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## Statistical Commission

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**Items for discussion and decision: governance statistics**

## Report of the Praia Group on governance statistics

### Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2015/216 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of Cabo Verde on the current and planned activities of the Praia Group on governance statistics. The report describes the outcome of the meeting of the Praia Group, which was held from 17 to 19 June 2015 in Praia, including a 2016-2020 road map and priority actions towards the development of a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices, which will cover the conceptualization, measurement methodology and dissemination of governance statistics.

The Commission is invited to express its views on the priority areas identified by the Praia Group in its report. The Group also seeks the Commission's endorsement of its 2016-2020 road map for the development of a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices.

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\* E/CN.3/2016/1.



## Report of the Praia Group on governance statistics

### I. Purpose and organization of the Praia Group

1. The report on governance, peace and security statistics (E/CN.3/2015/17) was presented to the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session. Prepared by the national statistical office of Cabo Verde with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the report contained a proposal to establish a Praia group on governance statistics, whose purpose would be to encourage countries to produce governance statistics based on sound and documented methodologies and to address the conceptualization, methodology and instruments needed to produce such statistics. The Praia group would produce a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices. The endorsement of the report, with strong support from countries representing all continents and international organizations, underlined the pertinence and importance of governance statistics.

2. The first meeting of the Praia Group, held in Praia from 17 to 19 June 2015, led to the establishment of a steering committee which included representatives from the African Development Bank, the Cabo Verde National Statistics Institute, the National Institute for Statistics and Geography of Mexico, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Saferworld. The steering committee will implement a communication and advocacy strategy to encourage countries to share expertise on governance statistics with the Praia Group and to produce governance statistics; support the activities of the members of the Praia Group; ensure that different perspectives are considered and that the focus remains on the national and subnational levels; and help to identify sources of funding to guarantee the participation of Praia Group members from the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict countries.<sup>1</sup>

3. The first meeting of the Praia Group was attended by experts and representatives from national statistics offices of, inter alia, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, East Timor, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, the Niger, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, Tunisia and the State of Palestine. Several international, intergovernmental and civil society organizations also participated, namely, the African Development Bank, Développement, Institutions et Mondialisation (DIAL), the Economic Community of West African States, the Group of Seven Plus, OHCHR, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), PARIS21, Saferworld, the Transparency, Accountability and Participation Network, UNDP, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Witwatersrand

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<sup>1</sup> Participation in city groups is not funded, but the Praia Group will not be able to work in an inclusive manner or develop a holistic methodology if only members from institutions with funding capacity are able to participate.

University. Several entities were not able to attend but expressed their interest in participating in subsequent meetings.<sup>2</sup>

4. The recommendations made at the first meeting of the Praia Group included:

(a) Given the objectives of harmonization and universality in measuring governance, the Praia Group considers it essential to increase the participation of other stakeholders, including those from the developed countries, which are underrepresented compared with developing countries;<sup>3</sup>

(b) Promote the integration of governance statistics into official statistical systems to ensure regular production;

(c) The Praia Group recognizes that although the scope of its endeavours is broader than Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals, “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”, it is necessary to contribute to the discussion on indicators for the Goal, in consultation with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. This must be accomplished through the member countries of both the Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the Praia Group;

(d) Focus on advocacy for the measurement of governance, benefiting from the international momentum created by the Sustainable Development Goals;

(e) Provide more visibility to the Praia Group through cooperation with other global partnership initiatives, such as the Open Government Partnership and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

5. The members of the Praia Group will work in subgroups based on the outline of each activity provided in the terms of reference (see [E/CN.3/2015/17](#)). The steering committee will facilitate the work of the working groups. The proposed 2016-2020 road map for the development of a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices contains the activities set out below.

## **II. A mapping, critical assessment and synthesis of available instances of the conceptualization and measurement of governance by various countries and continents, research institutions, agencies of the United Nations system and other actors using different approaches**

6. National statistical offices, international organizations and civil society have already conducted critical and valuable work. The consolidation of best practices is

<sup>2</sup> The institutions include the national statistics offices of Ghana, Panama, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the following international, intergovernmental and civil society organizations: the African Union, the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), Global Forum for Media Development, Transparency International and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

<sup>3</sup> At the first meeting of the Praia Group, members agreed on the importance of strengthening the presence of developed countries in the group. Whenever possible, the Group will avoid scheduling meetings at the same time as other regional and international meetings on related topics.

needed, and such mapping is instrumental to initiating the methodological work pursued by the Group. Although several institutions have collected governance data, there is no agreement among relevant institutions on the concept used and its dimensions. The mapping will therefore focus on existing concepts of governance in use by different institutions, as well as on survey methodology, the structure of administrative records and procedures for data analysis and dissemination.

7. The purpose of this mapping is to ground the work of the Praia Group in existing initiatives, capitalize on the data revolution for sustainable development,<sup>4</sup> and provide users with documentation referring to relevant work on governance statistics.

8. In 2016, the Praia Group will conduct a survey among all identified producers of governance statistics. The results will be compiled by the steering committee and analysed by members of the Praia Group. The conclusions will be presented to the Statistical Commission.

### **III. Mapping of the demand for governance statistics by various user constituencies, such as policymakers, parliamentarians, national human rights commissions, national anti-corruption commissions, national security systems, civil society organizations, research institutions, citizens and international and regional bodies concerned with governance**

9. Ultimately, the aim of governance is to deliver solutions to people's problems. In that sense, it is a universal concept; demand for better governance statistics thus could come from anywhere. However, at its first meeting, the Praia Group acknowledged that States at different stages of development (fragile States, countries in transition or development and stable countries) will approach governance differently and demand for governance statistics will therefore come from different constituencies in different contexts and with respect to different national policy space.

10. Demands for governance statistics are increasing. Governments, municipalities, academia, civil society, private sector entities, scientific communities, media organizations, youth groups and regional, human rights and international organizations are the main users and require statistics on different aspects of governance. Praia Group members agreed that the scope of the Group's work should include, but not be limited to, violence and perceptions of peaceful societies,<sup>5</sup> quality of democracy, corruption, institutional capacity, child protection, justice, women's participation and empowerment, illicit financial flows and human rights.

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<sup>4</sup> In the report entitled "A world that counts: mobilizing the data revolution for sustainable development" (2014), it is stated that any legal or regulatory mechanisms, or networks or partnerships, set up to mobilize the data revolution for sustainable development should have the protection of human rights as a core part of their activities, specify who is responsible for upholding those rights, and support the protection, respect and fulfilment of human rights.

<sup>5</sup> The measurement of crime and violence is within the scope of the road map to improve the quality and availability of crime statistics at the national and international levels. The Praia Group should therefore follow the agreements set out in the road map on crime statistics and the advances towards their implementation.

11. The first mapping of demand will be conducted in 2016 and a second is planned for 2019 with the aim of aligning the handbook with rising demand and ensuring that new concerns and apprehensions are addressed in the methodology to be developed.

#### **IV. Expert consultations on the various constitutive dimensions of governance statistics and user consultations with ministries or other entities responsible for the governance agenda at the national, regional and international levels**

12. The longer-term task is the production of a handbook on governance statistics and supporting documentation. The Praia Group envisages five phases in its work: (a) phase 1, mapping, critical assessment and synthesis of available instances of the conceptualization and measurement of governance by various countries and continents, research institutions, agencies of the United Nations system and other actors using different approaches (2016); (b) phase 2, mapping of demand for governance statistics by various user constituencies, such as policymakers, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, national anti-corruption commissions, national security systems, civil society organizations, research institutions, citizens and international and regional bodies concerned with governance (2016); (c) phase 3, preparation of the first draft of the handbook (2017); (d) phase 4, consultation on the draft handbook (2018); and (e) phase 5, revision of the draft in the light of the consultations (2018).<sup>6</sup>

13. During phases 1, 2, 3 and 4, it will be necessary to make proposals on the content of the first draft of the handbook, which will be informed by the results of the mappings and consultations conducted by the respective working groups.

14. The handbook will focus on:

- (a) Institutional coordination;
- (b) Concepts, dimensions and operational definitions;
- (c) Statistical methodologies;
- (d) Questionnaire design;
- (e) Structure of and procedures relating to administrative records;
- (f) Analysis plan;
- (g) Dissemination.

15. Consultations will be conducted in selected countries, bringing together different stakeholders (statisticians, policymakers, human rights experts and civil society) to discuss concepts, statistical methodologies and policy uses.

16. In phase 5, the draft handbook will be revised in the light of the consultation during phase 4. The revised document will be discussed by the Praia Group in October 2018 and presented to regional statistics commissions (Africa in November 2018; Asia-Pacific in December 2018; Europe/OECD in May 2019; America in

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<sup>6</sup> The final report of the Praia Group and the handbook on governance statistics will be prepared by November 2019 for presentation to the Statistical Commission in March 2020.

September 2019). Alongside the regional consultations, an online consultation will be open to national statistics offices from November 2018 to September 2019.

17. The handbook will be submitted to the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in November 2019 and presented to the Statistical Commission in March 2020.

## **V. Development of technical documents containing methodological and practical guidelines for improved gathering and compilation of governance statistics at all levels, covering issues of concept definition, data quality, comparability, methodology, possible sources and data compilation and dissemination mechanisms**

18. In order to develop the handbook, several technical documents will be produced based on the outcomes of the activities listed above. The documents will focus on:

- (a) Guidance on the content (concepts, definitions, metadata, questionnaires, etc.) and the process of operationalization (planning, budget, actors to be involved);
- (b) Main components of the final product (for example, guidance, handbook, operational manuals);
- (c) Existing international standards relevant to governance, human rights, corruption, peace and security;
- (d) Conceptual framework: main dimensions of the subject of measurement;
- (e) Methodological framework: data sources (administrative data, survey-based data, big data, crowdsourcing), data quality and safeguards for data collection (such as data confidentiality in line with existing legal frameworks);
- (f) Core list of indicators with metadata information, as well as flexibility to develop contextually specific indicators;
- (g) Guidance on operationalization at the country level (planning, institutional coordination and arrangements, data collection, consolidation, dissemination and analysis of results, tabulation plans, access to microdata/open data, capacity-building, information technology tools);
- (h) Guidance to be developed on cross-cutting issue of data disaggregation (legal, methodological and practical terms);
- (i) Inclusive data collection system (guidance on new partnership with other government agencies, private sector, civil society and others);
- (j) Populations that are vulnerable, marginalized and at risk of discrimination (women, the homeless, migrants, minorities, etc.);
- (k) Disaggregation;
- (l) Good practices on compiling governance statistics.

## VI. Support by the Praia Group to Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals

19. The Sustainable Development Goals and targets were adopted by the General Assembly at its seventieth session (see resolution 70/1). The indicators framework, to be submitted to the Statistical Commission at its forty-seventh session, is the responsibility of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. The proposal includes indicators on governance and, although several indicators are based on sound methodologies, some need further discussion (for example, conflict-related deaths per 100,000 people). This set of indicators will be the Praia Group's first priority for methodological and technical discussions. The second priority is to develop complementary indicators that could be used at the regional and national levels. These indicators will assist countries to identify gaps and orient policies.<sup>7</sup> A specific technical document addressing each approved global indicator for Goal 16 will be elaborated.

20. The Praia Group stands ready to assist the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators regarding governance indicators for the Goals. The Group will set up a working group to respond to requests from the Inter-Agency and Expert Group for information, methodology and technical guidance or other relevant concerns and needs. The working group will be rearranged according to the nature of the requests from the Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the expertise of its members.

21. The Praia Group will draw upon existing initiatives<sup>8</sup> led or developed by members.

22. The Praia Group will rely on existing groups that bring together governance experts, development practitioners, statisticians, United Nations agencies and civil society. Such groups include the Virtual Network on Indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 16 (coordinated by UNDP) and the Transparency, Accountability and Participation Network (represented by Saferworld).

## VII. Points for action by the Statistical Commission

23. **The Statistical Commission may wish to recommend the implementation of the proposed road map and request that a progress report be presented at its forty-ninth session or earlier if the need arises.**

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<sup>7</sup> Designing policies to address a low percentage of children under age five whose births have been registered with the civil authority will require complementary indicators to understand whether the low percentage is caused by a lack of civil authority structures, disinformation from parents or other factors. Each cause will require the implementation of a specific type of policy.

<sup>8</sup> Praia Group members have developed or are developing methodologies in specific domains (for example, crime statistics: National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico and UNODC; trust indicators: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; perception indicators: African Union and several others).