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**Items for discussion and decision: data and indicators for the  
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development****Report of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination  
and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring****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 the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring. The present report provides a summary of the activities of the Group since the last session of the Statistical Commission. It highlights the outcomes from its first two virtual meetings, held via teleconference on 7 October and on 11 November 2015, as well as details on the preparations for its first physical meeting, scheduled for mid-January 2016.

Points for decision by the Commission include: (a) proposed revisions to the High-level Group's terms of reference; (b) a proposed concept note for the organization of a United Nations world data forum in 2016; and (c) the programme of work for the Group for the year 2016.

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\* Reissued for technical reasons on 26 January 2016.

\*\* [E/CN.3/2016/1](#).



## **Report of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring**

### **I. Introduction**

1. At its forty-sixth session, the Statistical Commission agreed to establish a High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring, composed of national statistical offices, and of regional and international organizations as observers, operating under the auspices of the Commission. The Commission tasked the High-level Group with promoting national ownership of the post-2015 monitoring system and fostering statistical capacity-building, partnership and coordination.

### **II. Mandate and membership**

2. As requested by the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session, the terms of reference of the High-level Group, presented in annex I of the present document, are the result of a consultation process with Member States led by the Chair of the Commission and approved by the Bureau of the Commission.

3. In establishing the High-level Group, the Statistical Commission requested the use of existing regional mechanisms in order to ensure equitable regional representation and technical expertise. A consultation process within the regional statistical mechanism, with the support of their respective United Nations regional commissions, was conducted between May and July 2015 in order to establish the membership of the Group. Annex II presents the current list of members. As agreed by the Commission, the Chair of the Commission acts as an ex officio member of the Group.

### **III. Summary of activities of the High-level Group**

#### **A. First meeting of the High-level Group**

4. At its first meeting, held on 7 October 2015 via teleconference, the High-level Group discussed a number of proposals for strengthening and clarifying its terms of reference, in particular with a view to make them more specific, forward-looking and operational, and to better delineate responsibilities between the Group and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. At the same meeting, countries were invited to submit expressions of interest to serve as Co-Chair of the Group. Hungary and Côte d'Ivoire expressed their interest and were nominated by consensus.

5. The High-level Group discussed an initial draft concept note for the organization of the World Forum on Sustainable Development Data, and stressed the leadership and commitment of the international statistical community in the realization of that initiative.

6. A website for the High-level Group was launched by the Secretariat (see <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/hlg/>), including both a public section and a password-

protected section, to facilitate communication within the Group and with other stakeholders.

## **B. Second meeting of the High-level Group**

7. The second meeting of the High-level Group was held via teleconference on 11 November 2015. At that meeting, the members provided additional suggestions to strengthen and clarify the Group's terms of reference, and tasked the Secretariat with compiling all inputs and finalizing a proposed revised version of the terms of reference to be submitted for approval to the Statistical Commission. The revised version is presented in annex III of the present document.

8. The members also discussed the nature and purpose of the World Forum on Sustainable Development Data as proposed by the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session. The Commission had stressed the importance of such a forum and provided a strong mandate to move forward under its auspices. Accordingly, members discussed the role and potential scope of the World Forum, and how to best engage and collaborate with other stakeholders, including those from the private sector and civil society.

9. The High-level Group underlined its unique role in providing strategic leadership for statistical monitoring and reporting of the Sustainable Development Goals, as mandated by the Statistical Commission. Therefore, under its leadership, the World Forum on Sustainable Development Data would provide a recurring venue for discussion on data for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

10. The second meeting of the High-level Group also agreed that the Monday High-level Forum of the Statistical Commission (a side event to be held on 7 March 2016) would be dedicated to the preparations for the World Forum on Sustainable Development Data, while some elements of the World Forum could also be taken up by the technical seminars of the Commission on 11 March and at one of the lunchtime side events of the Commission.

## **C. Third meeting of the High-level Group**

11. The members of the High-level Group agreed to convene a face-to-face meeting of the Group on 14 and 15 January 2016 in New York. The main objectives of the third meeting will be to: (a) review the mandate and working mechanisms of the Group; (b) discuss strategic aspects of the implementation of a global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework; and (c) discuss next steps in the programme of work for 2016 of the Group, including the organization of the World Forum on Sustainable Development Data.

12. At the forty-seventh session of the Statistical Commission, the Co-Chairs of the High-level Group will provide an oral update covering the key findings of the January meeting and any other developments that occurred between the submission of the written report and the session of the Statistical Commission.

#### **IV. Points for decision**

13. **The Statistical Commission is invited to express its views on the proposed revised version of the terms of reference of the High-level Group. The proposal is the result of consultations among Group members with a view to making its terms of reference more specific, forward-looking and operational, and to better delineate responsibilities between the Group and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.**

14. **The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the fact that the terms of reference of the High-level Group include tasks previously carried out by the Friends of the Chair group on broader measures of progress. The Commission is therefore invited to express its appreciation to the Friends of the Chair group and approve that that group discontinue its work.**

15. **In addition, the Statistical Commission is invited to consider and express its views on the following documents, to be presented in a conference-room document prepared as a result of the discussions of the third meeting of the High-level Group to be held on 14 and 15 January 2016 in New York:**

- (a) **The proposed programme of work for the High-level Group for 2016;**
- (b) **The draft concept note for the organization of the World Forum for Sustainable Development Data.**

## Annex I

### **Version of the terms of reference of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring after the consultation process led by the Chair of the Statistical Commission**

#### **Terms of reference for the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post-2015 monitoring**

1. The High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for post-2015 monitoring (High-level Group for post-2015 monitoring) aims to establish a global partnership for sustainable development data and in this function will:

a. Provide strategic leadership for the SDG implementation process as it concerns statistical monitoring and reporting;

b. Promote national ownership of the post-2015 monitoring system and foster capacity-building, partnership and coordination for post-2015 monitoring, including to ensure consistency between national and global monitoring and reporting;

c. Address the need of funding statistical capacity-building, including by developing proposals and advocating for resource mobilization and their management and monitoring, and identifying ways to leverage the resources and creativity of the private sector;

d. Advise on how the opportunities of the data revolution can be harnessed to support the SDG implementation process, taking into account the levels of development of the countries;

e. Review and make recommendations, as appropriate, and in cooperation with the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), on the issue of common (cross-country) data infrastructures to exploit the possibilities of new technologies;

f. Reach out and promote dialogue and partnerships between the statistical community and other stakeholders working on the implementation and monitoring of globally agreed sustainable development goals and targets.

2. In undertaking its work, the Group will consult closely with the co-chairs of the newly created IAEG-SDGs on issues related to statistical capacity-building and other issues as required and reach out to existing joint initiatives for statistical capacity and technical assistance such as the ones taking place under PARIS21, the Memorandum of Understanding of the Development Banks with the United Nations on cooperation on statistical activities and other coordination and cooperation agreements in order to avoid any duplication of work.

3. The Group will consist of 15 to 20 representatives of national statistical offices, with a balanced geographical representation following broadly the distribution in the IAEG-SDGs, and will include regional and international agencies

as observers. Members of the group will be nominated through existing regional mechanisms<sup>1</sup> and should preferably not be members at the same time of the IAEG-SDGs. The Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat will act as the secretariat of the Group. The members of the HLG will elect two Co-Chairs.

4. The Group will operate under the auspices of the Statistical Commission and will report to it annually, seeking its guidance.

5. The mandate and functioning of the High-level Group will be reviewed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2017 at its 48th session.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistical Commission for Africa, Conference of European Statisticians, Statistical Conference of the Americas, Committee on Statistics, ESCAP and Statistical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

## Annex II

### Members of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring

The following countries are currently members of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring:

*Chair of the Statistical Commission\**

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

*Oceania*

- Vanuatu

*Eastern Africa*

- Mozambique
- Rwanda

*Caribbean*

- Bahamas
- St. Lucia

*Middle and Southern Africa*

- South Africa

*Central and South America*

- Argentina
- Ecuador
- El Salvador

*Western Africa*

- Côte d'Ivoire

*Northern Africa*

- Tunisia

*Eastern Europe*

- Hungary

*Western Asia*

- State of Palestine
- Yemen

*Southern Europe*

- Italy

*Central, Eastern, Southern and South-Eastern Asia*

- Mongolia
- Pakistan
- Malaysia
- Kazakhstan

*North America and Northern and Western Europe*

- Denmark
- Switzerland
- United States of America

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\* The Chair of the Statistical Commission is an ex officio member of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring.

## **Annex III**

### **Proposed revised version of the terms of reference for the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Post-2015 Monitoring**

#### **Terms of reference for the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

1. The High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Statistical Capacity-Building for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (High-level Group) will establish a global action plan for data for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in this function will:

(a) Provide strategic leadership for the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation process as it concerns statistical monitoring and reporting within the framework of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics;

(b) Promote national ownership of, and foster capacity-building, partnership and coordination for, the follow-up and review system of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including to ensure consistency between national and global monitoring and reporting;

(c) Recommend priority areas to target funding for statistical capacity-building, advocate for resource mobilization, management and monitoring;

(d) Review and make recommendations as appropriate and in cooperation with the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to facilitate modernization and harmonization of data infrastructures and identify ways to leverage the resources and potential contributions of the private sector;

(e) Advise on how to harness the opportunities provided by the data revolution to support the SDG implementation process, following up on the recommendations of the report “A world that counts: mobilising the data revolution for sustainable development” by the United Nations Secretary-General’s Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (IEAG), and taking into account the levels of development of the countries;

(f) Promote engagement between the statistical community and other stakeholders working on the monitoring of globally agreed sustainable development goals and targets;

(g) Provide guidance on the content and organization of a United Nations World Forum on Sustainable Development Data, and lead the global statistical community’s efforts to reach out and cooperate with relevant stakeholders, including civil society, academia and the private sector.

2. In undertaking its work, the High-level Group will consult closely with the Co-Chairs of the IAEG-SDGs in relation to statistical capacity-building for the implementation of SDG indicators. It will also engage with existing joint initiatives



for statistical capacity-building and technical assistance, such as those taking place under PARIS21, the memorandum of understanding of the Development Banks with the United Nations on Cooperation on Statistical Activities and other coordination and cooperation agreements in order to avoid any duplication of work and to extend efficiencies as they are identified.

3. The High-level Group will comprise 22 member representatives of national statistical offices, with a balanced geographical representation following broadly the distribution in the IAEG-SDGs. Members of the group will be nominated through existing regional mechanisms<sup>2</sup> for an initial period of two years, after which some are expected to be rotated as agreed by the respective regional mechanisms. Preferably, members of the High-level Group should not be at the same time members of the IAEG-SDGs. The members of the High-level Group will elect two Co-Chairs. The High-level Group will include, as observers, representatives of regional commissions and regional and international agencies. The High-level Group will seek the inputs from countries that are not members of the High-level Group through their respective regional mechanisms. The Division will act as the secretariat of the High-level Group.

4. The High-level Group will operate under the auspices of the Statistical Commission and will report to it annually, seeking its guidance.

5. The mandate and functioning of the High-level Group will be reviewed by the United Nations Statistical Commission as needed.

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<sup>2</sup> Statistical Commission for Africa, Conference of European Statisticians, Statistical Conference of the Americas, Committee on Statistics, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Statistical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.