

Friends of the Chair on Economic Statistics
Comments on A Draft Framework of Better Outcomes and Recommendations
for Action for the System of Economic Statistics

Country: Indonesia

First of all, we would like to say thank you to Statistics Canada and UNSD for sending us the draft framework. In general, we agree and support the draft, which we find it very comprehensive and clear. We have comments and identify the challenges relating to the recommendations of actions.

II. Recommendations of actions

1. Networking: Collaboration and user consultation

- a. We agree with the FOC Group which recommends that collaboration and user consultation should build on traditional mechanism of global and regional forums on economic statistics. In the future we really hope that collaboration and user consultation from international initiatives can be managed *more structurally to avoid overlapping and increase efficiency and effectiveness*. The forums may be formed by geographical position of the economy, availability of infrastructure, subject of discussion, or group of countries. At the moments, there are so many regional forums discussing the same topics which cause inefficiency and overlapping.
- b. We support the idea to establish a network of data science centers in national statistical systems. In Indonesia, we have regular meetings and discussions with *Indonesia Statistics Society Forum* and *Indonesia One Data Program* which consist of representatives from BPS-Statistics Indonesia, government institutions (central and regional), and academia from many universities. We also build *National SDGs Secretariat* involving many stakeholders including private companies and philanthropy. Some of the activities relating to data standard, metadata, and code reference work smoothly. However, we have problem in *the case of data interoperability* among stakeholders.
- c. We also agree to adopt the “whole of systems approach” for the systems of economic statistics.
 - 1) We fully support the idea to share libraries of methods and algorithms, because it will encourage countries to adopt and implement them. It also will improve the validity and comparability among countries.
 - 2) We concern with the idea of sharing a central global repository of big data, especially with private sector owners. It will be very good and ideal if we can achieve it. However, based on Indonesia’s experience, it is very difficult due to several reasons.

The idea may be implemented if we consider “free big data” such as google mobility index, flight tracker, job vacancy, etc. However, if we talk about “paid big data” such as mobile positioning data (MPD) which is widely used for tourism and mobility in small level areas, it will be very difficult. NSO and private sectors have different perspectives. NSO concerns with availability and quality of the data, while the private sector data owners concern with business so that they treat their data as a product and sell them to government institutions as an end-user. In fact, the private

sector owners sell the same data to several stakeholders with high prices and we cannot share them to others due to confidentiality, security and other related issues.

- 3) Network development involving the private sector data owner is possible but it may take long process. In our experience to collect e-commerce data, as a consequence of government regulations stating that the recording of e-commerce data has to be done through one gate (BPS-Statistics Indonesia), we face some difficulties, such as:
- It is difficult to unite the needs of all Ministries/Agencies with various interests (some agencies need big data in aggregate form and some ask for details/granular)
 - Resistance from e-commerce companies and associations in providing detailed/granular data due to aspects of security, confidentiality, and differences in product classification
 - It is difficult to apply law enforcement to companies that do not submit data regularly

Referring to these issues, we suggest to implement the idea of sharing a central global repository of big data by starting with “free big data” which could be accessed by many countries and emphasize on standard data, metadata, code reference and interoperability.

2. Transforming and challenging: Statistical infrastructure and operations, and data solutions

We agree with the idea of sharing knowledge and expertise, technology and partnerships. We have applied it by sharing our SUT compilation system with one country and are ready to share it with other countries that need the system.

We suggest to exclude the statement of “*sharing financial resources*” or rearrange the word/ sentence. In the case of Indonesia, financial contributions for cooperative activities with international institutions/foreign countries are outside the authority of NSO because it is managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

b. Data sharing

The main challenge for this idea is different regulations in each country. In Indonesia, based on our government regulation, we may share free microdata for universities and government institutions, while for business and international organizations we may provide them based on transactional selling as part of non-tax government revenue.

c. Common data infrastructure and common resources

Indonesia agrees with this initiative. However, we have to consider the big gap of infrastructure and resources among countries. We suggest to find balanced solutions to accommodate the needs and abilities of NSOs from developing and less developed countries to enable them fulfill the specified criteria.

d. Common technological solutions (for the integration of geospatial data, the use of data science, the use of nowcasting techniques, and the production of high frequency statistics)

- 1) We fully support the development of SAE (Small Area Estimation) because it can reduce sample size, cost, time and respondents burden. BPS has collaborated with universities to apply this method in several areas such as poverty and SDGs indicators in the last two years. The main challenge is finding “*the most appropriate auxiliary variables*” which reflect the regional characteristics. Therefore, the development may need a long way.

- 2) We agree using big data for nowcasting or real time information. Indonesia has regularly released the results from big data such as mobility index, MPD, job vacancy to support official statistics. However, we need *an official manual from UN*. The manual will increase the validity, guarantee the comparability among countries and help the NSOs to convince the data users.

Other issue to consider:

During the pandemic, many NSOs have difficulties to publish indicators due to budget cutting, avoid face to face enumeration, etc. To fill the gap of information, many NSOs including Indonesia has used big data and also conducted *online survey* in order to provide information on the impact of pandemic to social economic and people behavior. Since the *online survey* is not conducted randomly, the results have many constraints, for example they may not represents the whole population. For this reason, many NSOs put special notes to inform the limitations to data users. In the future, what can we do to make the results more robust?

3. Enabling: Institutional arrangements and governance

We agree with recommendation of the creation of the UN Committee of Experts on Population and Wellbeing Accounts. We suggest that *environment aspect* can be more elaborated and stated more explicitly to emphasize its importance in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4. Experimenting, integrating and documenting: Statistical framework and methods

We support the idea of updating and revising global statistical standards to keep pace with the fast-changing environment. However, apart from the factors that drive the need of the updating, we should also consider several factors to make sure that all of the countries agree to adopt them, such as:

- updated concept and definition should reflect the conditions in majority of countries (some of the concept and definition may reflect the real conditions in the developed countries, but they may not be applicable in developing countries).
- the ability of developing countries to adopt the new methods due to resource limitations
- impacts of methodology changes (for example: political impact and perspective /confusion of data users)
- suitable time of change
- different deadlines of the implementation considering capabilities of developing countries (longer deadline time for developing countries)