each TT to justify activities
- Evaluate potential of new activities based on interest and available resources
- Task teams are responsible for calling, setting up, leading, and taking minutes for their own meetings. Co-leads should alternate or delegate notetaking tasks (use of AI readers for notetaking is discouraged due to privacy concerns)
- TT minutes should be shared with the entire TT and Secretariat
- Decisions should involve entire TT membership where possible

Coordination Between Task Teams

- Pedro raised concerns about potential overlap between task teams
- Clarification of the focus of TT3 (statistical literacy for external stakeholders) versus TT2 (learning culture within NSOs)
- Gabriel noted the connection with the Task Team on Training and Learning within the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science (UNCEBD)

New Initiatives

- Dag Roll-Hansen noted TT2's interest in developing indicators on organizational learning culture, requiring resources and potentially cross-team support
- Potential for contributing to updating of chapter on Human Resources Management and Development in the Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical System
- Idea of a "Statistical Literacy-thon" was floated, requiring an assessment of internal capacity and resources
- Discussion about how to evaluate potential new activities based on interest and available resources

Statistical Commission Highlights

- GIST side event at the Statistical Commission focused on STAT and learning culture, event was well-attended. During side event Djibouti expressed interest in implementing STAT
- The outcomes of the GIST annual meeting were shared at the Statistical Commission
- Overall appreciation was expressed for GIST's tools and work during the Commission.

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