

GIST Board Meeting Minutes



Date: 3 July 2025

Time: 08:00-09:10 EDT (12:00 – 13:10 UTC)

Attendees:

- **Elena Proden** (UNITAR, GIST Chair)
- **Dorota Rozmus** (Statistics Poland, Co-lead new TT on Big Data and Data Science)
- **Anna Rusinek** (Statistics Poland)
- **Pedro Campos** (Statistics Portugal / University of Porto, Co-lead TT3)
- **Ziad Abdullah** (Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics - AITRS, Lead Translation TT)
- **Julieth Alejandra Solano Villa** (DANE Colombia, Co-lead TT1)
- **Alexandra Jane Simpson Silva** (DANE Colombia, TT1)
- **Sara Florez Hincapie** (DANE Colombia, TT1)
- **Francesca Perucci** (Open Data Watch, TT1)
- **Dag Roll-Hansen** (Statistics Norway, Co-lead TT2)
- **Elizabeth Baffoe-Bonnie** (Ghana Statistical Service, Co-lead TT2)
- **Bianca Walsh** (IBGE Brazil, Co-lead TT3)
- **Alexander Loschky** (UNSD, GIST Secretariat)
- **Clarence Lio** (UNSD, GIST Secretariat)
- **Gabriel Gamez** (UNSD, GIST Secretariat)

Apologies:

- **Derek Azar** (US Census Bureau, Co-lead new TT on Big Data and Data Science)
- **Tawheeda Wahabzada** (Open Data Watch, Co-lead TT1)

Summary of Action Items

#	Action Item	Lead(s)
1.1	Schedule an inaugural meeting for the new Task Team on new data sources/technologies.	Dorota Rozmus, Derek Azar + Support by the GIST Chair and Secretariat

1.2	Invite all GIST members to the inaugural meeting to help define the TT's scope and work plan.	Dorota Rozmus, Derek Azar + Support by the GIST Chair and Secretariat
3.1	Send a call for newsletter contributions to all GIST members via email.	Alexander Loschky (Secretariat)
3.2	Email all Task Team leads with instructions to update their pages on the GIST Wiki.	Alexander Loschky (Secretariat)
3.3	Task Teams to update their sections in the wiki as soon as possible.	All TT leads
4.1	Circulate the minutes of this meeting.	Alexander Loschky (Secretariat)
4.2	Schedule the next GIST Board meeting.	Elena Proden (GIST Chair)

1. Transition of the UNCEBD Task Team on Capacity Development and Training to GIST

Presented by: Alexander Loschky and Gabriel Gamez (GIST Secretariat)

Summary of Discussion:

- Alexander Loschky explained the proposal to move the Task Team (TT) on Capacity and Training from the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science (UNCEBD) to GIST. This move is intended to incorporate the TT's focus on capacity development on big data and data science training into GIST and rationalize the organization of related initiatives.
- Gabriel Gamez confirmed that an agreement had been reached with the TT's leads and that this transition would reinforce GIST by adding a dedicated focus on new data sources and technologies.
- **Introductions:** Dorota Rozmus and Anna Rusinek (Statistical Poland in Katowice) introduced themselves as members of the incoming task team. The other co-lead, Derek from the US Census Bureau, was unable to attend.
- **Discussion & Feedback:**
 - **Ziad Abdullah** expressed strong support for the initiative, highlighting the high demand for training in big data and data science in the Arab region. He noted the upcoming World Data Forum in Saudi Arabia as a key opportunity for collaboration and offered to be part of the new task team.
 - **Francesca Perucci** welcomed the idea and inquired about the scope of the transition. She asked whether the entire mandate would be transferred or if there would be an

opportunity for GIST members to help shape the new work plan and define the scope of "big data."

- **Gabriel Gamez** responded that the group had been somewhat dormant, and the transition is an opportunity to revitalize it. GIST members are welcome to join, and the task team will also seek new members from outside GIST, such as the UN Regional Hubs for Big Data. The scope will be delineated collaboratively.
- **Pedro Campos** suggested that the term "big data" may be outdated for many National Statistical Offices (NSOs), which more commonly work with complex but not necessarily high-volume data. He proposed focusing on methods like AI and machine learning for integrating new data sources, rather than on the "big data" label itself.
- **Gabriel Gamez** agreed this was a valuable discussion point. While the TT originates from a committee focused on "Big Data and Data Science," the move to GIST is a perfect opportunity to redefine the scope based on the needs of GIST members and member states. The key is to create a space within GIST for new data sources and technologies.

Decisions & Action Items:

- **Decision:** The proposal to transition the UNCEBD task team into GIST was approved in principle by the attendees.
- **Action Item 1.1:** The new task team leads (Dorota and Derek), with support from UNSD, will schedule an inaugural meeting.
- **Action Item 1.2:** An invitation will be sent to all GIST members to join the inaugural meeting to help define the task team's scope, work plan, and potential name.

2. Presentation of Task Team Workplans

2.1 Task Team 1: Addressing NSO Needs

- **Presented by:** Julieth Alejandra Solano Villa (DANE Colombia)
- **Summary:** The task team has a finalized work plan with five key activities:
 1. **Promote STAT Tool:** Implement the Statistical Training Assessment Tool (STAT) in new countries (proposed: Namibia, Palestine, Argentina, Djibouti).
 2. **Webinars:** Host webinars to promote the STAT tool and share knowledge.
 3. **Translation:** Complete the French translation of the STAT tool and initiate an Arabic translation (crucial for work with Palestine).
 4. **Analysis:** Analyze findings from STAT implementations to develop new indicators, with a specific link to the work of TT2 on Learning Culture.
 5. **Knowledge Sharing:** Create a community of practice for countries that have implemented the STAT tool to share experiences and challenges.

- **Update:** Kenya has expressed interest in joining the task team's work. The TT plans to hold its next meeting in the week of July 27th.

2.2 Task Team 2: Learning Culture

- **Presented by:** Dag Roll-Hansen (Statistics Norway)
- **Summary:** The task team's work plan focuses on four main areas:
 1. **Share Experiences:** Continue to host meetings where members share experiences and case studies on fostering a learning culture to build a common understanding of the concept.
 2. **Develop Materials:** Create promotional and advocacy materials (e.g., workshop guides, videos) to help organizations enhance their learning culture.
 3. **Develop Indicators:** Create indicators to measure progress in learning culture, collaborating closely with TT1 and utilizing data from the STAT tool.
 4. **Update Handbook:** Update the chapter on Human Resource Management in the *Handbook of Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems* to better incorporate the concept of learning culture.

2.3 Task Team 3: Statistical Literacy

- **Presented by:** Pedro Campos and Bianca Walsh (IBGE Brazil)
- **Summary:** The task team is progressing on four initiatives:
 1. **Statistical Literacy Inventory:** A call for contributions to populate the inventory on the GIST website is ongoing.
 2. **Guidance Note:** The first version of the "Guidance Note for NSOs on Statistical Literacy Initiatives" is complete and ready for publication on the GIST website.
 3. **Youth Initiative (Datathon/Hackathon):** An idea for an online datathon focused on measuring youth literacy of SDG indicators is under consideration. Discussions are ongoing to avoid overlap with other initiatives.
 4. **GROW Webinars:** The next webinar is being planned. A poll of members resulted in four potential topics: ChatGPT, Data & Algorithm Literacy, Indigenous Data Literacy, and a case study from India. The topic will be decided at the next TT meeting.

2.4 Translation Task Team

- **Presented by:** Ziad Abdullah (AITRS)
- **Summary:** The task team is being formed with confirmed participation from several Arab states, GCC-Stat, and the Arab Open University. Palestine will also be a member. An inaugural meeting

is planned for early August to define the scope and work plan. The first translation request is for the census guide.

3. Newsletter, GIST Wiki, and Website Revamp

Presented by: Alexander Loschky (GIST Secretariat)

- **Newsletter:** A call for articles for the next GIST newsletter will be sent out via email. A new submission form has been created on the GIST Confluence wiki to streamline the process.
- **Wiki and Website Revamp:**
 - UNSD is revamping the internal GIST Wiki. All task teams will be requested via email to update their pages with their mission, work plan, and member list.
 - **Crucially, this updated information on the Wiki will be used to automatically populate the public-facing GIST website.** This new, streamlined process is essential for UNSD to efficiently manage communications and support GIST activities.
- **GIST Information Document:** Gabriel Gamez proposed to develop a concise document explaining GIST's purpose, governance, and the objectives of each task team. This document should be based on the information provided by the task teams on the updated Wiki.

Action Items:

- **Action Item 3.1:** UNSD to send a call for newsletter contributions to all GIST members.
- **Action Item 3.2:** UNSD to email all Task Team leads with instructions to update their respective pages on the GIST Wiki.
- **Action Item 3.3:** Task Teams to update their sections in the wiki as soon as possible.

4. Any Other Business (AOB)

- **Secretary General's Report to the next Statistical Commission:** Gabriel Gamez informed the group that a report on capacity development is being prepared for the UN Statistical Commission. GIST's input will be solicited in the future, as human resources and training are a fundamental component.
- **Next meeting:** The GIST Chair and Secretariat will schedule the next Board meeting soon.