

Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress

Establishment and mandate

At its forty-fourth session, in 2013, the Statistical Commission, by its decision 44/114: **Follow-up to the policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission: response to the Rio+20 mandate for broader measures of progress**

(a) In its capacity as the designated “intergovernmental focal point for the elaboration and the review of the indicators used by the United Nations system”¹ and, in response to the specific mandate of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), decided to launch a work programme to develop broader measures of progress;

(b) Recognized the importance of developing adequate measures to support the evolving debate on sustainable development policy at both the national and international levels, and noted in this context that significant work has already been done in past years and is currently being carried out by the Commission (for example, the Millennium Development Goals, the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting) as well as by national, regional and international organizations;

(c) Noted that, even if no single measure captures today’s complex development notion and even if it will take time to develop a set of technically solid and globally agreed measures of progress, there is a need to start the work as soon as possible on defining such a set;

(d) Stressed that “broader measures of progress” have to be part of a larger information infrastructure/architecture in order to support development policy at all levels and need therefore to be linked to evolving sustainable development goals and any framework that will support the post-2015 development agenda;

(e) Insisted that the statistical community needs to be adequately involved in the discussion on new development frameworks, in order to advise early on any formulation of targets and indicators;

(f) Expressed concern that the statistical capacity of many countries, especially, but not exclusively, developing countries, is limited and that significant investments for statistical capacity over the coming years will be necessary so that statistics for sustainable development are themselves sustainable;

(g) Supported the formation of a Friends of the Chair group to build a work programme to develop broader measures of progress based on a stocktaking exercise of current national, regional and international practices in this field, and to conduct a technical review of these existing efforts with a view to identifying good/best practices and to facilitating the sharing of knowledge, especially for the benefit of developing countries; requested the Friends of the Chair group to closely monitor the ongoing debate on development frameworks and to keep the Bureau of the Statistical Commission informed, undertaking an active dialogue with United Nations bodies and the policy sphere in order to ensure that a robust statistical measurement approach is incorporated from the outset in preparations for the post-2015 development agenda; requested the secretariat to assist the Commission in its work by organizing meetings of the Friends of the Chair group and preparing relevant materials, including an inventory of existing practices, and requested the Friends of the Chair group to report on the preliminary results of its work to the Commission at its next session in order to receive guidance for subsequent work.

¹ See General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.