



THE INTER-SECRETARIAT  
**WORKING GROUP ON  
HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS**

# Strengthening household surveys: from inclusivity to interoperability



[unstats.un.org/iswghs](https://unstats.un.org/iswghs)

# Current Status of Household Surveys

Household surveys  
are **IMPORTANT** for  
research, policy  
and development

But with challenges on:

- Availability, coverage, accuracy, timeliness, cost-effectiveness policy-relevance and use of household surveys
- Diminishing response rates; coordination failures; lengthy questionnaires
- A crowded backdrop of competing data sources and methods: survey needs to work with other data sources

# Positioning Household Surveys for the Next Decade



☐ Organized around **8 technical priorities**:

Enhancing the **interoperability** and **integration** of household surveys

Designing and implementing more **inclusive, respondent-centric surveys**

Improving sampling efficiency and coverage

Scaling up the use of objective measurement technologies

Building capacity for CAPI, phone, web, and mixed-mode surveys

Systematizing the collection, storage, and use of paradata and metadata

Incorporating machine learning and artificial intelligence for data quality control and analysis

Improving data access, discoverability, and dissemination.

Commissioned by the Working Group and endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2022 (53<sup>rd</sup> session) “[Positioning Household Surveys for the Next Decade](#)”

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# Revision of the UN Handbook on Household Surveys

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Mandated by the UN  
Statistical Commission,  
March 2024

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Guided by the Inter-  
Secretariat Working Group  
on Household Surveys

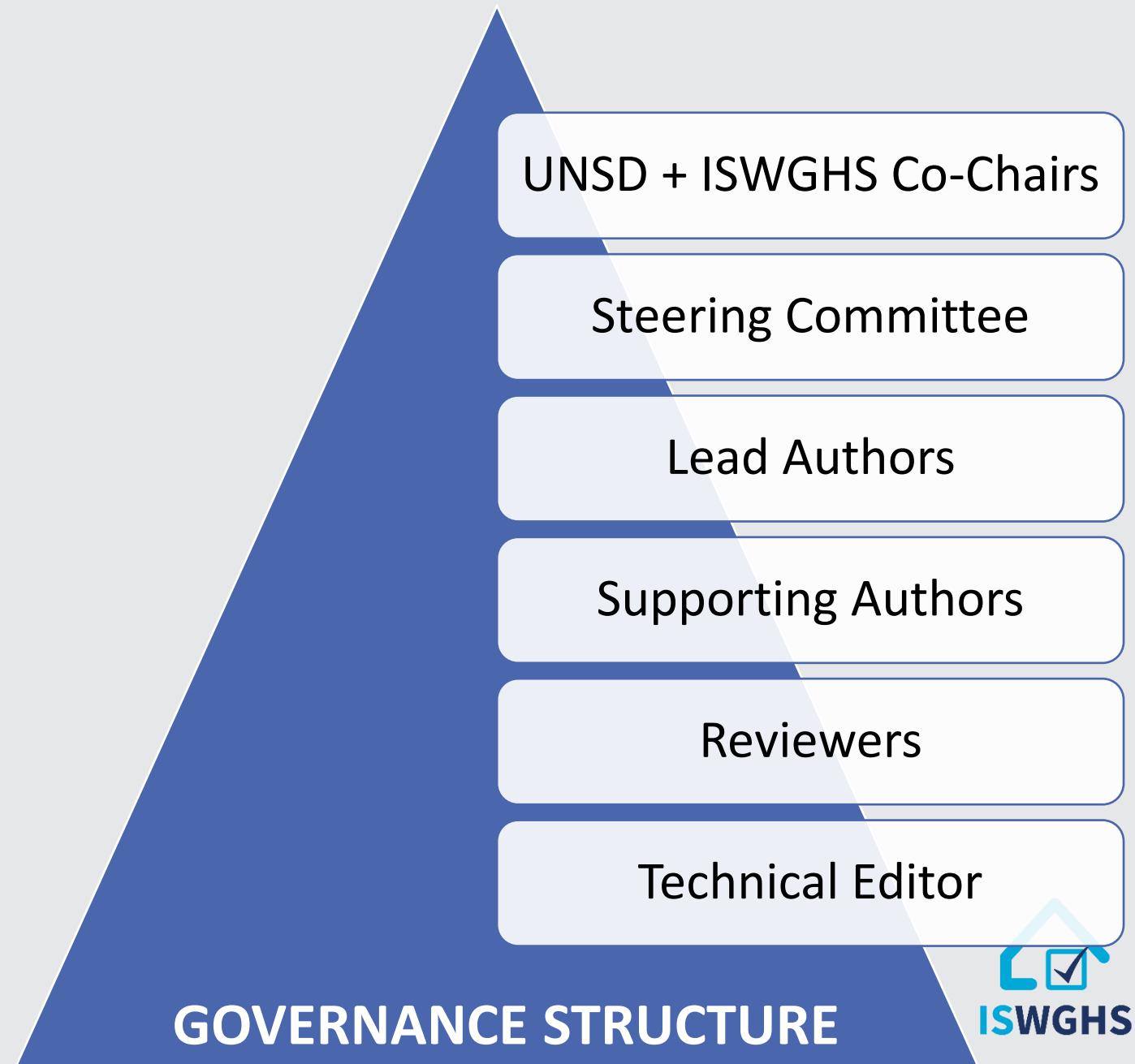
## The previous versions:

- United Nations Handbook on Household Surveys, 1984
- Other handbooks covering different aspects of household surveys: 1982-2008

Draft handbook to be submitted to the UN Statistical Commission  
March 2026

# What is special about the revised handbook?

- 8 Steering committee members
- 43 drafters
- 35 reviewers
- 20 NSOs representing different regions
- 24 Academia/survey consulting firm
- 22 international/regional organisations



# What is special about the revised handbook?

## Multiple rounds of consultations with different communities:

- Key experts in the household survey field (Nov – Dec 2023)
- United Nations Inaugural meeting on the Revision of the Handbooks of the Household Surveys, 22-24 Jan. 2024
- Regional consultations (Africa, Asia, Europe and LAC)
- Thematic areas: migration, IDP-refugees, time use surveys, gender, persons with disabilities, LGBTQi+

## Striking a balance between foundation and innovation

## Incorporating country case studies for practical guidance

# What is special about the revised handbook? (Cont.)

## More inclusive:

- Going beyond households: taking into considerations population living outside of households (Do we change the name??)
- Strengthening areas on engaging with respondents and citizens, and on establishing a renewed relationship with our respondents
- Integrating special considerations to ensure surveys are inclusive for gender, children, refugee/IDPs, SIDs and countries under/post conflict

## Interoperable/ integration:

- Treating surveys as an element within the national statistical and data ecosystem and improving interoperability by design
- A crosscutting theme that all chapters need to provide guidance on



# Structure of the Revised Handbook

Chapter	Topic
0	Introduction
1	Features of household surveys/ crosscutting themes
2	Needs, Scope and Business Case
3	Survey Management
4	Questionnaire
5	Frame and Sampling
6	Data Collection
7	Data Processing
8	Weighting
9	Analysis
10	Dissemination
Annex	Thematic Areas (see next slide)

Each chapter follows the same draft framework:

Overview and roadmap

How to

Innovations

Resources

Needs to cover the crosscutting themes:

Quality/FPOS

Modes

Data integration/interoperability

Inclusivity

Respondent burden

# We want to hear from you!

Challenges encountered in conducting household surveys;

Information that has been insufficiently covered in existing guidance on household surveys and should be included in this revision;

What questions would you like the handbook to respond to, will

- Inform the topics of the case studies
- Be used as training data for the “chatbot”

Preferred formats for dissemination to facilitate easier access and updates



**Provide your input!**  
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