



UN Expert Group on National Quality Assurance Frameworks

Comments on NQAFs (received in response to the questions in the 13 August 2010 EG launch letter/e-mail):

Japan: Minoru YAMASAKI, 6 September 2010

Thank you for your e-mail of 14 August 2010. We, Japanese government, are currently addressing the issue of our national quality assurance framework as below. So, I'm happy to work together with the experts on in this Group.

What are your country's or agency's experiences – if any – with the development or use of an NQAF?

What problems and obstacles have you experienced or anticipate experiencing in developing and implementing an NQAF?

In Japan, each agency produces various official statistics for its own administrative purpose with no standard model for quality assurance / quality assessments. We have initiated the development of a common framework of quality assurance / quality assessments for every statistical agency of whole national government, which will contribute to the improvement in all official statistics. (The framework is expected to be completed in next year).

In our attempt above, we have referred to some existing frameworks developed by other countries and international organizations. Now, we recognize that there are some problems to be resolved such that what level of the quality standard of the framework we should set on the assumption that the standard might differ according to the users of statistics and their purposes?

What are the main needs and priorities from a country perspective vis-à-vis the development and implementation of an NQAF?

What are your initial comments regarding the three proposed templates for a generic NQAF presented in the Statistics Canada report

In order to produce official statistics timely and accurately responding to the user's needs, we are working for the development of a framework of quality assurance / quality assessments. As I mentioned before, there are big differences among the agencies in terms of resources, or contents of their statistics. Under these circumstances, it is feared that setting high standards of the framework could not be as effective as expected. Therefore, I think it necessary to develop and manage a feasible framework. For example, several kinds of level (such as "required", "desirable", "optional") should be set on each standard consisting of the framework.

Taking the above-mentioned our circumstances into consideration, I think, in developing and implementing the NQAF in this Expert Group, it is important to discuss and to set standards and management policy so that even the countries or statistical agencies that have small resources could introduce and improve the quality.

In our work for developing a common framework of quality assurance / quality assessments, we mainly refer to the frameworks by the Statistics Canada and the European Statistical System of proposed three NQAFs. On the other hand, we recognize that the framework by IMF has played a vital role as the assessment framework for data quality of countries.

I also would like to make a comment on the direction of the discussion in this Expert Group. I understand that our aim is to develop a generic national quality



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assurance framework which will be agreed widely in the international community, whereas many frameworks exist. For that purpose, I would suggest that, considering the circumstances of each country like Japan as above, we should discuss not only the contents of the NQAF but also the management policy of the NQAF in this Expert Group. It is essential to ensure the effectiveness of this NQAF.

Best regards,

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