Implementation Strategy for the *System of National Accounts, 2008*

Prepared by the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts

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15 December 2008

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I.   Introduction

1.   At its thirty-ninth session, the Statistical Commission adopted, in principle, volume 1 of the *System of National Accounts, 2008* as the international standard for national accounts statistics. The Commission encouraged Member States and regional and international organizations to implement and support all aspects of implementation, including the national and international reporting of national accounts statistics based on the *System of National Accounts, 2008* (2008 SNA). Also at the thirty-ninth session, the Commission requested the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) to submit a strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA. This background document elaborates on a proposed implementation strategy summarized in the report of the ISWGNA to the fortieth session of the Statistical Commission. At this stage the documents describes a set of proposed actions to be undertaken over the next five years depending on the priorities identified by the Statistical Commission and available resources. A more developed plan will be developed by the ISWGNA, in due course, taking into account the comments provided by the Commission.

2.   The proposed strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA takes into account, as point of departure, the different levels of implementation of the SNA in various countries and regions. It is recognized that the detailed strategy should reflect the need for regional and sub-regional coordination, given the different levels of statistical development between countries. An assessment of the current status of SNA implementation by United Nations Member States is presented in section II.

3.   The proposed implementation strategy builds on the results of regional consultations undertaken by the member organizations of the ISWGNA between 2006 and 2008, elaborating on principles for the implementation, reflecting the perspectives of users, producers and those engaged in policy formulation and analysis. Among these events was the conference[1] held in Luxembourg in May 2008, from which the *Luxembourg Recommendations* emerged. From these consultations the need for institutional capacity building to produce source statistics as an integral part of national accounts compilation was identified.

4.   The ISWGNA used the *Luxembourg Recommendations* as input to the proposed implementation strategy of the 2008 SNA. Section III describes these principles and demonstrates how the ISWGNA envisages applying them through specific instruments and modalities.

5.   Section IV describes specific activities planned by the member organizations of the ISWGNA to strengthen the institutional capacity of countries. A proposed coordination, monitoring and reporting mechanism and a funding strategy are outlined in section V and section VI, respectively.

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[1] International Conference on International Outreach and Coordination in National Accounts for Sustainable Growth and Development, jointly organized by the Statistical Office of the European Communities and United Nations Statistics Division, 6-8 May 2008, Luxembourg.

II. Assessment of the current level of SNA implementation

6.   A study by the ISWGNA, that was presented to the Commission at its thirty-sixth session, and regional consultations between 2006 and 2008 have identified six key impediments to the successful implementation of the SNA for countries with less developed statistical systems.

(a)   The number of staff and training are insufficient, staff turnover is too high and recruitment efforts are insufficient;

(b)   Country, regional and international agencies providing assistance do not coordinate their activities very well;

(c)   Training and capacity building by international organizations could be more pragmatic. Reference manuals and compilation guidance are not easily accessible;

(d)   In order to exhaustively measure the activities of the whole economy, and household consumption and production in particular, data collection mechanisms need to be improved, including supporting infrastructure such as business registers and other frames;

(e)   Institutional statistical systems are lacking modern management and consultative arrangements, and ICT infrastructure needs upgrading; and

(f)   Quality and policy relevance of basic economic and macroeconomic statistics are not well promoted.

7.   From the experience gained from various assistance projects undertaken to improve statistical capacity, it has become apparent to ISWGNA organizations that users need to be consulted more and a greater effort is needed to promote the use of national accounts data. Another related issue is the need to ensure that the implementation of the SNA is incorporated in countries' national statistical development plans.

8.   Assessments of the level of implementation of the 1993 SNA have been undertaken regularly by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). They are based on the national accounts data reported annually by United Nations Member States, in response to the United Nations National Accounts Questionnaire (UN-NAQ). The data are either reported directly to the UNSD, through the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), or through the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM). Assessments are made in terms of the scope of data compilation, reflecting the established milestone level methodology[2], compliance with the 1993 SNA and timeliness of national accounts data. Although the assessments do not address the quality of the statistics, when they are combined with country and regional consultations they should prove to be sufficient to determine where the implementation strategy should focus.

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[2] The milestone methodology is described in the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts to the twenty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission; document E/CN.3/1997/12.

9.   The reporting of national accounts data to the UNSD has improved markedly in recent years. The improvement comes entirely from developing countries, especially in Africa and Oceania. Almost all developed countries and countries in transition already report national accounts data to the UNSD. At the end of the 2007 reporting period, almost 84 per cent of developing countries had reported at least once between the 2003 and 2007 reporting periods.

10. Virtually all developed countries and countries in transition and about 60 per cent of developing countries compile national accounts data according to the 1993 SNA. Compliance with the 1993 SNA has shown a marked improvement during the last two reporting periods. This is due mostly to a 23 per cent increase of countries in Africa and a 21 per cent increase of countries in Asia that are compiling their national accounts according to the 1993 SNA.

11. Although the UNSD has seen an increase in the number of countries responding to the UN-NAQ, many of the countries that have responded in the last five reporting periods are not responding every year. This is particularly noticeable for small island developing states (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs). Many of these countries have attributed this to a lack of staff training, high turnover of staff and lack of resources to employ full-time national accounts statisticians, along with other aforementioned impeding factors. In some cases, the initial capacity established through external assistance could not be sustained.

12. Only 10 per cent for SIDS and LDCs are able to provide the seven tables of the minimum requirement data set (MRDS)[3], compared with an overall rate 40 per cent. This clearly shows that there is a lack of a well developed national accounts system in many developing countries.

13. Assessments by UNSD and other international agencies point to structural weaknesses in basic source data and institutional statistical capacity. An analysis of these structural weaknesses indicates the need for strengthening three building blocks of the production process: a) business registers and frames, b) source data from annual and infra-annual surveys, and administrative sources, and c) institutional statistical capacity. Given that statistical production capacity varies greatly, both within and between regions and sub-regions, the global programme of implementation of the SNA and related economic statistics should be tailored to address the different levels of statistical development.

III.   Proposed strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA

A. Objective

14. The proposed 2008 SNA implementation strategy aims to support sound macroeconomic management and evidence-based policy formulation through the sustained compilation and reporting of national accounts and related source data by national, regional and international statistical systems. The efficiency and sustainability of a global implementation programme for

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[3] The MRDS is defined in the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts to the thirty-second session of the Statistical Commission; document E/CN.3/2001/8.

the 2008 SNA rest on establishing agreed principles for more cooperation at the national, regional and international level.

15. Various outreach events have been undertaken to articulate these principles by consulting country compilers, sources of technical cooperation, and users of national accounts and related source statistics. The most important of these events was the conference held in Luxembourg in May 2008 that resulted in the *Luxembourg Recommendations*. This conference was jointly organized by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and brought together representatives from international organizations, development banks and bilateral donors, as well as representatives from some 70 developing countries.

16. From the *Luxembourg Recommendations* the following principles emerged as useful to include in the implementation strategy of the 2008 SNA: (i) strategic planning; (ii) coordination, monitoring and reporting; and (iii) improving statistical systems. The rest of this section describes these principles and demonstrates how the ISWGNA envisages applying these principles through specific instruments and modalities.

B. Strategic planning

17. The ISWGNA proposes that countries should use strategic planning frameworks to develop a programme for statistical capacity building to achieve their national development objectives. Strategic planning has a number of benefits. Firstly, it is the best way to obtain political and financial support for investment in statistics. Secondly, it can be used to identify current strengths and weaknesses of statistical capacity in producing key economic indicators and basic source data. Thirdly, it can be used to lay out a schedule of tasks to remedy the weaknesses. Fourthly, it can be used by countries to produce the information needed for monitoring their own economic development programmes.

18. Best practices of existing initiatives should be used to shape the strategic planning and implementation framework of the SNA implementation. The manual of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS21) on National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDSs) provides guidance for putting strategic planning frameworks together. The NSDSs are the most widely used guidelines and many developing countries already have or are updating their NSDS planning tool. Therefore, countries should review their NSDSs to ensure they incorporate the 2008 SNA implementation needs.

19. The regional commissions, in consultation and cooperation with their (sub) regional development partners, should coordinate this review of the NSDSs to meet the implementation needs of the 2008 SNA and where necessary supplement this information with other national and regional assessments. For this review of national strategies and the subsequent formulation of national and regional SNA implementation plans, it is envisaged that existing regional coordination mechanisms, like statistical committees or working groups, in addition to new steering groups where needed, will be mobilised, with the regional commissions acting as secretariats. The creation of new coordinating mechanisms should be envisaged only when strictly necessary. Consideration should be given to the broad based participation of stakeholders

in the coordination structures; they should include international organizations, regional development banks and agencies and other donor and representative recipient countries.

20. In order to ensure a cost effective monitoring and reporting of regional SNA implementation plans, the ISWGNA proposes the adoption of a common information system. The dimensions of the structure of the information system proposed by the ISWGNA are described in the next section.

21. A detailed timetable, showing the plans of regions and Member States for the SNA implementation programme, including the change over to the 2008 SNA, is still to be drafted, but it is expected that good progress will be made in 2009. In developing the programme, account will be taken of the different levels of statistical development between and within the regions.
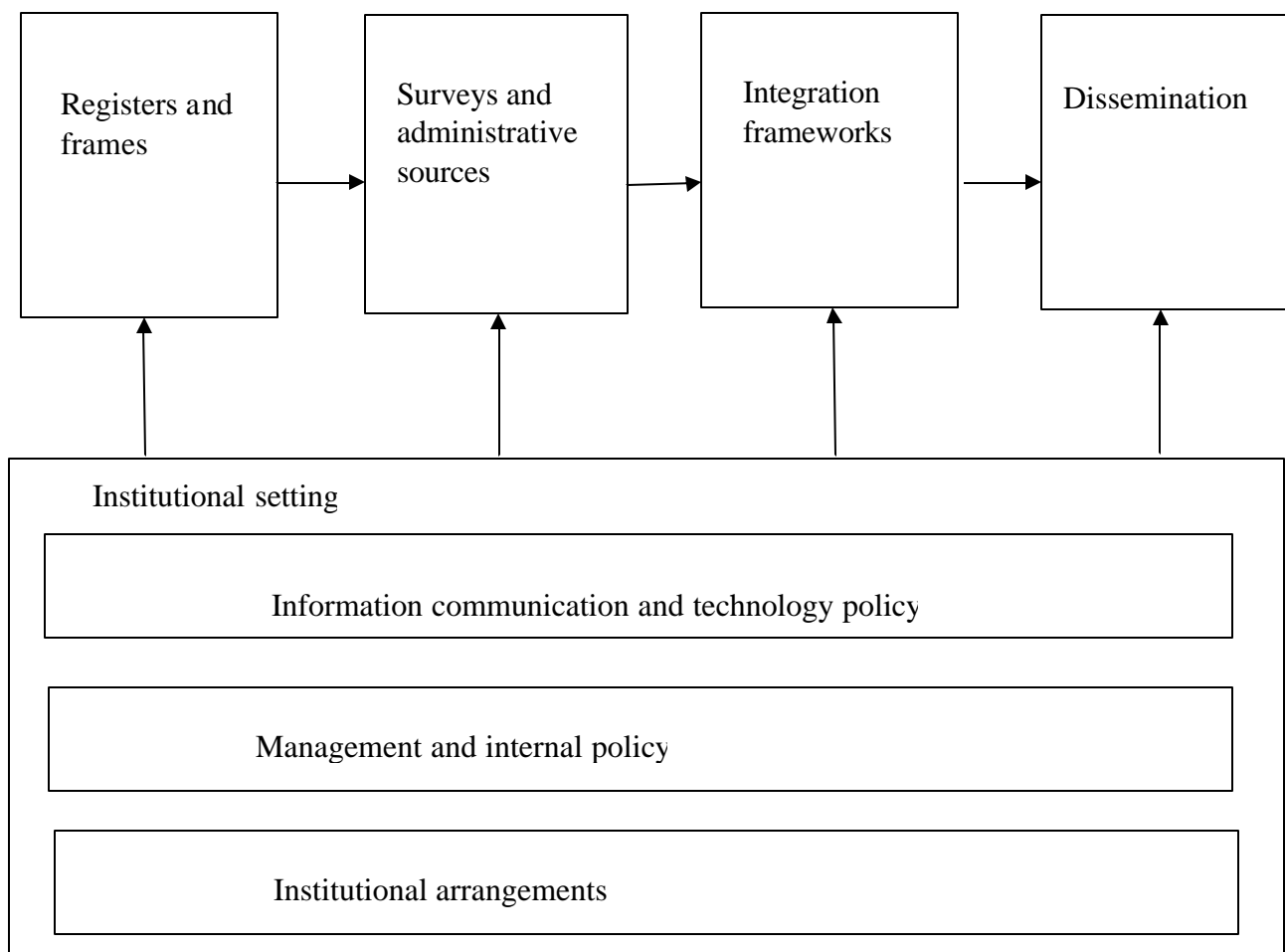
C. Coordination, monitoring and reporting

22. The principle of coordination, monitoring and reporting ensures that the roles of international and regional organizations, other donors and recipient countries are clear and their actions are complementary and effective. Coordination comprises the timing and sequencing of events. Monitoring comprises assessing the efficiency of technical assistance programmes, evaluating lessons learned, and using resources effectively. Reporting communicates progress and operational issues to interested stakeholders. Better coordination, monitoring and reporting collectively help meet national and regional goals, as well as providing a means to evaluate international indicators against agreed benchmarks to assess the progress of expanding the scope and achieving compliance of the national accounts. Monitoring, reporting and evaluating should also be used to identify risks to the implementation process so that timely interventions can be made to keep plans on track.

23. The ISWGNA proposes to apply a programme information structure to facilitate the coordination, monitoring and reporting on the SNA implementation in this multi-stakeholder environment. This proposed information system is built on the structure of the statistical production process and an established data quality assessment framework for evaluating statistical project outcomes. Together, the two dimensions will allow the ISWGNA to develop a coherent information system for programming, monitoring and reporting. The statistical process dimension will be used to programme and monitor the implementation and the IMF Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) dimension will be used to evaluate and report on outcomes.

24. The statistical production process can be stylized in a five-part structure: (i) Institutional setting; (ii) Registers and frames; (iii) Surveys and administrative sources; (iv) Integration frameworks; and (v) Dissemination. Figure 1 depicts the statistical production process in a stylized diagram. This structure is built on the well-established and recently revised UNECE *Classification of Statistical Activities*. The Coordinating Committee for Statistical Activities (CCSA) uses the *Classification* for assembling an annual report of the statistical work of international organizations. As such, it is an already established framework used by international organizations to promote coherent and complementary statistical work. Table 1 in Annex 3 shows how the five components identified in Figure 1 map into the *Classification of Statistical Activities*.

Figure 1: Statistical Production Process Framework

| Registers and frames | → | Surveys and administrative sources | → | Integration frameworks | → | Dissemination |

Institutional setting

Information communication and technology policy

Management and internal policy

Institutional arrangements

25. The IMF uses the DQAF in its data modules of the Reports on Observance of Standards and Codes (data ROSCs) as a tool to evaluate the quality of country practices in producing macroeconomic statistics. The DQAF comprises six dimensions. The first two, *Prerequisites of quality* and *Assurances of integrity*, broadly cover the institutional setting for the compilation and dissemination of statistics. *Methodological soundness* covers the standards adopted in compiling the statistics, while *Accuracy and reliability* covers the data sources and statistical methods used in compiling the statistics. *Serviceability* deals with fitness for use criteria, such as periodicity and timeliness, and temporal and inter-sectoral consistency. Finally, *Accessibility* deals with how effectively data and information about the data are disseminated to users. Table 2 in Annex 3 provides a more detailed breakdown of the DQAF into its indicator items.

26. As already described, the SNA implementation strategy uses standards for the statistical production process to support programming and monitoring, and the DQAF to support programme reporting. Both are vital for overall coordination at regional and country level and, the ISWGNA will work with the regional commissions to seek the adoption of an information system. A commonly accepted system is highly desirable for effective project programming, monitoring and reporting, especially in the SNA context with multiple compiler stakeholders within a country and often multiple funding agencies within and across countries.

D. Improving statistical systems

27. The principle of statistical system improvement is undertaken through the strengthening of the national statistical system, which covers each of the building blocks of the statistical production process.

28. The ISWGNA proposes to retain, but refocus, the four modalities used in the SNA implementation strategy for the 1993 SNA by providing training and delivering technical cooperation, preparing manuals and handbooks, and sponsoring research. These modalities should focus more than in the past on the various stages of the statistical production process that precede the integration of the data into the national accounts, namely in the collection and processing of basic source data and the institutional context.

29. Organizing national and regional training seminars and workshops are still considered appropriate modalities in support of the transfer of knowledge in national accounting and related economic statistics at the country level. Likewise, providing technical cooperation through advisory missions by working directly with the staff of national offices will advance the use of the 2008 SNA as the principal integration framework for national statistical systems.

30. Publishing new handbooks and compilation guides and revising existing ones will elucidate best practices in establishing modern institutional environments, compiling registers and frames, collecting survey and administrative data, implementing and maintaining integration frameworks, and disseminating data on the national accounts and related economic statistics.

31. Research will be required to maintain the relevance of SNA recommendations in a changing economic environment. It will also be required to draft related methodological guidelines and contribute to the development and use of satellite accounts in areas such as social well being and environmental sustainability.

32. Extending the 2008 SNA website (hosted by the UNSD) to include a web-based knowledge base on economic statistics and macroeconomic standards sourced from and hyperlinked to other relevant organizations will facilitate easy access to statistical standards, compilation guidance and best practices.

33. In conjunction with the web-based knowledge base, it is envisaged to mobilise the existing regional knowledge and training networks to take part in an internationally agreed training and teaching programme for the SNA and related macroeconomic standards. These regional networks will be invited to collaborate with the ISWGNA to develop and deliver standard training and teaching programmes (including distance learning programmes) on the SNA and related macroeconomic standards.

34. It is recognized that the well-tested four modalities used in the past are insufficient for a fully successful implementation of the SNA as they only address the support provided to countries for implementation. To be fully successful, the implementation strategy should also take into account the responsibilities of the countries to take ownership of the implementation process by including it in the development of their national statistical systems. Therefore, an additional element, advocacy, is added to the existing modalities with the aim to stimulate the demand for

national accounts data and encourage the use of the accounts. Advocacy will play an important role in encouraging national support for acquiring and maintaining viable economic statistics and national accounts programmes and to communicate its policy relevance. In this regard the experience gained by PARIS21 will play an important role1.

IV. Activities by the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts for the implementation of the 2008 SNA

35. The activities of the ISWGNA relate to the existing modalities of support, which the member organizations of the ISWGNA used for the implementation of the 1993 SNA. This section provides an overview of the issues that need to be addressed with these activities. Annexes 1 and 2 provide more detail on planned technical cooperation and training activities and the production of handbooks and manuals by the member organizations of the ISWGNA.

A. Training and technical cooperation

36. To meet the challenges of national accounts development in countries with less advanced statistical systems in the next decade, training and technical cooperation activities need to give greater emphasis to institutional capacity building and development of data sources. At the same time, countries with advanced statistical systems have programmed a sequence of activities to implement the 2008 SNA, in many cases with specific deadlines. European Union countries and a great majority of OECD countries have indicated their intention to implement the 2008 SNA by 2014 through a sequence of activities pertaining to the adaptation of the revised ISIC and CPC classifications, the adaptation of the business registers and surveys, and procedures for backcasting time series.

37. Training and technical cooperation programmes for countries requesting assistance put a further emphasis on direct country involvement, while promoting a common information structure of programming, monitoring and reporting. The training and technical cooperation programmes will emphasise the integration of statistical capacity building in national planning and programming cycles to secure resources for sustainable statistical programmes for national accounts and related basic economic statistics. Moreover, this training and technical cooperation will share and promote best practices on results based management approaches for national statistical offices.

38. The training programmes will be implemented mainly through organizing training seminars, workshops and meetings. Actively pursuing these initiatives at a (sub) regional level should enable regional organizations and their member countries to share experiences (peer-to-peer) in developing sustainable economic statistics programmes.

39. These training and technical cooperation programmes need to focus more than in the past on (a) the design and maintenance of business registers and data collection programmes to generate relevant source data; and (b) the institutional processes and structures through interagency agreements, creating advisory committees and strengthening the legislative and regulatory framework on data sharing.

40. Overall, technical assistance for the implementation of the 2008 SNA needs to focus more than in the past on improving collaboration among technical and financial development partners, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, the implementation strategy suggests that the ISWGNA cooperates with other existing coordination bodies such as the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) and PARIS21, to further promote the implementation of the 2008 SNA. Annex 1 provides details on the planned technical cooperation and training activities of the member organizations of the ISWGNA.

B. Manuals and handbooks

41. The publication of a series of new and revised manuals and handbooks will support the implementation of the 2008 SNA. These methodological guides will provide practical compilation guidance on new recommendations, such as measuring the gross fixed capital formation of R&D. They will also address data quality issues, including data dissemination. Moreover, guidance will be provided on the integration of the balance of payments, government finance statistics, monetary and financial statistics and environmental statistics into the national accounts statistics. The latter will take into account that the process of updating the 1993 SNA strove to maintain harmonization with other international standards. Responsibility for the preparation of the manuals will be shared among the member organizations of the ISWGNA in collaboration with other international organizations. Annex 2 presents the manuals and handbooks planned and recently produced by the ISWGNA member organizations for supporting the 2008 SNA implementation.

42. There is a need to make the methodological guides available in all six official languages. Experience and feedback from the countries have shown that the availability of guides in languages other than English significantly enhances their use in the implementation of the SNA. The ISWGNA will strive, in cooperation with the statistical community, for the translation of the manuals and handbooks to the extent possible.

C. Research

43. Research will continue to be undertaken under the leadership of the ISWGNA member organizations as part of their support of the implementation of concepts from the 2008 SNA and its satellite accounts. The results of the research will be shared widely and incorporated in the SNA knowledge management system mentioned earlier.

44. The High-Level Forum for the Long-Term Development of the System of National Accounts held on 17-18 November 2008 in Washington, D.C., and organized by the ISWGNA at the request of the Statistical Commission, deliberated on research aspects. A summary of the outcome of the Forum is included in the ISWGNA's report to the fortieth session of the Statistical Commission, document E/CN.3/2009/8.

45. In the context of the 2008 SNA implementation strategy, research efforts will focus in particular on the development of compilation guidance. An output of this research should be guidance by the ISWGNA on improving the scope, periodicity and timeliness of the national accounts statistics of the "core accounts" given the different levels of statistical capacity of countries.

46. The OECD Working Party on National Accounts (WPNA) will address issues on the national accounts research agenda in the 2008 SNA - over twenty items have already been proposed. Members of OECD WPNA will take part in task forces created to address them, sponsored by the ISWGNA. In addition, the WPNA may form its own task forces to address other issues it considers important.

47. In the framework of the Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Working Group on the Impact of Globalization on National Accounts, for which the UNECE provides the secretariat, research is under way to develop recommendations on how to deal with the distortions caused by globalization in the national accounts. The IMF is actively involved in the work of the group. The WTO and UNCTAD also participate.

48. The UNSD in collaboration with the other international organizations will continue its coordination function in organizing work under the SNA research agenda among its various contributors. It will ensure the involvement of national accounts experts of the Member States in the discussions and seek the continued services of members of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts. A broader and sustained dialogue with representatives from academia, the business accounting sector, the regulatory authorities and the corporate sector will be developed.

D. Advocacy

49. As an integral component of the implementation strategy, advocacy aims to support an ongoing dialogue among statistical producers, the various levels of government, business sector, the academic community, and the general public about user needs for official statistics and the progress in meeting those needs. This recurrent communication can be established through targeted workshops, conferences, press releases and promotional materials that highlight the benefits of good quality official statistics in general, and national accounts in particular. These regular engagements between the producers of statistical outputs and the providers of basic data on one hand and the users of national accounts on the other will reinforce a better funded and more effective national accounts programme that provides reliable data for an evidence-based economic policy formulation. The focus of the advocacy should be on stimulating demand and engaging with users.

50. Advocacy should be achieved through the development of a communication strategy promoting the overarching framework of the SNA. This strategy should make it clear that through statistical integration of basic statistics with macroeconomic accounts, a coherent set of statistics and indicators can be derived for evidence-based policy formulation for a sustainable development at regional, national and international levels. Therefore, promoting good quality national accounts statistics is essential in establishing a sound macroeconomic policy within a coherent medium-term budgetary framework.

51. An explicit communication strategy will become an integral component of technical assistance and training programmes undertaken by the ISWGNA member organizations, Eurostat, IMF, OECD, UNSD and World Bank. Supporting materials and guidelines are to be developed for this purpose by the ISWGNA in cooperation with PARIS21.

V.   Mechanism for coordination, monitoring progress and facilitating cooperation

52. In the multi-stakeholder environment for the SNA implementation strategy, a mechanism is needed in order to coordinate, monitor and report progress at (sub) regional and international level. The purpose of this mechanism would be to share information on the development and the execution of the SNA implementation strategy.

53. The ISWGNA proposes to establish a mechanism, possibly in the form of an interagency and intergovernmental advisory group, in order to seek advice on the implementation of the SNA and related macroeconomic standards. In particular, it is proposed that this group will consist of representatives of regional coordinating mechanisms and will advise the ISWGNA on maintaining and managing a coherent programme of work to implement 2008 SNA. If these proposals were accepted, the ISWGNA would further reflect on the modalities of the mechanisms.

54. This proposed group will advise the ISWGNA on maintaining and managing a coherent programme of work. The new project information model described in this document will be used to facilitate cooperation among agencies in delivering technical assistance and training through more timely and effective communication on work programmes and programme developments. Agencies will characterize their programme activities in terms of the statistical process and in terms of DQAF indicators to evaluate and report the activities in the recipient countries. It is expected this coherent information system will assist in providing timely notice of possible synergies and impending duplications and gaps in work programmes. For the review of national and regional SNA implementation plans, regional coordination mechanisms may wish to establish such advisory groups to share information on the development and the execution of the SNA implementation strategy on the regional level.

55. In addition to implementing a standard programme documentation structure across its member agencies, the ISWGNA proposes to support a web-based knowledge base on economic statistics and macroeconomic standards sources from and hyperlinked to other organizations as relevant to ensure a single point access to normative documents, compilation guidance and country experiences. This instrument will help ensure that ISWGNA organizations are delivering a consistent message on the implementation of the SNA and related macroeconomic standards.

56. It is expected that the advisory group will further assist in promoting practical instruments of implementation across the (sub) regions such as handbooks, compilation guides, textbooks, advocacy modules, software tools for the various components of the statistical production process and the use of SDMX as a common data transmission system.

VI. Strategy for funding

57. The strategy for funding arrangements for the 2008 SNA implementation can only be based on a cooperative and partnership model. It should build largely on the existing resources and comparative advantages of all stakeholders and partners. The ISWGNA considers various sources of funding viable:

 a) countries should include funding needs for 2008 SNA implementation in their national plans and actively seek sources of funding for their plans;
 b) international agencies providing technical assistance and financial support should make a case for the importance of their support for the 2008 implementation and to the extent possible scale up their support;
 c) all agencies involved should build on synergies with the other similar programmes such as the International Comparison Program, GDDS, work of PARIS21, provision of training and technical assistance; and
 d) donors should provide financial support for research towards and implementation of cross cutting issues and development of tools.

Annex 1
Planned technical cooperation and training activities of the ISWGNA member organizations

1. Implementation issues affecting **OECD** member states will be addressed in the annual meetings on national accounts and financial statistics. Since countries in the OECD will follow a staggered implementation of the 2008 SNA, a strategy is being adopted to deal with the temporary reduction in international comparability during the transition phase. In assisting SNA implementation in developing countries and countries in transition, the OECD will continue organizing jointly with the National Bureau of Statistics of China and the Indian Central Statistical Office annual workshops on national accounts. In addition, the OECD is working with new prospective members (i.e. Chile, Estonia, Russia, Israel, and Slovenia) and other significant economies such as Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa.

2. In **Eurostat**, training on the new European System of Accounts (ESA) will be organized for specialists of member states working with national accounts during 2011-2013. Eurostat will support the MEDSTAT initiative for North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.

3. The regular biennial Joint **UNECE/Eurostat/OECD** Meeting on National Accounts will provide a forum for the national accounts experts in the area to discuss issues related to the implementation of the 2008 SNA. Future meetings are planned in 2010 and 2012. Back-to-back with these meetings, special sessions will be organized for the CIS and other interested countries with focus on the implementation of specific issues of priority to these countries. Furthermore, as part of its statistical programme of work, the UNECE will provide assistance to the CIS countries and countries in the Western Balkan region on institutional building, business registers, price statistics and dissemination.

4. National accounts technical assistance projects with **IMF** member countries comprising about 280 missions in fiscal year 2009 (May 2008-April 2009) from regional technical assistance centres, externally funded capacity building projects, and IMF headquarters.

5. In addition, the IMF will also have conducted, by the financial year ending April 2009, three missions to assess countries' statistical systems, i.e. as reported in the data ROSCs. Furthermore, over that period, the IMF will also have undertaken 16 missions to support its data dissemination standards, the General Data Dissemination System and the Special Data Dissemination Standard.

6. IMF's extensive technical assistance and training programme in the national accounts integration framework is supported primarily through its execution of projects for a range of external funding agencies. A smaller amount of TA and training activity is supported through the IMF budget. The principal vehicles for externally funded project execution are regional technical assistance centres (RTACs) and modular topical projects. A Center Coordinator (CC) directs each RTAC. The CC is nominated by IMF and approved by a Steering Committee comprising representatives of donors and of countries to be covered by the centre. In addition, based on a work programme developed with the countries to be served by the centre, the IMF proposes a range of Advisors to execute the work programme, generally with the help of short-term experts. The RTAC Steering Committee also approves the Advisors, whose execution of the work

programme is supervised by the CC. There are currently six RTACs (with more RTACs in the planning stages):

- The African Technical Assistance Center – East (AFRITAC-E), Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
- The African Technical Assistance Center – West (AFRITAC-W), Bamako, Mali
- The African Technical Assistance Center – Central (AFRITAC-C), Libreville, Gabon
- The Caribbean Technical Assistance Center (CARTAC), St. Michael, Barbados
- The Middle Eastern Technical Assistance Center (METAC), Beirut, Lebanon
- The Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Center (PFTAC), Suva, Fiji

7. The **IMF** is executing with the **World Bank** a statistical project for 21 Anglophone African countries plus Mozambique for the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). This project is structured according to a set of topical modules covering about five countries each, managed by a module manager, who executes the module work programme with the help of short-term experts.

8. The **World Bank's** strategy, to support developing countries statistical capacity building efforts, is driven by the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS). This plan includes actions to support the 2010 round of census, improving household surveys, and assisting countries to develop their national statistical plans. As many countries now have prepared their national strategies, the emphasis is moving towards the implementation of these plans and mobilizing the needed financial and technical support. Together with other key donors, the World Bank is working towards scaling up support to developing countries. It is initiating a new programme called Statistics for Results Facility which includes a new trust fund for countries to use. This new facility will complement the other existing mechanisms available through the World Bank, namely the multi-donor Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB) and the STATCAP lending programme. Overall, these support mechanisms available to countries are broad based to improve their statistical systems. However they could be used to address countries specific priority needs aimed at 2008 SNA implementation.

9. The **United Nations Statistics Division** is collaborating closely with the UNECA, UNECE, UNECLAC, UNESCAP and UNESCWA and other regional partners in developing regional SNA implementation strategies based on national implementation strategies. For example, **UNECE** conducted a survey in its Member States that are not members of the European Union or the OECD ensuring that the views and plans of these national agencies compiling national accounts and related basic statistics are taken into account. Similar surveys will be or have been undertaken by the other regional commissions or their (sub) regional partners with the intent to develop comprehensive SNA implementation plans in the course of 2009.

10. United Nations Development Accounts projects are in place in various regions to strengthen the statistical capacity in national accounts and related source data through multi-year programmes. The technical assistance and training activities of the UNSD from their regular technical assistance programmes will be aligned with these projects to support and supplement capacity building undertaken in the development accounts projects.

11. Due attention will be placed on coordination with other members of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts providing technical assistance and training in the balance of payments, international investment positions, government finance statistics and monetary and finance statistics areas. For instance, with proper sequencing of the interventions between the partner organizations, technical assistance activities could build on those interventions in elaborating the national accounts for related institutional sector accounts and the complementary accounts for the household and non-financial sectors.

12. The UNECA and UNECLAC have developed programmes of work in national accounts under the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom Africa) and Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA) led by the African Development Bank and Brazil, respectively. Further considerations are presently given to the broadening of the participation of the working groups to included international organizations, regional development banks and agencies and other countries of the region and formulate a broad based regional programme in 2009 with the regional commissions acting as secretariat.

13. UNECE secretariat, in coordination with the CIS Statistical Committee, Eurostat and other donors, will provide technical assistance to the CIS countries through seminars, workshops and consultations. The CIS Statistical Committee has foreseen various activities directed to the national statistical offices (NSOs), including seminars for the staff of NSOs, preparation of guidelines for 2008 SNA implementation and consultation on specific issues raised by countries.

14. The UNESCWA has obtained the go-ahead from its Statistical Committees in 2008 to draft the regional SNA implementation strategies in 2009. The UNESCAP plans to do likewise in its forthcoming Statistical committee meeting. In each of the regions, a regional coordination committee or taskforce may be created consisting of international agencies, development banks and regional agencies and representative countries to work out the strategies.

Annex 2
Production of manuals and handbooks of the ISWGNA member organizations

1. The member organizations of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (**Eurostat, IMF, OECD, United Nations** and **World Bank**) will proceed with the publication of the System *of National Accounts, 2008*. The UNSD will collaborate with its regional partners to make the international standard progressively available in six official UN languages in 2009 and 2010.

2.In the European Union, the 2008 SNA will be implemented in the form of the revision of the European System of Accounts (ESA), with its adoption and publication planned for 2011. Related manuals planned by **Eurostat** include**:** *Manual on Supply Uses and Input Output Tables* (2008), *Manual on Government Deficit and Debt* (update, 2008), *Manual on Regional Accounts* (2011), *Handbook on Quarterly National Accounts* (update, 2012).

3. The new **OECD** manual *Handbook on Deriving Capital Measures of Intellectual Property Products* is expected to be released by mid-2009. It will provide guidelines on the treatment of expenditures on research and development (R&D), mineral exploration and evaluation, software and databases, and entertainment, literary and artistic originals. The OECD is also engaged in producing two other manuals to foster consistent methods of estimation: a revised edition of the *Manual on Measuring Capital* (2009), and a *Handbook on the Measurement of Volume Output of Health and Education*.

4.Planned and recently published manuals by the **IMF** supporting the 2008 SNA implementation include the *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual* (BPM6, 2008), and updates of the *Compilation Guide to Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Statistics*, *Government Finance Statistics Manual*, *Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual* and *Quarterly National Accounts Manual*. Other relevant manuals are the *Compilation Guide for Monetary and Financial Statistics* (2008) and the *Compilation Guide for Balance of Payments*, *Export and Import Price Index Manual* .

5.The **United Nations Statistics Division** will draft supplementary guidance through its handbook series on national accounts such the *Handbook of National Accounting: Financial Production, Flows and Stocks* (jointly with ECB), *Handbook of National Accounts: Accounting for Production, Handbook of National Accounting: Integrated Economic Statistics* (in collaboration with the Friends of the Chair led by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis).

6.Also the UNSD programme of work includes the revision of existing international recommendations on basic economic statistics such as the *International Recommendations on Index Numbers on Industrial Production, 2009* following the drafting of the revision of the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics, 2008*, the *International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics, 2008*, the *International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics 2008* (jointly with UNWTO), and the *Tourism Satellite Account: Recommended Methodological Framework, Revision 1, 2008* (jointly with UNWTO, Eurostat, and OECD). In the area of international merchandise trade and trade in services, revisions are under preparation such the *Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services, Revision 1*

(as a part of TFSITS) due in 2010 and *International Recommendations of Merchandise Trade Statistics* (as part of the TFIMTS) due in 2011.

7.With the revision of the *International Standard Industrial Classification for all Economic Activities Revision 4*, the *Central Product Classification Version 2*, the *Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 4*, additional supplementary documents are prepared such as the Companion Guide for ISIC and CPC and Implementation Guide for ISIC Revision 4 on the national adaptation of the ISIC classification, the adaptations of the business registers and surveys and back-casting of time series.

8.With the recognition of the statistical link between the economy and the environment, work is underway in the drafting of the revision of the *System of Environmental Economic Accounting* due in 2012/2013. Along with the preparing of this international accounting standard, other standards are being drafted for the subsystems such as the *System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water* (SEEA-W), 2007, the *System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Energy (SEEA-E)* and the *System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Material Flow Accounts (SEEA*-MFA). Also these standards will be accompanied by relevant international recommendations that provide the guidance on the data items to be collected and reported (e.g. the *International Recommendations for Water Statistics (IRWS)* and the *International Recommendations for Energy Statistics (IRES)).*

9.In each of the above mentioned areas (i.e. national accounts, industry, distributive trade, international trade, classifications, etc.) UNSD will collect national compilation and dissemination practices from individual countries. These national practices will be made available electronically through the *Knowledge Base for Economic Statistics and Macroeconomic Standards* along with other best practices in other statistical domains and activities.

10.Operational guidelines on the new treatment of goods for processing and merchanting recommended by the 2008 SNA will be prepared within the work of the **UNECE/Eurostat/OECD** Working Group on the Impact of Globalization on National Accounts, by the end of 2010.

11.**UNESCAP**, as a result of undertaking a Development Account project to develop a unified data collection strategy for measuring informal employment and employment in the informal sector, will develop guidelines on the measurement of informal employment and employment in the informal sector.

Annex 3

Programme information structure for the 2008 SNA implementation strategy

Table 1. The Statistical Production Process and the Classification of Statistical Activities

Statistical production	UNECE statistical activities
Institutional setting	
Management and internal policy and institutional arrangements	*Domain 5: Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics* 5.1 Institutional frameworks and principles; role and organization of official statistics 5.2 Statistical programmes; coordination within statistical systems 5.3 Quality frameworks and measurement of performance of statistical systems and offices 5.4 Management and development of human resources
Information and communications technology	*Domain 5: Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics* 5.5 Management and development of technological resources (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing)
Registers and frames	
	Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis *4.2 Classification* *- Of units* *4.3 Data sources* 4.3.1 Population and housing censuses; registers of population, dwellings and buildings 4.3.2 Business and agricultural censuses and registers
Surveys and administrative sources	
	Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis *4.2 Classification* *- Of items* *4.3 Data sources* 4.3.3 Household surveys 4.3.4 Business and agricultural surveys 4.3.5 Other administrative sources

Statistical production	UNECE statistical activities
Integration frameworks	
	Domain 1: Demographic and social statistics
	1.1 Population and migration
	1.2 Labour
	1.4 Health
	1.8 Justice and crime
	Domain 2: Economic statistics
	2.1 Macroeconomic statistics[4]
	2.2 Economic accounts[3]
	2.3 Business statistics
	2.4 Sectoral statistics
	2.4.1 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries
	2.4.2 Energy
	2.4.3 Mining, manufacturing, construction
	2.4.4 Transport
	2.4.5 Tourism
	2.4.6 Banking, insurance, financial statistics
	2.5 Government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics
	2.6 International trade and balance of payments
	2.7 Prices
	2.8 Labour cost
	2.9 Science and technology
Dissemination	
	Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis
	4.1 Metadata
	4.5 Dissemination, data warehousing

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[4] Focus of the 2008 *System of National Accounts*

Table 2. The IMF Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF)

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
0. Prerequisites of quality	**0.1 Legal and institutional environment**—*The environment is supportive of statistics*	0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating the statistics is clearly specified. 0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data-producing agencies are adequate. 0.1.3 Individual reporters' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only. 0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured through legal mandate and/or measures to encourage response.
	0.2 Resources—*Resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programmes.*	0.2.1 Staff, facilities, computing resources, and financing are commensurate with statistical programmes. 0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.
	0.3 Relevance—*Statistics cover relevant information on the subject field.*	0.3.1 The relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are monitored.
	0.4 Other quality management—*Quality is a cornerstone of statistical work.*	0.4.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality. 0.4.2 Processes are in place to monitor the quality of the statistical programme. 0.4.3 Processes are in place to deal with quality considerations in planning the statistical programme.
1. Assurances of integrity *The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.*	**1.1 Professionalism**—*Statistical policies and practices are guided by professional principles.*	1.1.1 Statistics are produced on an impartial basis. 1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques as well as decisions about dissemination are informed solely by statistical considerations. 1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.
	1.2 Transparency—*Statistical policies and practices are transparent.*	1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public. 1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to their release is publicly identified. 1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such. 1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.
	1.3 Ethical standards—*Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.*	1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behaviour are in place and are well known to the staff.

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
2. Methodological soundness *The methodological basis for the statistics follows internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.*	**2.1 Concepts and definitions**—*Concepts and definitions used are in accord with internationally accepted statistical frameworks.*	2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.
	2.2 Scope—*The scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.*	2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.
	2.3 Classification/ sectorization—*Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.*	2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.
	2.4 Basis for recording—*Flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices*	2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks. 2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis. 2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.
3. Accuracy and reliability *Source data and statistical techniques are sound and statistical outputs sufficiently portray reality*	**3.1 Source data** – *Source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics.*	3.1.1 Source data are obtained from comprehensive data collection programmes that take into account country-specific conditions. 3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required. 3.1.3 Source data are timely.
	3.2 Assessment of source data—*Source data are regularly assessed.*	3.2.1 Source data—including censuses, sample surveys, and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide statistical processes.
	3.3 Statistical techniques—*Statistical techniques employed conform to sound statistical procedures*	3.3.1 Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques to deal with data sources. 3.3.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.
	3.4 Assessment and validation of intermediate data and statistical outputs—*Intermediate results and statistical outputs are regularly assessed and validated.*	3.4.1 Intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable. 3.4.2 Statistical discrepancies in intermediate data are assessed and investigated. 3.4.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators or problems in statistical outputs are investigated.
	3.5 Revision studies—*Revisions, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.*	3.5.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used internally to inform statistical processes (see also 4.3.3).

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
4. Serviceability *Statistics, with adequate periodicity and timeliness, are consistent and follow a predictable revisions policy.*	**4.1 Periodicity and timeliness**— *Periodicity and timeliness follow internationally accepted dissemination standards.*	4.1.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards. 4.1.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards.
	4.2 Consistency— *Statistics are consistent within the dataset, over time, and with major datasets.*	4.2.1 Statistics are consistent within the dataset. 4.2.2 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time. 4.2.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.
	4.3 Revision policy and practice—*Data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.*	4.3.1 Revisions follow a regular and transparent schedule. 4.3.2 Preliminary and/or revised data are clearly identified. 4.3.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are made public (see also 3.5.1).
5. Accessibility *Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.*	**5.1 Data accessibility**— *Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.*	5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts). 5.1.2 Dissemination media and format are adequate. 5.1.3 Statistics are released on a preannounced schedule. 5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time. 5.1.5 Statistics not routinely disseminated are made available upon request.
	5.2 Metadata accessibility— *Up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available.*	5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices are annotated. 5.2.2 Levels of detail are adapted to the needs of the intended audience.
	5.3 Assistance to users— *Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available.*	5.3.1 Contact points for each subject field are publicized. 5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.