

Fourth meeting of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post-2015 monitoring (HLG for post-2015 monitoring)

New York, 6 March 2016

UNHQ, 2 UN Plaza

Closed meeting

Meeting report

Introduction

The fourth meeting of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post-2015 monitoring (HLG) took place on 6 March 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The fourth meeting of the HLG was held the weekend prior to the start of the 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission.

The agenda is included in Annex 1. Representatives from 17 of the 22 countries who are members of the group, a representative of the current chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission as an ex-officio member and the two co-chairs of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators attended the meeting (see Annex 2). An Update on the work of the HLG was prepared as a background document for the 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission¹. This background document contains the draft documents² agreed at this meeting and reflects decisions reached at this meeting of the HLG.

Agenda item 1: Opening

Ms. Gabriella Vukovich, co-chair of HLG, opened the meeting.

The provisional agenda was adopted after adding a discussion point on the global partnership to the agenda.

¹ Available from (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/BG-2016-3-update-high-level-group-for-partnership-E.pdf>)

² The draft documents are the proposed programme of work, the UN World Data Forum draft concept note, and the draft outline of the Global Action Plan.

Agenda item 2: Follow-up from the Third Meeting of the HLG

Review of mechanisms for involvement of observers

The group agreed that a process and mechanism needs to be established on how observers and issue partners can be involved in the work of the HLG and how decisions are communicated with all stakeholders. Given the importance of the work of the HLG, the group needs to clarify when it will convene open/closed meetings and when issue partners will be invited. It was suggested that meetings held in conjunction with the Statistical Commission should be open to allow for the broader participation of the colleagues in New York to attend the Commission.

Action points:

- ✓ *Members from United States and the State of Palestine to prepare a draft of a concept note on participation of observers in the HLG and a communication strategy to be circulated to the HLG Members to be circulated by 21 March 2016.*
- *HLG Members to provide comments on the concept note by 1 April 2016.*
- *UNSD to disseminate the concept note on the HLG website.*

Finalization of work programme for 2016

UNSD presented a draft proposal for HLG work programme for 2016/2017, which includes activities of the two HLG subgroups on the Global Action Plan for Data and the UN World Data Forum. The composition of the subgroups is as follows:

- The subgroup on the Global Action Plan includes representatives from Denmark, Ecuador, Hungary, Malaysia, Mongolia, the State of Palestine, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Switzerland and the USA.
- The subgroup on the UN World Data Forum consists of representatives from Cote d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Hungary, the State of Palestine, Rwanda, South Africa and Tunisia.

The HLG Members agreed to convene the fifth meeting of the HLG in late May/early June 2016 (venue t.b.d.). The main objective of this meeting will be to discuss the preparation of the UN World Data Forum.

The HLG Members also agreed to establish a joint subgroup of IAEG-SDG and HLG Members tasked to draft a note on immediate statistical capacity building priorities for the implementation of the global SDG indicators. The purpose of the subgroup will be to link the work and objectives of the IAEG-SDGs and the HLG and provide a venue to discuss and recommend specific priorities and concrete actions for the implementation of the global SDG indicators, particularly with respect to statistical capacity building.

Action points:

- ✓ *UNSD to revise the work programme for March 2016 to March 2017 for inclusion in the background paper for the 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission and presentation by the co-Chair at the Commission.*³
- ✓ *UNSD to request expressions of interest from HLG and IAEG-SDG members to participate in the joint subgroup on immediate statistical capacity building and implementation priorities for the global SDG indicators.*

Agenda item 3: The Global Action Plan for Data

Update by the Subgroup

The HLG subgroup working on the Global Action Plan for Data presented an initial draft of the plan. It was agreed that the draft would be presented to the Commission in the background paper with some modifications described below. More substantial modifications and changes will be prepared by the subgroup based on discussions at this meeting and any feedback received during the Statistical Commission. The subgroup will further define the timeline and continue to develop the draft Global Action Plan for consultation with relevant stakeholders. It was agreed to include more specific details on actions proposed (what, when and who).

Regarding next steps after the Global Action Plan has been presented to and agreed/adopted by the Statistical Commission, some members raised the question of whether the plan should be elevated to the General Assembly or the High-level political forum (HLPF)?

Overall, the HLG agreed on the draft Global action plan. Additional open discussion topics, to be further discussed by the subgroup, are:

Cover note – It was recommended to include a cover note clarifying that the draft is a work in progress and explaining the process for its further elaboration. The cover note should also position the Global Action Plan within other activities undertaken by the HLG and the Statistical Commission, as well as its linkages to the work of the IAEG-SDGs and the HLG (see paragraph above on the establishment of a joint subgroup of IAEG-SDG and HLG members).

Timeline – Regarding the timeline for the development of the Global Action Plan, some members of the HLG cautioned against acting either too slowly or in haste. It was suggested that the HLG needs to be proactive and prepare the first steps as soon as possible. In this connection, both the representatives of the IAEG-SDGs and HLG members emphasized the need for developing, as soon as possible, specific guidelines on what countries need to do to address the statistical challenges of the 2030 Agenda, and how the statistical community can support countries.

³ The draft proposal is included in Annex I of the background document presented at the forty-seventh session of the Statistical Commission (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/BG-2016-3-update-high-level-group-for-partnership-E.pdf>).

Regarding the duration of the plan, some HLG members suggested three phases of action, namely, 2016-2020, 2021-2025, and 2026-2030, each of which should have clearly defined priorities.

Issue partners – Some members requested to invite issue partners, such as Paris 21 and the World Bank, to share their experiences with previous action plans when discussing the draft Global Action Plan for Data at future HLG meetings.

Literacy, accountability – It was stressed the importance of including the development of guidelines for public/private dialogue and communication with stakeholders under strategic objective 4.1 of the action plan.

Importance of statistics – It was suggested to underscore the importance of statistics and to enhance the language on the connection between statistics and the political process.

Managing the different data sources – It was suggested to add language and objectives on data sources, to ensure consistent practices within the scope of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Furthermore, it was suggested to include objectives on the development of institutional arrangements under Strategic Area 4, to help develop and guide the link between public and private data.

Integration approach – It was noted that an integrated approach and coordination across themes and statistical process and geography has significant global implications. It was suggested to include elements on an integrated approach in the global action plan, e.g., drawing from the experiences of Australia and Mexico.

Needs of specific countries – Some HLG members suggested to acknowledge and highlight in the action plan the heterogeneity of countries' capacities and priorities, and that the action plan should aim to strengthen coordination. It was discussed that the action plan should address the specific needs of national statistical systems in developing countries, particularly LDCs and countries in special situations, e.g., in strategic action 5.

Resources – Some members also indicated that the global action plan should provide guidance for managing and funding capacity building efforts. It was requested that the plan should be more specific on official development assistance (ODA) and South-South cooperation, among other strategies.

Ownership – Overall, HLG members stressed that the action plan needs to be owned by the countries and the Statistical Commission, and with National Statistical Offices playing the central role in its implementation at the country level. It was also suggested to include text in the action plan explaining the role of the international organizations in this process.

Scope – While there is agreement that the main focus of the action plan should be on the challenges of the 2030 Agenda, the HLG indicated its scope is beyond sustainable development, covering capacity building, partnership and coordination for statistics in all domains.

HLM members agreed on the following specific revisions to the draft Global Action Plan to be submitted to the 47th session of the Statistical Commission:

- Remove the current timeline, incorporate specific action points and insert language on the role of trust between in statistical systems.
- Under strategic objective 1.1, add language on “national statistical systems”. It was emphasized that we need good systems to monitor these actions.
- Add an additional strategic area on *dissemination and use of statistics*.
- HLG members agreed to provide additional suggestions for revisions to the draft in writing to the Secretariat for inclusion in the revised Global Action Plan as part of the background document for the 47th Session. Inputs were received from Ecuador, Italy and Kazakhstan.

Action points:

- ✓ *UNSD to revise the Global action plan taking into account the quick fixes for inclusion in the background paper for the 47th Session of the UNSC.*
- ✓ *Establishment of a joint subgroup of IAEG-SDG and HLG Members tasked to draft a note on immediate statistical capacity building priorities for the implementation of the global SDG indicators.*
- *Subgroup to revise the Global action plan based on the substantive comments made during the meeting (summarized above) and continue work on the revised draft to be circulated prior to the next meeting.*

Agenda item 4: The United Nations World Data Forum

Update by the Subgroup

UNSD updated the HLG that the expression of interest to host the UN World Data Forum will be circulated to the UN missions by Under-Secretary General Mr. Wu on 8 March 2016. It will allow for a two-week reply period. The note includes specific reference to the need for the national statistical office of the host country to contribute to the national planning and implementation of the UN WDF. It was agreed to delete paragraph 3 from the concept note.

It was asked to clarify what the process is if we receive multiple expressions of interest. It was requested that the committee be made up of colleagues from the north and south.

Some ideas on themes for inclusion in the UN WDF include new data sources, big data, and the role of administrative records in the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

Action points:

- ✓ *UN-DESA (UNSD) to circulate the expression of interest on 8 March 2016.*
- *UNSD to review the expressions of interest and bring preparatory work on the administrative matters.*
- *Subgroup to develop detailed plan for the organization of the UN WDF in consultation with other stakeholders.*
- *HLG to provide comments to the subgroup and the Secretariat on the concept note within 3 weeks.*

Agenda item 5: Global Partnership

The issue of the Global Partnership was brought up by South Africa. It was reiterated that the NSOs need to be at the center of this endeavour. The HLG was informed by South Africa that the African heads of state will be tabling a resolution to the Commission and that the Secretary General will be asked in the Second Committee what the process was in the formation of the Global Partnership. The African community will seek for the Secretary-General to inaugurate the Global partnership at the UN WDF.

Agenda item 6: Conclusions

It was agreed that the next meeting of the HLG will take place in late May/early June 2016. UNSD will explore availability of conference rooms in NY. If a member of the HLG would like to host the next meeting, please inform UNSD as soon as possible.

The two subgroups will continue their work on their respective tasks (see above action points under specific agenda items for more details).

Annex 1. Agenda

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Statistics Division

ESA/STAT/AC.316/L.1
7 March 2016

Fourth meeting of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post-2015 monitoring (HLG for post-2015 monitoring)

New York, 6 March 2016
Closed meeting

Sunday, 6 March 2016

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

- 1. Opening**
- 2. Follow-up from the Third Meeting of the HLG**
 - Review of mechanisms for involvement of observers
 - Finalization of work plan for 2016
- 3. The Global Action Plan for Data**
 - Update by the Subgroup
 - Discussion on the elements of the Global Action Plan
- 4. The United Nations World Data Forum**
 - Update by the Subgroup
 - Discussion on next steps
- 5. Global Partnership**
- 6. Conclusions**

Annex 2. List of Participants

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Statistics Division

ESA/STAT/AC.316/L2

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New York, 6 March 2016

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HLG members

Argentina	Mr. Jorge Todesca Director Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos
Argentina	Mr. Hernan Munoz National Director of Planning and Statistical Coordination Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ibrahima Ba Director General Institut National de la Statistique
Denmark	Mr. Jørgen Elmeskov Director General, National Statistician Statistics Denmark
Denmark	Mr. Niels Ploug Director, Social Statistics Statistics Denmark
Ecuador	Mr. José Alejandro Rosero Moncayo Executive Director Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos
El Salvador	Mr. Pablo Jose Soriano Counsellor Permanent Mission to the UN
Hungary	Ms. Gabriella Vukovich President Hungarian Central Statistical Office
Italy	Mr. Giorgio Alleva President Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat)
Italy	Ms. Marina Gandolfo Head of International Relations Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat)
Kazakhstan	Mr. Zhasser Jarkinbayev Vice Chairman Statistics Committee of Kazakhstan
Mongolia	Mr. B.Badamtsetseg Director of Integrated Policy and Cooperation Department National Registration and Statistics Office of Mongolia
Mongolia	Ms. S. Oycenchimeg Director of Population and Social Statistics National Statistical Office of Mongolia

Mongolia	Ms. Khusten Acting Director of IRD National Statistical Office of Mongolia
Mozambique	Mr. Saide Dade Advisor to the President Instituto Nacional de Estatística
Rwanda	Mr. Yusuf Murangwa Director General National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
Rwanda	Mr. Dominique Habimana Director, Statistical Methods, Research and Publication National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
South Africa	Mr. Pali Lehohla Statistician General Statistics South Africa
South Africa	Mr. Risenga Maluleke Deputy Director-General Statistics South Africa
South Africa	Ms. Yandiswa Mpetsheni Acting Deputy Director-General Statistics South Africa
State of Palestine	Ms. Ola Shakhshir President Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)
State of Palestine	Mr. Loay Ghouneim Director General of Public Relations Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)
State of Palestine	Mr. Khaled Palazwa Director of Science and Technology Dept Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)
Switzerland	Mr. Benjamin Rothen Deputy Head of the Unit International Affairs Swiss Federal Statistical Office
United Kingdom	Mr. Neil Jackson Chief Statistician Department for International Development
United States	Ms. Katherine Wallman Chief Statistician Office of Management and Budget
United States	Ms. Jennifer Park Senior Advisor Office of Management and Budget
Vanuatu	Mr. Simil Johnson Youse Government Statistician Vanuatu National Statistical Office

Invited speakers

IAEG-SDGs	Mr. Enrique Jesús Ordaz López Director General for Integration, Analysis and Research Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI)
IAEG-SDGs	Ms. Lisa Grace Bersales National Statistician and Civil Registrar General Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

Secretariat

UNSD	Mr. Stefan Schweinfest Director United Nations Statistics Division
UNSD	Ms. Francesca Perucci Chief, Statistical Services Branch United Nations Statistics Division
UNSD	Mr. Luis González Morales Statistician United Nations Statistics Division
UNSD	Ms. Linda Hooper Statistician United Nations Statistics Division