

Minutes

UN Coordination for the Implementation programme of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics

**New York
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Participants:

AfDB: Mr. Adalbert Nshimyumuremyi
Eurostat: Mr. Pieter Everaers, Mr. James Whitworth
UN-ECA: Mr. Dimitri Sanga
UN-ECE: Ms. Lidia Bratanova
UN-ECLAC: Mr. Luis Gonzales
UN-ESCAP: Mr. Jan Smit
UN-ESCWA: Mr. Giovanni Savio
UNSD: Ivo Havinga, Rob Edwards, Ronald Jansen, Herman Smith, Alessandra Alfieri,
Benson Sim, Ricardo Martinez-Lagunes, Leonardo Souza, Daniel Clarke

1. Introduction

UNSD opened the meeting highlighting the positive developments that flowed from the collaboration between UNSD and the Regional Commissions to strengthen individual work programmes and to ensure a common approach to the SNA implementation. The Regional Commissions confirmed their commitment and welcomed the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest. ECLAC indicated that there is a need for coordinating data exchange between UNSD and the Regional Commissions to reduce the response burden on the countries. UNSD will discuss the issue with each Regional Commission and report at the next coordination meeting.

2. The implementation programme of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics

UNSD provided an overview of the global implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics. The Regional Commissions presented their regional initiatives, reflecting the goals set for the three stages of the change over to the 2008 SNA and ways to assist countries for drafting their implementation programmes. The priority in 2011 will be on the drafting of the national implementation programmes for the 2008 SNA.

Synergies with the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme (ICP) and other programmes, such as the development of agricultural statistics, were identified. It may be possible to build on the momentum from these programmes, particularly the ICP, to facilitate the 2008 SNA implementation programme. The National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) need to reflect the implementation of the 2008 and these synergies.

The Regional Commissions agreed to strongly encourage countries to draft their national implementation plans as envisaged in Stage 1 of the global implementation programme for the

2008 SNA and supporting statistics. The development of the expenditure accounts (in relation with the ongoing support from the ICP program) and business registers are considered priority areas, for which modular templates should be prepared to undertake self assessments as an input in the drafting of the national implementation plans. Progressively, other modular templates in accordance with the building blocks of the statistical production process are to be prepared, like for source data, integration and dissemination, institutional arrangements, etc.

3. The research agenda of the 2008 SNA

UNSD presented the ISWGNA approach to address issues on the 2008 SNA Research Agenda. The procedures for approving and deciding on topics, and the publication of the results, as set out in the ISWGNA report to the 2011 UNSC, were highlighted. The Regional Commissions were invited to increase their participation in the SNA research discussions. For this purpose UNSD and the Regional Commissions agreed to coordinate in developing views on SNA research issues.

4. Training and Capacity building

UNSD noted that insufficient statistical training is a hindrance to successful implementation of the SNA for countries with less developed statistical systems. In this context, the ISWGNA agreed to an integrated approach for standardized, comprehensive and easily accessible training material for all domains of economic statistics to facilitate the 2008 SNA implementation. For optimal use of resources and to avoid duplication of efforts, UNSD called for better coordination of efforts with the Regional Commissions.

The Regional Commissions presented their regional training initiatives and welcomed the initiative to develop a knowledge base for training material. Eurostat also presented its training initiatives, calling the attention for the increased use of its software ERETES.

The creation of a knowledge base on training material similar to the one on UNSD website on Economic Statistics: Methods and Country Practices is envisaged. As a concrete step, existing training materials from international agencies and countries will be made progressively available through this dedicated knowledgebase on training materials.

UNSD and the regional commissions should partner with other international organisations, regional institutions and countries in this endeavour. Further initiatives have to be considered such as training for trainers, e-learning and audio-visual training materials.

5. Environmental Economic Accounts

UNSD summarized the latest news on Environmental Economic Accounts. In particular, it stressed the importance to engage countries in commenting on the draft chapters of the revised SEEA to ensure that the perspectives of developing countries are taken into account in the standard, considering its future implementation. In this regard, UNSD also emphasised that the Regional Commission have a role to play.

The Regional Commissions noted that in some regions such as ECLAC and ESCWA the cooperation with UNSD has been very productive, particularly concerning the organization of workshops and in-country visits for the implementation of the SEEA-Water.

It was noted that given the limited resources in countries, it would be useful to integrate the development of basic environment statistics in the regular production processes of basic statistics. On-going initiatives in business registers should also cover the development of statistics such as water and energy use by economic activities. In the same vein, initiatives on the development of indicators of sustainable development or green growth/green economy indicators should also be seen as developing basic statistics that in time can be integrated in the accounting framework.

ECE envisages in the future a more active engagement in the implementation of the SEEA, in particular after its adoption by the Statistical Commission. This will provide the ECE a clear mandate to work with countries on the implementation of the SEEA and its sub-modules.

6. International trade and tourism statistics

UNSD briefed the Regional Commissions on the efforts to integrate trade with other economic statistics. The Regional Commissions noted that there have been limited regional initiatives on trade and tourism statistics, but there may be an increase in the number and scope of these initiatives as a result of the integration with other economic statistics. With many different players in this field, UNSD stressed the importance of a good cooperation between the Regional Commissions and UNSD.

7. Conclusions and the way forward

The meeting noted that there is already strong cooperation between UNSD and Regional Commissions on the 2008 SNA implementation. In keeping with Stage 1 of the global implementation programme, two priority areas in advancing the formulation of national programmes of implementation were identified: a) a modular template for the statistical development of expenditure accounts (GDP by expenditure) and b) a modular template for business registers. Moreover, where possible, the synergies should be attained from leveraging the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme in the development of the modular approach to the expenditure accounts and ongoing activities of the Regional Commission in the development of business registers.

The meeting also expressed the need for a collective approach in making existing training materials accessible for all domains of economic statistics. UNSD and the Regional Commissions will share existing training material through the creation of a knowledge base and will mobilise their regional partners and member countries to share their training material.