

17 June 2016

Meeting of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System

New York, 6 March 2016
United Nations Headquarters, Room DC2-1684
15:30 – 17:30

Meeting Notes

A. Opening, adoption of agenda and participation

1. The meeting was opened and chaired by Mr. Pietro Gennari (FAO), chair of the UN System Meeting. The Meeting adopted the agenda without amendments.
2. The agenda, documents presented and a detailed list of participants are presented as annexes I, II and III, respectively.

B. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

3. UNSD briefed the Meeting on the current status of the indicator framework for monitoring the SDGs which is being presented to the Commission by the IAEG-SDGs in a new annex 4 in the IAEG's report accompanied by a background document. UNSD stressed the importance of the Commission being able to deliver after 9 months of work, although a lot work was still to be done by the IAEG, e.g. the indicator tier system. The IAEG will continue its work at the planned meeting at the end of March in Mexico. There was also a brief update on the Global Partnership.
4. The Meeting discussed role of international organizations in the various processes, i.e. the IAEG-SDGs and the High Level Group.

Conclusions

5. The Meeting agreed to keep each other informed on the various processes, support the processes as appropriate and to work on joint positions where/when possible. A dedicated discussion on the role of the UN regional Commission in SDG monitoring and reporting will be held at the next meeting.

C. Quality assurance frameworks

6. UNCTAD introduced document UNSYSTEM/2016/2, "A Generic United Nations Quality Assurance Framework", which also contains the "Report on the

Preparation of Assuring Statistical Quality in the UN Statistical System and Generic Statistical Quality Assurance Framework for UN Agencies” prepared by the consultant, Mr. Michael Colledge, who had been hired by UNSD to support this work until the end of 2015.

7. The Meeting discussed the questions raised by UNCTAD in the document. In addition, the question of implementation (for example through peer reviews) and the possible role of the Framework in the SDG process were brought up.

Conclusions:

8. The Meeting decided to invite all organizations to a final round of feedback. Final feedback on the draft framework (as presented in document UNSYSTEM/2016/2) should be provided to UNCTAD as soon as possible after the meeting. UNCTAD will share the word version of the draft Framework to facilitate comments. The meeting aspires to adopt the final Framework at its next meeting in fall 2016 in Paris. This first concrete output would form an excellent basis of the Meeting’s first report to the UNSC (see also item F below).

D. Principles Governing International Statistical Activities

9. UNSD briefed the Meeting on the outcome of the second regular session of 2015 of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Para 86 of the report (CEB/2015/2) is quoted below:

“Data, especially data disaggregated by gender, age, race, disability and other dimensions, were crucial to delivering on the 2030 Agenda, including by facilitating effective localization and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. To ensure that the United Nations system took a consistent approach to producing high - quality statistics for analysis and decision-making, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social affairs urged the agencies to adhere to the principles governing international statistical activities to which the chief statisticians and principal coordinators of statistical activities within the system and in other international organizations had committed in 2005.” [bold font added]

Conclusions:

10. The Meeting decided to follow up with a letter exchange between USG Wu and the heads of agencies as this would open a channel for the chief statisticians to communicate about the Principles with the highest level in their agencies. UNSD will approach USG Wu about such a letter and keep the Meeting informed and if successful share a draft letter before it is being sent.

E. System-wide Statistical Capacity Building Evaluation

11. UNSD and others shared their experience with this ongoing system-wide evaluation exercise. First results will be presented at a side event to the Statistical Commission entitled “Briefing on independent system-wide evaluation of the UN System’s contribution to strengthen national capacities for statistical analysis and data

collection to support the achievement of the MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals” (see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/side-events/20160310-2L-un-system.pdf>).

Conclusions:

12. Members are encouraged to participate in the event. UNSD will share any documentation if/when available.

F. Working Methods

13. ILO introduced the draft chapeau for the terms of reference as presented in document UNSYSTEM/2016/3. Under the same agenda item the Chair brought up the question of how and how often the Meeting should report to the UNSC.

14. The Meeting discussed the following suggestions: (a) whether all UN System organizations or only such with a statistical mandate should be invited to participate; (b) that the chapeau should mention the Principles; (c) that the chapeau could mention the new quality framework (d) whether the Meeting/Group should give itself a better name (e.g. Committee of Chief Statisticians of the UN System); (e) whether the defining characteristic was “only” the membership (as opposed to CCSA) or whether there was a more strategic difference (such as the SDGs); and (f) what the best reporting mechanisms to the Statistical Commission are.

Conclusions:

15. The Meeting invited all members to a final round of concrete comments to the current draft text of the chapeau after this meeting. The Meeting also decided to report to the Statistical Commission at least every two years in a separate report.

G. Other business

16. The Meeting will hold its next meeting on 28 September 2016 hosted by the OECD in Paris on the margins of the CCSA Meeting (29-30 September 2016).

H. Actions to be taken

Action	Lead Agency	Participants	Deadline	Output
B. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	All Chair	All Secretariat	--- Sept 2016	Keep each other informed. Add topic to fall agenda.
C. Quality assurance frameworks	Task Team	All	Sept 2016	Members to provide comments to the task team. Task team to finalize QAF before fall meeting
D. Principles Governing International Statistical Activities	UNSD	---	Before summer	Arrange for a letter from USG Wu to head of agencies/offices. Keep all members informed.

E. System-wide Statistical Capacity Building Evaluation	All	---	Mar 2016	Members to attend the relevant UNSC side event. UNSD to share document as/if available.
F. Working Methods	ILO	All	Sept 2016	Members to provide comments on chapeau. ILO to finalize chapeau before the fall meeting.

Annex I

Agenda

1. Adoption of agenda
2. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (oral update by chair and UNSD)
3. Quality Assurance Frameworks (report by UNCTAD)
4. Principles Governing International Statistical Activities (oral update by Secretariat)
5. System-wide Statistical Capacity Building Evaluation (oral update by UNSD)
6. Working methods: - Chapeau for the TOR (report by ILO) - Reporting arrangements to the UN Statistical Commission (oral introduction by chair)
7. Other business

Annex II

List of documents

UNSYSTEM/2016/1 Agenda

UNSYSTEM/2016/2 Quality Assurance Frameworks

UNSYSTEM/2016/3 Chapeau for the TOR

Annex III

List of Participants

(In alphabetical order of the organization)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Pietro Gennari	Pietro.Gennari@fao.org
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)	Sainarayan Ananthanarayan	asainarayan@icao.int
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