

Second Meeting of the United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians 12 June 2023, Online Conclusions

Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, opened the meeting. He thanked the Network members for their contribution to the work of the Network and for their inputs to the [report of the Network](#) to the 54th session of the Statistical Commission. He underscored the need for the Network to forge strategic partnerships with the relevant communities when implementing its 2023 work programme to follow up on the [decisions](#) in the report of the 54th session of the Statistical Commission. He also encouraged Network members to share their insights and views on the Network's 2023 work programme.

In her opening remarks, Aishath Shahuda, Co-Chair of the United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians and Deputy Chief Statistician, Maldives Bureau of Statistics, highlighted the benefit of the Network meetings as a mechanism to update members on current and emerging issues, from which they can collaborate and work together with various partners to develop innovative solutions to tackle these issues.

The meeting began with a keynote presentation on “Measuring Human Capital in the National Accounts - an Experimental Approach” before discussing the follow-up work from the report on the 54th session of the Statistical Commission and the initiative to improve the Network's communication and outreach activities.

The members of the Network:

1. Expressed their appreciation for the work done by the Bureau in organizing the virtual meeting and preparing the informative agenda.

Keynote presentation

2. Welcomed the initiative to include a keynote presentation in the second and future meetings of the Network, where appropriate.

3. Agreed to provide to the Network's Bureau the names of possible keynote speakers and/or topics for future Network meetings for consideration.

4. Observed that many countries may not have readily available source data to compile estimates of human capital, especially those related to the use of human capital in volunteer work, post-retirement activities and the informal economy.

5. Acknowledged that while it would be more straightforward to incorporate estimates of human capital in expenditure-based GDP, more thinking on how to account for these estimates in the production and income approaches to compiling GDP may be needed.

6. Noted that the scope of human capital as defined in the presentation may need to be expanded to include human capital which is acquired through informal training and education.

7. Underscored the need for the statistical community to actively engage with policy makers on the implications of incorporating human capital and related capital services in the national accounts for policy making and using related terminology for reporting on the labour market

Follow-up work from report on the 54th session of the Statistical Commission

Data access sprint

8. Supported the proposal to (a) continue work on global value chain use cases in 2023 in horticulture, semiconductors, e-commerce, retail trade and tourism and (b) work on capacity building initiatives together with the CEBD Task Team on Capacity Building.

9. Supported the proposal for the data access sprint to liaise with the newly-formed Network of Data Science Leaders and its task team on privacy enhancing techniques in its work on the GVC use cases.

10. Supported the proposal for the data access sprint to work together with the Training, Competencies and Capacity Development task team of the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics to enhance the capacity of countries to access privately-held data for statistical purposes.

11. Observed that the statistics act of many countries may cover the collection of survey data, but not the collection of micro privately-held data such as those on global value chains, so national statistical offices may need to engage more actively with the owners of such data to address concerns such as how to ensure the confidential access and use of the data provided by them.

Beyond GDP sprint 2023

12. Supported the organization of the seven sprint meetings to explore the feasibility of developing an integrated statistical system for inclusive and sustainable well-being which gives clarity around how the range of statistical standards and outputs can be utilized to give a comprehensive picture of the modern world, and delivers a coherent framework within which users can utilize different data in an integrated approach to address complex policy questions.

13. Acknowledged the internal and external institutional collaborative requirements of such a system and recommended that the sprint task team should assess whether some of the data such as social and environment data that national statistical offices and other government agencies are already collecting can be reused and recycled for compiling the data required by the system in order to alleviate the data requirements.

International Statistical Classifications sprint

14. Welcomed the proposal for the Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications (UNCEISC) and Network to collaborate in organizing a sprint on international statistical classifications to (a) raise awareness of the importance of international classifications with both internal and external users, (b) advance outreach by the Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications to engage national statistical offices, (c) provide an additional forum for discussing and sharing modern ways of updating and implementing classifications and (d) highlight the importance of investing in

classification work as a foundation for data integration, including the proposed integrated system for inclusive and sustainable well-being.

15. Agreed to coordinate with the bureaus of the UNCEISC and Network on the feasibility of members presenting at the sprint webinars to share their experiences with using international statistical classifications.

Improving the Network's Communication and Outreach Activities

16. Noted the feedback on the need to improve the communication and outreach of the Network's activities that the Network bureau has received from stakeholders.

17. Appreciated the initiative of the Network's Bureau to propose a number of process improvements to (a) improve the relevance of the Network's work programme through a more formal and structured consultation process with members and statistical groups and committees and formal communication on sprint activities and outcomes and (b) expand the types of activities conducted such as organizing quarterly Network meetings, producing short and focussed podcasts on relevant themes and strengthening relations with statistical groups and committees of the international statistical system and regional commissions with a focus on the Global South, in response to this feedback for better communication, consultation and outreach.