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Report on Scaling up the Global Initiative on the Implementation of the System of National Accounts and Supporting Statistics

Prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division in consultation with the members of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts, selected countries and the members of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts

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I. Introduction

1. With the advent of the fast changing economic and financial landscapes in a global economy, policy analysts, representatives of academia and members of the general public urgently request infra-annual data that extend in scope to analyse the external and domestic economic and financial vulnerabilities. The national accounts and supporting statistics provide such a comprehensive and exhaustive measure. More in general, the national accounts facilitate the identification of the drivers of growth and inflation, job creation in countries and regions and inform about the trade-offs between fiscal, monetary and debt reform and initiatives to increase growth, employment and equality.
2. The United Nations Statistical Commission has recognised the urgency to meet these policy needs through the strengthening of the national statistical capacity for compiling national accounts and supporting statistics in general and the acceleration of the change over to the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) in particular. At its forty-fourth session, the Statistical Commission requested the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA), supporting countries and other regional organizations, to explore ways to scale up the coordination, the advocacy and the resources for the implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and supporting statistics at the national level and to report thereon to the forty-fifth session of the Commission.
3. The recognition of the urgency to strengthen the statistical capacity of countries in compiling and reporting of national accounts statistics should also be understood in connection with the post-2015 development agenda. Although the negotiations for the agenda are still ongoing, it is expected to seek the eradication of poverty and pathways of sustainable development that are characterized by inclusive economic and social development, and environmental sustainability. Recognising this multidimensional policy perspective, national statistical programmes need to adopt an integrated statistics approach. Integrated statistics calls for a strategic programme for the development of a balanced national statistical system based on country policy priorities and ownership.
4. Against the backdrop of the considerations above, this report on scaling up the global initiative on the implementation of the SNA and supporting statistics has been drafted through, a cooperative effort between countries and organizations, referred to as “the Group” in this report. The Group consists of members of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts (AEG), comprised of experts from 16 countries, participants from five additional countries and ISWGNA members. Participants provided valuable ideas for formulating a programme on scaling up SNA implementation.
5. The Group met on 28 and 29 May 2013 in Luxembourg on the margins of the 8th meeting of the (AEG). The report of this meeting formed the basis for the drafting of this background document to the report of the ISWGNA to the Commission. Subsequently, this background document was submitted to the Group in January 2014 for its final review of the formulation of the way forward on the scaling up of the programme of work for the 2008 SNA at country level.

6. The report addresses the main issues suggested by the Group participating in the Luxembourg meeting. As proposed, the report addresses the effective coordination and management mechanisms and the partnerships required for a scaled up global programme. The mechanisms should ensure that the national statistical capacity development activities are based on integrated economic statistics programmes of work at sub-regional level that reflect country priorities and ownership.

7. Following the guidance of the meeting, the report also sets out an advocacy/communication programme around the policy applications of the national accounts and the link with the formulation of the SDG and post-2015 development agenda. Moreover, the report addresses the preparation and adoption of common implementation approach for the main components of the statistical production process and institutional environment and the formulation and adoption of common monitoring and reporting tools to evaluate progress with the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics. These common approaches and tools will facilitate a cost effective collaboration among participating countries in the implementation programme and will allow international agencies to prepare common compilation guidance, training material and tools that can be flexibly adapted to regional and country requirements.

8. Section II of the present report informs on the meeting on the scaling up of the coordination, advocacy and resources for the implementation of the SNA. Section III makes the case for developing an integrated statistics approach to facilitate cooperation and coordination of capacity building activities. Mechanisms to support international cooperation and coordination for more effective management of the implementation of an integrated statistics programme are presented in Section IV. Section V describes a proposal for the development of a capacity building programme on integrated statistics. Conclusions of the report are presented in Section VI.

II. The meeting on the scaling up of the coordination, advocacy and resources for the implementation of the SNA

9. The meeting on the scaling up of the coordination, advocacy and resources for the implementation of the SNA¹ provided a forum to discuss ways and means to scale up the global initiative on the implementation of the SNA. This needed to be considered in view of the lack of progress in developing countries to prepare national implementation strategies and programmes for the implementation of economic statistics as part of the change over to the 2008 SNA. It provided an opportunity to discuss the implementation and compilation issues of the SNA and to identify ways to better coordinate the implementation of the SNA. UNSD presented a strategic approach for the development of an implementation programme for the SNA and supporting statistics as well as proposals for scaling up the implementation of the SNA that include a global governance arrangement, a coordination mechanism, communication strategy and common monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

10. To facilitate the discussion, participants from Jamaica, Uruguay, Colombia and Brazil presented their country practises on the implementation of the SNA. The presentations on country practises confirmed earlier studies that a lack of resources (institutional infrastructure and financial and human resources) was the main impediment for an exhaustive measure of

¹ The report of the meeting is available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/aeg/2013/m8-2.asp>

economic activity based on the SNA. In addition, political motivation to take ownership at the highest levels of government was encumbered by the absence of adequate statistical management and communication strategies. Their country experiences showed that these impediments can be overcome if the management of the agencies decide to formulate a national strategy and programmes of work for economic statistics in support of the implementation of the SNA. Stepping up the statistical management in combination with the support from international organisations proved crucial for mobilising the political motivation to broaden the legal mandates and allocate adequate resources for the development of the national statistical system (NSS).

11. The Group agreed with the strategic approach to develop a statement of strategy and programme of work on integrated statistics for the changeover to the 2008 SNA. This should take into account detailed and broad ranging discussion with relevant partners of the national statistical system. In this respect, it was also noted that the implementation of the SNA more generally (e.g. arriving at an exhaustive estimate of GDP), instead of focussing on the latest conceptual “novelties” of the 2008 SNA, may need to be given a higher priority. Furthermore, the Group emphasised that the statement of strategy needs to be incorporated into the operational activities of the national statistical system to successfully implement the SNA and supporting statistics. The Group also emphasised the need for the adoption of an integrated economic statistics approach in the national statistical capacity building programmes that encompasses the strengthening of both the institutional mechanisms, including national coordination arrangements between relevant institutions within a country, and the statistical operations and infrastructure of the national statistical system.

12. The Group agreed with a sub-regional approach, broadly based on countries of regional integration communities, with selected countries in the communities taking the lead (i.e. lead country). This approach builds on the need for comparable statistics in support of ongoing economic integration policies and ongoing south-south, north-south and triangular statistical cooperation.

13. The Group also emphasised country ownership of the required actions for strengthening their statistical production process and institutional arrangements to facilitate the compilation of the required scope and detail of the economic statistics and national accounts needed based on country priorities for evidence based policy making.

14. The Group recognised the need for better international and regional alignment of the support for the implementation of the SNA and supporting statistics based on national implementation strategies and programmes at the sub-regional level. This alignment should strengthen the coordination and avoid duplication of efforts in the areas of training and technical assistance. This alignment of technical assistance by international agencies, is also needed in bi-lateral technical assistance to countries to ensure an effective management and coordination of country assistance by development partners. In addition, developing countries are requested to look at possibilities of them getting involved in international discussions on technical aspects related to the implementation of the SNA, for example participating in the relevant meetings and task forces of international organisations.

15. The Group noted that having a coordinated and managed programme at the global level based on a strategic integrated economic statistics approach and a sub-regional orientation would facilitate lining up the statistical capacity development activities on common sub-regional statistical priorities based on country ownership and country policy

needs. Moreover, the approach would prevent activities of development partners crowding out limited institutional capacities at the country level.

16. The Group agreed that there is a lack of political motivation to take country ownership of the SNA implementation for evidence based policy making, particularly at the highest levels of government. To address this issue, it was noted that international and regional organizations should assist countries in focusing communication around the application of the macro accounts for policy purposes in an interconnected regional and global environment. Participants noted that clearly defined and internationally coordinated reporting templates could support the awareness raising and the subsequent implementation at the national level. Also related communication by international organisations with national users was considered extremely helpful. In this context, the participants have put forward the G20 Data Gaps Initiative and the Strategy for the development of agricultural and rural statistics as examples of the sort of advocacy that is required to obtain the political motivation at the highest level of national, regional and global governance.

17. The Group also noted that the advocacy message should be directed to obtain political motivation and country ownership of the economic statistics programme by linking this programme to the formulation of the framework for sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the post 2015 development agenda with reference to inclusive growth and stability. This programme not only foresees accountability through monitoring and reporting of a strengthened national statistical system with a strong coordination role of the national statistical organisation, but also transparency of governance through a trusted national statistical system led by an independent national statistical office. This link will also warrant, in accordance with the request from the Statistical Commission, to take account of the broader measures of progress and the acceleration of programmes to achieve the MDGs and setting baselines for the SDGs.

III. Integrated statistics approach to facilitate cooperation and coordination of capacity building activities for the 2015 development agenda

18. The development of an integrated statistics approach encompasses the institutional and regulatory aspects as well as the statistical operational and infrastructural aspects of the national statistical system using the SNA as organizing conceptual framework. The Group agrees that the comprehensive statistical and institutional perspective provided by the integrated statistics approach enhances the data quality and analytical value of statistics. The integrated statistics approach not only meets the policy demand for data quality and improved timeliness, it also introduces standards for information management that make the production process of statistics better documented, more flexible and transparent, lessen response burden and over time reduce costs.

19. The integrated statistics approach with the introduction of standard statistical information management contrasts with sectoral and ad-hoc indicator approaches. It moves away from the a narrow functional (stovepipe) view of specialized sectoral and indicator production processes to a cross-functional (holistic) view of developing indicators as an outcome of a balanced statistical systems of basic statistics and accounts.

20. This approach is based on the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics that include lessening of response burden, cost-effectiveness and value for money. Moreover, the approach draws on the International Principles of Technical Cooperation, which calls for the

country ownership based on national priorities, adopting strategic result based management with well defined output and outcome indicators for statistical capacity building and aligning the delivery of technical support in capacity building.

21. The Group recalled that the global initiative for the implementation of the 2008 SNA, endorsed by the Statistical Commission, has adopted an integrated statistics approach. With the adoption of this approach, the programme on the implementation of the SNA has broadened its scope beyond the production of macroeconomic accounts, to the statistical production process of basic statistics and to aspects of the institutional environment such as seeking political commitment and allocation of adequate resources for official statistics, using statistics for evidence based policy making and strengthening the national coordination for statistics.

22. The Group also acknowledged that developing a global programme on integrated statistics needs to take into account also other international statistical initiatives such as the implementation of the system of environmental-economic accounting and the global programme on agricultural statistics. Annex I elaborates on these and other international initiatives for developing various areas of statistical capacity. These major statistical programmes can mutually reinforce capacity building of national statistical systems when the trajectories of implementation of actions and outputs are deliberately coordinated, synchronized and prioritized.

IV. Mechanisms to support international cooperation and coordination for more effective management of the implementation of an integrated statistics programme

Global and regional coordination mechanisms

23. The Group agreed that further efforts should be made at global and regional level to put appropriate coordination, monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place in delivering an aligned and coordinated technical support programme at country level, Equally important was the recognition that effective national partnerships should be put in place to generate political motivation, appropriate statistical mandates and allocation of adequate resources at country level. At the global level, the Group submits that these partnerships should extend to a better system wide collaboration between international organizations based on comparative advantages and mandates of these agencies. Moreover, at regional level, this global partnership should include regional partners like the regional development banks, the regional commissions and the regional economic integration organisations.

24. The Group maintains that better synergies and cost efficiencies can be found between the regional and national technical assistance initiatives. For this purpose the global coordination should extend to such activities as fund raising, drafting normative and compilation guidance by statistical domain, formulating advocacy strategies, developing software tools by adopting a standardized information management model, and developing e-learning programmes. Having a coordinated and managed global programme would also facilitate the statistical capacity development activities to be lined up on common sub-regional priorities and policy needs and prevent other activities to crowd out limited institutional capacities at national level.

25. A global coordination mechanism, in the form of an interagency and intergovernmental advisory group may be required to facilitate the implementation of the programme on integrated statistics. The Group further suggests reviewing existing regional coordination mechanisms that can subscribe to a programme on integrated statistics at the regional level.

Common monitoring and reporting mechanisms

26. In the multi-partner environment for developing integrated statistics, a mechanism is needed for monitoring and reporting progress between the partners at national, (sub) regional and international level. The purpose of this mechanism would be to share information on the development and the execution of the programme on integrated statistics.

27. The Group proposes that the project information model described in Annex II could be used for timely and effective communication on work programmes. It is expected that this coherent information system will assist in providing timely notice of possible synergies and impending duplications and gaps in work programmes.

Communication strategy

28. A common communication strategy should be established that can address the concerns of and inform the main stakeholders through regular updates/briefings on the status of progress and outcomes of the global initiative on an integrated statistics programme.

29. In addition, the Group proposes a central web portal that uses common methodological standards, tools and programmes to ensure system coherence among international and regional organizations. The current UNSD Knowledge Base on economic statistics and the SNA and the World Bank's VSS web portals provide a starting point for updated and comprehensive information and technical support material for the implementation of the programme on integrated statistics. A central web portal will ensure a single point access to normative documents, compilation guidance and country experiences. In addition, this instrument will help ensure a consistent message on the programme on integrated statistics.

Strategy for funding

30. The funding arrangements for the programme on integrated statistics 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 Group considers various sources of viable funding sources:

- (a) countries should include funding needs for the programme on integrated statistics 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 programme on integrated statistics 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). bilateral and multilateral donors, should provide financial support for development of common tools for the integrated statistics programme at the global level, while ensuring that these global public goods are reflecting the regional specificities.

V. Capacity building programme on integrated statistics

31. In considering the request of the Statistical Commission to scale up the implementation programme of the SNA at country level, the Group recognises that many developing countries may need technical assistance in adopting an integrated statistics programme, characterised by a combined policy, institutional and statistical perspective. Moreover, the coordination with other global capacity building and country-based initiatives should also be considered when scaling up the effectiveness of the delivery of capacity building at country level.

32. When considering the scope of a capacity building programme on integrated statistics and the ramifications of its global coordination and governance mechanisms, the Group recognises that such a programme extends beyond the remits of the mandate of the ISWGNA. Therefore, the Group recommends that the ISWGNA may wish to consider requesting the Statistical Commission to establish a Friend of the Chair (FOC) to formulate a response to the need for scaling up capacity building at the country level.

33. The Group further recommends that the FOC could work out the modalities for establishing a harmonized integrated statistics programme, focused on overcoming national issues in producing internationally comparable macroeconomic accounts. In this connection, while donor support can help make the initial human and non-human capital investments, it is particularly important that sustained national budgetary funding be secured. Sustained national funding should meet recurrent and capital costs of sustaining a standardized statistical production process for basic business, household and macroeconomic statistics.

VI. Conclusions

34. Taking into consideration the issues presented by the Group in this report, the ISWGNA may wish to consider requesting the Statistical commission to appoint a FOC on integrated statistics. The FOC on integrated statistics should work out the modalities for establishing an integrated statistics capacity building programme for the development of balanced national statistical systems based on country policy priorities and ownership and to support the acceleration of the implementation of the SNA. The FOC could consider the following issues:

- (a). mechanisms to facilitate the coordination, monitoring and reporting for an integrated statistics programmes at national, (sub) regional and international level, while taking into account the relationships with existing statistical bodies and their mandates for capacity building, such as the ISWGNA, and other global and country-based initiatives;
- (b). communication strategy to generate political motivation, statistical mandates and allocation of adequate resources at country level;
- (c). funding arrangements to support the implementation of a programme on integrated statistics at the country level.

Annex I – International initiatives for developing various areas of statistical capacity

1. International initiatives for developing various areas of statistical capacity are presented in Sections I to VI of Annex I as follows: Section I – The implementation programme of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics; Section II – Inter-agency group on economic and financial statistics; Section III – The implementation programme for the 2012 SEEA and supporting statistics; Section IV – International Comparison Program; Section V – Global programme of agricultural and rural statistics; and Section VI – Potential actions to improve coordination of statistical activities to support the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

I. The Implementation Programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics

2. The implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics represents a global statistical initiative, which was mandated by the Commission at its fortieth session following the adoption of the 2008 SNA as the international standard for the compilation and dissemination of national accounts statistics. It has the dual objective in assisting countries in developing the statistical and institutional capacity to (a) make the conceptual change over from the 1968 or 1993 SNA to the 2008 SNA and (b) improve the scope, detail and quality of the national accounts and supporting economic statistics.

3. The efficiency and sustainability of the implementation of the 2008 SNA rest on the agreed principles of the implementation strategy, namely: (a) strategic planning, (b) coordination, monitoring and reporting; and (c) improving statistical systems. The strategy takes as a starting point the different levels of implementation of the SNA in various countries. It acknowledges the need for coordinated action, not only at the international level, but also at regional and sub-regional levels and emphasizes the need for close cooperation with regional commissions and sub-regional organizations.

4. The principles of the implementation strategy are operationalised in the implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics by four elements, namely: (a) using a strategic planning framework, (b) building a programme information structure around the statistical production process, the scope and the compliance for the national accounts and supporting economic statistics, (c) the modalities of statistical capacity building comprising training and technical cooperation, publication of manuals and handbooks, research and advocacy, and (d) the stages of implementation leading to the change over to the 2008 SNA.

5. The modalities of statistical capacity building comprise training and technical cooperation, publication of manuals and handbooks, research and advocacy. At the time that the global implementation programme of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics was adopted by the UNSC, the ISWGNA concluded that the best way to execute the global initiative was through light coordination. This light coordination mechanism allows the individual ISWGNA members, the regional commissions and other regional organizations to pursue their own programmes for the SNA implementation.

6. Eurostat coordinates the implementation of the ESA 2012 (the European version of the 2008 SNA) with European Union member States. The implementation of the new ESA methodology and transmission programme by European Union member States will commence in September 2014. This implementation is supported largely by preparatory work, including

discussions on specific topics and the development of guidelines in the context of working parties and expert groups of the European Union.

7. The IMF Statistics Department assists its member countries in developing capacity to compile and disseminate national accounts statistics. In addition to the technical assistance, it conducts training on national accounts methodologies and compilation practices to officials from statistical offices and other statistics producing agencies. The technical assistance activities of IMF in national accounts are designed as medium-term projects with overall objectives, specific outcomes, outputs and implementation dates. Overall planning and strategy for technical assistance in national accounts are managed from IMF headquarters, which also supervises and monitors the quality of technical assistance provided through the eight IMF regional technical assistance centres.
8. In addition to organizing and co-organizing various task forces and workshops, OECD organizes an annual workshop on the implementation of the 2008 SNA, for the combined meeting of the OECD Working Party on Financial Statistics and the OECD Working Party on National Accounts.
9. UNSD has initiated a series of seminars upon requests from a number of countries to help them with formulating a plan for the implementation of the 2008 SNA in line with global and regional recommendations. For this seminar series pilot countries are identified that could take the lead with the implementation of the 2008 SNA in their subregions. A subregional seminar is then organized in collaboration with the regional commissions and relevant subregional organizations. The aim is to initiate the formulation of a national strategy and implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting socioeconomic statistics, with the objective of strengthening the national statistical system in support of improved policymaking. In addition, UNSD also conducts training workshops to facilitate the compilation of national accounts.
10. The World Bank continues to support the implementation of the 2008 SNA through activities related to its regular programme of work for improving statistical capacity, particularly in developing countries, and work related to the International Comparison Programme. The World Bank is continuing to work with key donors on scaling up its support for developing countries by providing financing mechanisms supporting statistical capacity-building. Although the World Bank support mechanisms available to countries for improving their statistical systems are broad based, those facilities could also be used to address country-specific needs aimed at the implementation of the 2008 SNA. In addition, the World Bank provides E-learning courses on national accounts, including lessons on GDP calculation, supply and use tables, data sources, exhaustiveness of national accounts estimates and estimates beyond GDP, such as institutional sector accounts, as part of a library of e-learning courses on selected topics available on the web through the Virtual Statistical System and are free of charge to all interested parties.
11. UNSD hosts the website of the ISWGNA² that provides information about: the activities of the ISWGNA; guidance on the implementation of the SNA; the SNA research agenda; handbooks and manuals providing SNA compilation guidance; and the 2008 SNA in all official languages.

² The website of the ISWGNA is available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/iswgna.asp>

12. The United Nations regional commissions support the implementation of the 2008 SNA and other internationally agreed standards in economic statistics in the countries of their respective regions. In collaboration with countries, subregional organizations and ISWGNA organizations, the regional commissions have established advisory groups on national accounts and economic statistics. The purpose of the advisory groups is to assist the regional commissions in implementing regional implementation programmes for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics as approved by the regional statistical commissions. These regional programmes are well aligned with the global implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.

13. The work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) includes: (i) support to the countries of Eastern Europe Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South-East Europe (SEE) in the implementation of the 2008 SNA; (ii) contribution to the SNA research agenda through development of methodological guidance on emerging issues; and (iii) work to improve the quality and comparability of related economic statistics. ECE developed a set of regional recommendations for the implementation of the 2008 SNA and asked EECCA countries to draw national implementation plans following the agreed priorities. The development of the ECE regional recommendations and the other activities are coordinated by the regional advisory body – the Steering Group on National Accounts, established by the Conference of European Statisticians Bureau in order to reflect the new needs and priorities of national accounts work in the region. The ECE also promotes the implementation of internationally agreed standards and good practices in other areas of economic statistics, including business registers, short-term economic statistics and price indices. To work of the ECE is facilitated thorough its collaboration with UNSD, Eurostat, CIS, EFTA and the World Bank.

14. The Economic Commission for Africa continued working along with the African Union and African Development Bank, Regional Economic Communities, UNSD and other Development Partners to support the implementation of the 2008 SNA and other internationally agreed standards in economic statistics in the member States on the African continent. The work includes: (i) to develop and carry out the African Strategy and Implementation Action Plan to support member States with the implementation of the 2008 SNA; (ii) to support the formulation of national programmes for the implementation of the 2008 SNA at the national level; (iii) to contribute to the development and promotion of the application of the SNA compilation software ERETES; (iv) to disseminate and apply the international recommended methodologies and to share and exchange country experience in measuring informal sector activity and improve the exhaustiveness of GDP; and (v) to provide technical advice and assistance on the use of national accounts and economic statistics in policy analysis and formulation for sustainable development and mainstreaming gender in macroeconomic accounting and policy making.

15. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in collaboration with CARICOM, UNSD and the National Accounts Working Group of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, supports the regional activities to facilitate the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics based on the Regional Plan for the Implementation of the 2008 SNA in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC is also working closely with the Mercosur and Andean community as well as with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). IADB is supporting ECLAC with developing

guidance for Latin American countries to establish business registers in Latin American countries.

16. In addition, ECLAC managed the 2011 Round of the International Comparison Program (ICP) in Latin America and the Caribbean, leveraging on synergies with the Regional Plan for the Implementation of the SNA 2008 in the region. Various technical assistance missions have been carried out as part of the activities of ECLAC's Regional Advisor in national accounts and economic statistics. ECLAC conducts capacity development missions with the goal of providing technical support to national agencies in their change of base year programmes as well as in the adoption of new recommendations from the 2008 SNA. Also, in cooperation with the IMF, ECLAC has organized training courses in National Accounts that have the 2008 SNA as a framework.

17. In the area of economic statistics, the ESCAP region has designed and agreed on a "Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific"³ focused on capacity building. The "Core Set of Economic Statistics", endorsed by the Regional Commission⁴ in 2011, functions as a shared reference for cooperation and sets out the substantive ambition level for the Regional Programme. Subsequently, an "Implementation Plan for the Regional Programme" was developed over three years of intense work by countries and development partners⁵. The expected outcome of the Regional Programme is that the national statistical systems in the region have the capacity to produce and disseminate, in line with the international standards, the Core Set of Economic Statistics by 2020. While the top priority for the region as a whole is to improve basic economic statistics, as confirmed by a recent capacity screening⁶, many countries in the region have plans to implement the 2008 SNA

18. The implementation of the Regional Programme is overseen by the Steering Group on Economic Statistics, chaired by New Zealand, comprising heads and senior officials of macroeconomic statistics departments of national statistical offices as well as international organizations such as the Asian Development Bank, International Labour Organization and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The Steering Group is in the process of expanding to include representatives of Central Banks and ministries of finance for a coordinated approach to production of economic statistics at the national level.⁷

19. The Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) integrated the SNA and other topics of basic economic statistics, agricultural statistics and environment statistics in its

³ Please see "E/ESCAP/CST(2)/5, Proposed regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific", 25 October 2010. Available at: <http://www.unescap.org/stat/cst/2/CST2-5E.pdf>

⁴ Please see "Resolution 67/10 A Core Set of Economic Statistics to Guide the Improvement of Basic Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific", 25 May 2011. Available at: http://www.unescap.org/EDC/English/AnnualReports/2011-Resolutions-E67_23E.pdf

⁵ Please see "E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4, Proposed core set of economic statistics for Asia and the Pacific", 7 October 2010. Available at: <http://www.unescap.org/stat/cst/2/CST2-4E.pdf>; "E/ESCAP/CST(3)/CRP.1, Implementation plan for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific", 14 November 2012. Available at: <http://www.unescap.org/stat/cst/3/CST3-CRP1E.pdf>

⁶ Please see the "Report on the region-wide Capacity Screening of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific" at <http://www.unescap.org/stat/econ/SGRPES-Oct2013/Summary-of-Results.pdf>

⁷ For the latest information on the Steering Group's activities and work plan please see the "Report of the Third Meeting of the Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics" which took place on 29-31 October 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand at <http://www.unescap.org/stat/econ/SGRPES-Oct2013/report-3rd-SGRPES.pdf>

training syllabus. These courses are presented as internet-based e-learning courses, in national accounts compilation and use of economic statistics or performing tasks relating to compilation of national accounts, instructor-guided e-learning courses, providing a fairly comprehensive overview of the 2008 SNA as a framework for macroeconomic statistics, and advance level courses designed for experienced middle level officials to strengthen capacity to implement the recommendations of 2008 SNA and improve the quality and coverage of national accounts statistics. Experts from ADB, ESCAP, FAO, IMF and UNSD served as resource persons in the various courses.

20. The normative and operational work by the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA) on economic statistics aims to strengthen the statistical capacity of member countries for the compilation of national accounts and economic statistics including short-term economic statistics, such as, price statistics, industry, trade and energy statistics. To overcome the lack of short-term economic indicators and their metadata in the ESCWA region, a programme on the development of short-term economic statistics was established, based on the general framework developed by the United Nations with a view to providing the needed information to analyze the economic cycle, monitor economic performance and forecast the repercussions of financial crises and economic shocks. Within the same framework, the International Comparison Programme in its 2011 round continues to play a crucial regional role in the involvement of Western Asia national accounts experts in training and experience-sharing activities, and building capacity in the field of national accounts compilation, specifically from the expenditure side.

21. ESCWA cooperates with a number of international and regional organizations on capacity-building activities in the area of economic statistics, which include among others, UNSD, other United Nations organisations, Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization, the League of Arab States and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics.

II. Inter-agency group on economic and financial statistics

22. The Inter-Agency Group on Economic and Financial Statistics (IAG) comprises the Bank for International Settlements, the European Central Bank, Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund (Chair), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations, and the World Bank. It was established in 2008 to coordinate statistical issues and data gaps highlighted by the global crisis and to strengthen data collection. The work of the IAG is closely related to the G20 Data Gaps Initiative that has outlined a number of recommendations for addressing data gaps arising from the 2008 global financial crisis. Those recommendations were presented in the report of IMF and the Financial Stability Board secretariat entitled “The financial crisis and information gaps” (available from <http://www.imf.org/external/np/g20/pdf/102909.pdf>). The IAG disseminates G20 data at information about its activities on the Principal Global Indicator website available at: http://www.principalglobalindicators.org/about_pgi.aspx

23. One of the recommendations of the G20 Data Gaps Initiative, recommendation 15, calls for developing “a strategy to promote the compilation and dissemination of the balance sheet approach, flow of funds and sectoral data more generally, starting with G20 economies”. The objective of recommendation 15 is to expand the dissemination and reporting of internationally comparable and detailed annual and quarterly sectoral accounts by both G20 economies and non-G20 advanced economies. This expansion would involve improving the

compilation of sectoral accounts in terms of details (subsectors and asset details), closing data gaps, and developing financial stocks and flows on a “from-whom-to-whom” basis.

24. An important milestone in taking forward the work on implementing recommendation 15 was the development of templates for a minimum and encouraged set of internationally comparable sectoral accounts and balance sheets. The templates set the scope of sectoral accounts and balance sheets to support internationally coordinated efforts towards producing and disseminating internationally comparable statistics. To support the compilation of sectoral accounts and balance sheets, IMF has initiated a series of seminars for its member countries and launched technical assistance programmes for selected countries.

III. The Implementation Programme for the 2012 SEEA and supporting statistics

25. The implementation programme for the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) Central Framework represents a global statistical initiative, endorsed by the Statistical Commission at its forty-fourth session following the adoption of the SEEA Central Framework as the international standard for the compilation and dissemination of environmental-economic accounts.

26. The SEEA Central Framework provides a strong data compiling and confrontation framework to generate a wide range of data and indicators that can be further adapted to countries’ priorities and policy needs. The implementation strategy for the SEEA Central Framework reflects the need for regional and national coordination and advocates that the accounts should be implemented with a flexible and modular approach, giving full consideration to national circumstances and requirements. Four distinct phases are identified for the flexible and modular approach for SEEA implementation through a multi-year programme, irrespective of the level of statistical development, as follows:

- (a). Phase I – Establishment of appropriate national institutional arrangements based on agreed policy priorities that determine the scope and detail of the accounts and tables and will drive and support the implementation strategy. Identify whether there is a commitment and potential to sustain the programme over time is an important aim of the first phase;
- (b). Phase II – Self-assessment, for which a diagnostic tool will be designed to identify which accounts can be implemented and what basic data sources are needed for that purpose;
- (c). Phase III – Data quality assessment of basic data needed for the compilation of the accounts; and
- (d). Phase IV – Drafting the development strategy for environmental accounting, which contain a prioritization of types of accounts and improvement activities related to the source data.

27. The efficiency and sustainability of the implementation for the SEEA Central Framework rest on the agreed principles of the implementation strategy, namely: (a) coordination, monitoring and reporting; (b) strategic planning; and (c) improving statistical system and the development of data sources. It acknowledges the need for coordinated action, not only at the international level but also at regional and national levels, and emphasizes the need for close cooperation among different stakeholders.

28. The SEEA Central Framework is expected to be implemented with a flexible and modular approach taking into account national statistical office resources and requirements. The most important issues of the implementation process are institutional capacity building and the development of data sources. Activities to facilitate and stimulate the (global and national) implementation process include: training and technical cooperation, the development of training materials, cooperation with the research community, and advocacy.

29. In the multi-stakeholder environment for the SEEA Central Framework implementation strategy, a mechanism is needed to coordinate, monitor and report progress at (sub) regional and international level. The goal with this mechanism is to share information on the development and the execution of the SEEA Central Framework implementation strategy. The UNCEEA is the overall global coordinating body. UNCEEA established a Partnership Group, consisting of the organizations active in the field of environmental-economic accounting. This Partnership Group is responsible for facilitating and stimulating the implementation of SEEA Central Framework and will advise the UNCEEA on maintaining and managing a coherent programme of work to implement SEEA Central Framework. A trust fund for the implementation is expected to be created in a separate entity.

30. Cooperation among agencies in delivering technical assistance and training through more timely and effective communication on work programmes and programme developments are based on a programme information structure of the statistical production process and a data quality assessment framework for evaluating statistical project outcomes. Better coordination, monitoring and reporting collectively help meet national and regional goals, as well as providing a means to evaluate and to assess the progress of the implementation of SEEA. Monitoring, reporting and evaluating should be used to identify risks to the implementation process so that timely interventions can be made to keep plans on track.

31. The funding of the implementation programme for the SEEA Central Framework builds largely on the existing resources and comparative advantages of all stakeholders and partners resulting in a trust fund created by the partnership. Various sources of funding are viable:

- (e). countries are including funding needs for 2012 SEEA Central Framework implementation in their national plans and actively seek additional sources of funding for their plans;
- (f). international agencies providing technical assistance and financial support and other donors are making resources available for technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of SEEA Central Framework and the development of basic economic and environmental statistics in countries, in particular in developing countries; and
- (g). all agencies involved are building on synergies with the other similar programmes such as work of PARIS21, provision of training and technical assistance

32. Disbursements of the trust fund will be focused on assistance to countries that have shown commitment for SEEA activities through their own initial funding to assist them in achieving some success, rather than being used mostly for “seed” money where the chance of continued activity is limited.

33. The UNSD, in collaboration with UNDP, UNEP, the World Bank, the RCs and other relevant subregional organizations initiated a series of seminars. The aim with the seminar series is to facilitate capacity building for developing national and regional strategies for the SEEA implementation in response to policy needs for more comprehensive and accurate statistical information on the interactions of the environment and the economy. Moreover it is expected that the seminar series would initiate the formulation of a regional and national implementation strategy for the SEEA Central Framework, with the objective of strengthening the national statistical system (NSS) in support of developing comparable environmental-economic accounts for policy making. It is expected that this initiative would lead to a formulation of the development strategy for the implementation for the SEEA Central Framework and a multi-year statistics programme to develop environmental economic accounts.

IV. International Comparison Program

34. The International Comparison Program (ICP) was established as a worldwide statistical partnership to collect comparative price data and compile detailed expenditure values of countries' gross domestic products, and to estimate purchasing power parities (PPPs) of the world's economies. Using PPPs instead of market exchange rates to convert currencies makes it possible to compare the output of economies and the welfare of their inhabitants in real terms (that is, controlling for differences in price levels).

35. A governance structure of the ICP ensures that consistent results would be produced. This outcome is achieved by coordinating the work globally, establishing a single set of standards, providing centralized technical and practical guidance, and ruling on issues that had the potential to be interpreted in different ways in the regions. Several tiers of governance are in place, ranging from worldwide coordinating groups to regional bodies.

36. The nature of the ICP and its global reach meant that the UNSC is naturally the apex governing body. Because the membership of the UNSC includes national statistical offices and other international organizations, it was well suited to provide the overall oversight of the functioning of the ICP. The more hands-on overview is provided by an Executive Board. The Executive Board provides strategic leadership and makes decisions about the ICP's priorities, standards, overall work programme, and budget. The Board is also overseeing the activities of the ICP Global Office. Representation on the Executive Board is agency-based (either an international organization or a national statistics office), with the specific requirement that representatives be very senior staff.

37. The Global Office was established within the World Bank to carry out the day-to-day work required to implement the ICP worldwide. The global manager is responsible for its operations, supported by a team of professional statisticians and administrative staff. The Global Office reported regularly to the Executive Board on work programmes and budgets. The Global Office is subject to the World Bank's administrative and fiduciary rules and regulations, including all requirements related to the confidentiality of data. On day-to-day activities, the Global Office reported to the director of the World Bank's Development Data Group. The ICP was not only a global program under the auspices of the UNSC, but also a World Bank programme and initiative in which the DECDG director was accountable to the World Bank management for the programme. On matters related to the execution and implementation of the ICP mission, policy, programmes, priorities, and standards, the global

manager acted within Executive Board directives and within the framework of board-approved work programmes and budgets.

38. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is responsible for providing advice on technical issues related to the ICP; it resolves conceptual and methodological matters. TAG's members, appointed by the Executive Board, are all internationally known experts in the fields of prices or national accounts.

39. Regional offices coordinates ICP activities in each of the five geographic regions — Africa, Asia- Pacific, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), South America, and Western Asia. In addition, the economies included in the regular PPP program run by Eurostat and OECD were treated as though they were in an autonomous region for the purposes of incorporating their estimates into the worldwide estimates.

40. Some regions also had advisory boards responsible for establishing the governance structure of the regional programme, making decisions on technical aspects relevant to the region, and monitoring the work programme and financial and staff resource requirements. The boards also were expected to promote flows of information, disseminate the PPP results, and promote their use in the region. The regional coordinating agencies set up agreements with each of their participating countries outlining the respective roles and responsibilities of the regional coordinator and the country. These agreements provided a formal basis for mutual cooperation.

41. The main functions of the five regional coordinating organizations acting under the auspices of the Global Office are to liaise with the national agencies responsible for providing data in their region, to develop the regional product pricing lists, to train the staff involved in collecting prices and estimating the basic heading expenditures, to validate the data received, and to produce and publish the regional results. The regional coordinators and the Global Office maintained close ties to ensure the highest degree of consistency across regions. The regional coordinators takes part in meetings organized by the Global Office, and at those meetings worked together to review the regional results, decide on best practices, and agree on work plans and timetables.

42. In most economies, several different agencies provided the national accounts and price data for the ICP. In such cases, one agency is nominated as the national coordinating office, and within that agency a national ICP coordinator is appointed. The main role of the national coordinator is to ensure that the economy's ICP data (national accounts, prices, and wages) are estimated correctly, that statistical and field staff (involved in collecting prices) are trained in the concepts underlying the ICP and the practical implications for collecting prices, that data are edited and entered into the ICP database, and that editing queries from the regional coordinator are handled promptly. The national coordinators also attends the data validation workshops held in each region to check the consistency of the data supplied by those regions.

V. Global programme of Agricultural and Rural Statistics

43. The Global programme of agricultural and rural statistics was established as a response to the declining quantity and quality of agricultural statistics. The global strategy will also address the emerging data requirements posed by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), mainly on biofuels, global warming, the environment and food security. Policy makers at the national and international level and those developing investment

strategies to enhance economic development face many challenges with the changing face of agriculture in the 21st century. While agriculture is the primary source to feed, clothe, and provide materials for fuel and housing for a growing world population, the challenge is at the same time to lift millions of people out of poverty and hunger, reduce the impact of agriculture on the environment and global warming, and sustain water and land resources. These are issues that go beyond national boundaries. The purpose of the global strategy is to provide the vision for national and international statistical systems to produce the basic data and information to guide the decision making required for the 21st century. The global strategy is based on a thorough assessment of data user needs and what is currently available.

44. The strategic guidance and oversight for the execution of the Global Action Plan to implement the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics is provided by the Global Steering Committee (GSC). The GSC is the ultimate decision making body for using the resources in the Global Trust Fund for Implementing the Global Strategy, in compliance with the conditions stipulated in the agreements between the Fund Administrator (which is FAO) and individual Resource Partners.

45. In addition, the GSC seeks to achieve coordination of activities and interventions that are not funded through the Global trust fund, but are of significant relevance to implementation of the Global Strategy. Interventions of this nature include all relevant interventions that are funded through bilateral arrangements, self-funding modalities or any other activities outside the Global trust fund mechanism. The GSC will meet at least annually to monitor progress in implementation of the Global Strategy, evaluate its impact, and make decisions on the strategic allocation of Global trust fund resources based on the contributions committed by all Resource Partners. The GSC comprise the chair of the Statistical Commission; country representatives of the Regional Steering Committees (two per region); and representatives of international and regional organizations, Resource Partners, farmer associations, and other key users, as well as the key technical partners and FAO.

46. The Global Executive Board (GEB) is the executive committee of the GSC. Between meetings of the GSC, the GEB represents the membership of the GSC, facilitates coordination among all GSC members, and facilitates the decision-making process of the GSC. The GEB exercises functions delegated to it by the GSC. The GEB, in carrying out its functions, will be supported by the GO. The GEB will give instruction to the Fund Administrator (FA) in line with the strategic allocation decided by the GSC. The GEB has seven members appointed by the GSC from GSC members.

47. A Global Office was established to ensure overall technical coordination of the implementation of the Global Strategy at the global and regional level. The GO is hosted by the Statistics Division of FAO and led by the Coordinator assigned by FAO for this purpose. The GO act as secretariat of the GSC and the GEB and provides recommendations on the indicative allocation of funds among activities at the global and regional levels and between regions.

48. An Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Agricultural and Rural Statistics (IAEG) was established to bring countries and agencies together to develop and document good practices and guidelines on the concepts, methods, and statistical standards for food security, sustainable agriculture, and rural development. The IAEG will report to the commission on its activities every two years.

49. The IAEG comprises high-level experts in statistics on food security, sustainable agriculture and rural development from national governments and international organizations. The membership ensures regional representation and a broad range of experience drawn from countries, international agencies, academia, and other subject matter experts. The IAEG may consider establishing task teams on specific topics. The secretariat of the IAEG is hosted by FAO.

50. Regional Steering Committees are established as the decision-making body at regional level. The RSCs provide guidance and oversight, within the framework defined by the GSC and consistent with the relevant funding agreements, for implementation of the regional and country activities defined in the regional plan. In addition, the RSC will seek to achieve coordination of activities and interventions that are not funded through the Global trust fund, but are of significant relevance for implementation of the Global Strategy. Interventions of this nature include all relevant interventions that are funded through bilateral arrangements, self-funding modalities, or any other activities outside the Global trust fund mechanism.

51. Each RSC will evaluate the need to establish a Regional Executive Board (REB) and Regional Office (RO). The REB is an executive committee of the RSC that receives delegated authority from the RSC to oversee the execution of its decisions. The REB will meet more frequently than the RSC and will carry out the RSC's functions between meetings of the RSC. The structure and size of the RO will vary by region, depending on regional resources and needs. Its major role is coordinating the country assessments and providing the integrated national statistical systems with training and technical assistance. The RO also liaise with other international, regional, and sub-ROs within its region to coordinate their support for countries, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring that global standards are being followed.

52. Governance at the national level will build as much as possible on existing coordination mechanisms and structures. National governance of the agricultural statistical system entails the establishment where it does not exist of a sectoral coordination mechanism that brings together the national statistics office and the ministries responsible for agriculture, forestry, and fisheries and any other institutions that collect agriculture-related data. This sectoral coordination mechanism should be part of the national statistical coordination mechanism, such as the national statistics council, which provides governance to the whole national statistical system.

VI. Potential actions to improve coordination of statistical activities to support the Post-2015 Development Agenda

53. To record their continuing commitment to work together to strengthen country-level statistical capacity facilitated by inter-agency knowledge sharing, heads of the International Monetary Fund, the Multilateral Development Banks and the United Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that sets out the basis of their enhanced collaboration. The MOU was signed on April 19, 2013

54. The report by the United Nations' High Level Panel on the post-2015 development agenda puts improved data scope, quality, and accessibility front and centre. Better data and statistics, the Panel argued, will help governments track progress and ensure their decisions are evidence-based and can be held to account. The Panel called for a "Data Revolution" and the establishment of a Global Partnership on Development Data. Drawing from government

statistical offices, international organizations, civil society, foundations, and the private sector, the Partnership would develop a global strategy to fill data gaps and expand data accessibility. It would galvanize global efforts towards establishing a baseline for post-2015 targets.

55. Collectively, each signatory institution is a unique force to mobilize support for developing work programmes and encourage coherent actions on the broader spectrum of donors and partners. The entities of the United Nations system – the regional commissions, the United Nations funds and programmes, and United Nations specialized agencies – will be involved accordingly. Four broad areas of collaboration designed to maximize the effectiveness of the group are presented below.

Actions to influence the political discourse on global partnerships and strategies to improve data

56. Signatory institutions must carefully monitor the development at the global political level to ensure their collective voice is heard in the formation of any new partnership mechanisms to support statistics and data. It is proposed the group strive to develop a common set of principles in regards to future partnerships and strategies that impact the statistics domain. In laying out the principles, it is important for this group to ensure that the post-2015 indicators framework is aligned with the realities of data availability and country capacities, so that collaborative efforts of this group do not lead to overburdening of developing countries with unreasonable data demands.

Addressing a select number of difficult gaps in data production and accessibility

57. The experience of the MDGs reinforces the view that goals and attendant indicators should be limited in number and should capture high level aspirations for the outcomes of development programmes. Moreover, the effects of increasing globalization need to be captured. There are some key domains where actions today will undoubtedly improve the future evidence base, and these actions will best be informed by sound user diagnostics of data demand and capacity assessment of producers of statistical information. As many of these areas refer to the implementation of globally agreed standards and recommendations and are particularly pertinent at the regional level, these activities should build on the existing strategic partnerships between the regional development banks and the United Nations regional commissions.

58. Areas that need to be considered include:

- (a). Supporting standardized measures of Household Well-being;
- (b). Environmental sustainability through the development of a global implementation initiative for the SEEA in close alignment with other major implementation initiatives such as for the System of National Accounts and agricultural statistics;
- (c). Sound measures of the environment and of shared prosperity rely on sound national accounts data;
- (d). Administrative data systems for statistical use is one of the salient areas of statistical information in developing countries that require access for statistical purposes with the objective to reduce response burden and apply cost effective collection methods for official statistics.

Strengthening knowledge sharing on innovative approaches to data production and improving data accessibility

59. The revolution in information technology over the last decade provides an opportunity to strengthen data and statistics for accountability and decision-making purposes. There have been innovative initiatives to use mobile technology and other advances to enable real-time monitoring of development results, and to integrate statistical and geospatial data. But this movement remains largely disconnected from the traditional statistics community at both global and national levels. The post-2015 process needs to bring them together and start now to improve development data. This group could begin to draw these disparate communities together.

Supporting the Global Poverty Statistics Board

60. The recently established Global Poverty Statistics Board (GPS Board) is tasked to provide guidance to the World Bank team currently charged with producing the World Bank Group's global estimates of poverty and the well-being of the poorest segments of the population. Board members aim to provide the statistical foundation to take the work on the World Bank Poverty and Shared Prosperity goals forward. The aims of this Board should form part of the basis of the group's collaborative efforts, which could involve deepening consultations and discussion on approaches for poverty estimation at the working level and creating an expert group for advice and guidance on the data and technical issues.

61. In order to facilitate collaboration, the MOU states that:

- (a). Each party to the MOU will designate a representative to serve as the focal point for collaborative efforts.
- (b). On a rotating basis, one of the agencies will serve as secretariat to facilitate the exchange of information and reporting of progress.

Annex II – Project information model

1. 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 with the implementation of the programme on integrated statistics. 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.
2. It is proposed to apply a programme information structure to facilitate the coordination, monitoring and reporting on the programme on integrated statistics in the 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 outcomes⁸. Together, the two dimensions will allow for the development of 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.
3. The statistical production process is presented in a five-part structure:
 - (a). Institutional setting;
 - (b). Registers and frames;
 - (c). Surveys and administrative sources;
 - (d). Integration frameworks; and
 - (e). Dissemination.
4. Figure 1 depicts the statistical production process in a stylized diagram. This structure is built on the well-established Conference of European statisticians' 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 shows how the five components identified in Figure 1 map into the Classification of Statistical Activities.
5. 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

⁸ This information framework is also used to monitor the implementation of the SNA and the SEEA.

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 provides a more detailed breakdown of the DQAF into its indicator items.

6. As already described, the programme on integrated statistics 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 governing body would need to work with the regional commissions and other (sub) regional organisations 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 context of integrated statistics with multiple compiler stakeholders within a country and often multiple funding agencies within and across countries.

Figure 1: Statistical Production Process Framework

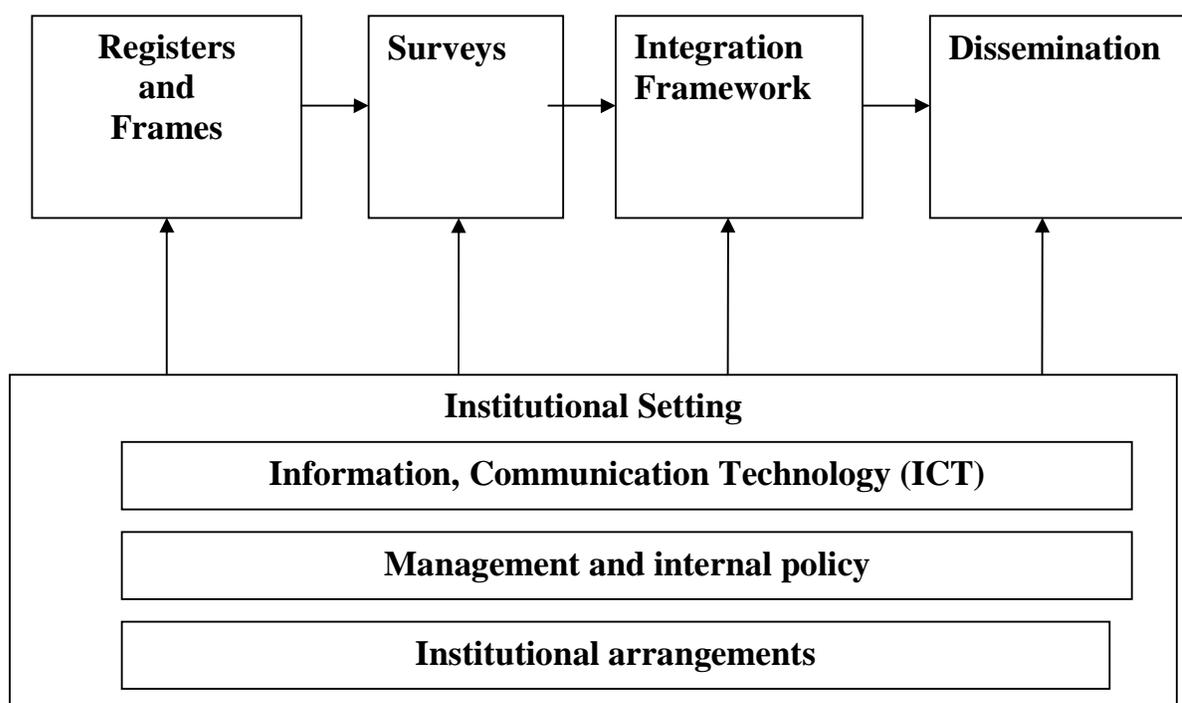


Table 1. The Statistical Production Process and the Classification of Statistical Activities

Statistical production	Classification of statistical activities
Institutional setting	
Management and internal policy and institutional arrangements	<i>Domain 5: Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics</i> 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	<i>Domain 5: Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics</i> 5.5 Management and development of technological resources (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing)
Registers and frames	
	<i>Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis</i> 4.2 <i>Classification - Of units</i> 4.3 <i>Data sources</i> 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	
	<i>Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis</i> 4.2 <i>Classification - Of items</i> 4.3 <i>Data sources</i> 4.3.3 Household surveys 4.3.4 Business and agricultural surveys 4.3.5 Other administrative sources
Integration frameworks	
	<i>Domain 1: Demographic and social statistics</i> 1.1 Population and migration 1.2 Labour 1.4 Health 1.8 Justice and crime <i>Domain 2: Economic statistics</i> 2.1 Macroeconomic statistics 2.2 Economic accounts 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	
	<i>Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis</i> 4.1 Metadata 4.5 Dissemination, data warehousing

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

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
<p>0. Prerequisites of quality</p>	<p>0.1 Legal and institutional environment—<i>The environment is supportive of statistics</i> 0.2 Resources—<i>Resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programmes.</i> 0.3 Relevance—<i>Statistics cover relevant information on the subject field.</i> 0.4 Other quality management—<i>Quality is a cornerstone of statistical work.</i></p>	<p>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. 0.2.1 Staff, facilities, computing resources, and financing are commensurate with statistical programmes. 0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented. 0.3.1 The relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are monitored. 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 .</p>
<p>1. Assurances of integrity <i>The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.</i></p>	<p>1.1 Professionalism—<i>Statistical policies and practices are guided by professional principles.</i> 1.2 Transparency—<i>Statistical policies and practices are transparent.</i> 1.3 Ethical standards —<i>Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.</i></p>	<p>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. 1.2.1 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. 1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behaviour are in place and are well known to the staff.</p>

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
<p>2. Methodological soundness <i>The methodological basis for the statistics follows internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.</i></p>	<p>2.1 Concepts and definitions— <i>Concepts and definitions used are in accord with internationally accepted statistical frameworks.</i> 2.2 Scope —<i>The scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.</i> 2.3 Classification/sectorization—<i>Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices.</i> 2.4 Basis for recording—<i>Flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices</i></p>	<p>2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices. 2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices. 2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with 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.</p>
<p>3. Accuracy and reliability <i>Source data and statistical techniques are sound and statistical outputs sufficiently portray reality</i></p>	<p>3.1 Source data – <i>Source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics.</i> 3.2 Assessment of source data—<i>Source data are regularly assessed.</i> 3.3 Statistical techniques—<i>Statistical techniques employed conform to sound statistical procedures</i> 3.4 Assessment and validation of intermediate data and statistical outputs—<i>Intermediate results and statistical outputs are regularly assessed and validated.</i> 3.5 Revision studies— <i>Revisions, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.</i></p>	<p>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. 3.2.1 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. 3.3.1 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. 3.4.1 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.</p>

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
		3.5.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used internally to inform statistical processes (see also 4.3.3).
<p>4. Serviceability <i>Statistics, with adequate periodicity and timeliness, are consistent and follow a predictable revisions policy.</i></p>	<p>4.1 Periodicity and timeliness— <i>Periodicity and timeliness follow internationally accepted dissemination standards.</i> 4.2 Consistency— <i>Statistics are consistent within the dataset, over time, and with major datasets.</i> 4.3 Revision policy and practice— <i>Data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.</i></p>	<p>4.1.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards. 4.1.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards. 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. 4.3.1 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).</p>
<p>5. Accessibility <i>Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.</i></p>	<p>5.1 Data accessibility— <i>Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.</i> 5.2 Metadata accessibility— <i>Up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available.</i> 5.3 Assistance to users— <i>Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available.</i></p>	<p>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. 5.2.1 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. 5.3.1 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.</p>