

Meeting of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System

Paris, 28 September 2016

OECD Headquarters, Room MB 1122

13:00 – 17:00

Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System (CCS-UNS)

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I. Background

1. The first meeting of “UN entities on Statistical Programmes” was held on 9 September 2007 in Madrid, on the margins of the 10th Session of the Commission for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA). Since then, the Group met regularly twice a year, once in spring on the occasion of the annual session of the UN Statistical Commission and once during the fall on the occasion of the fall session of CCSA.

2. The UN Statistical Commission considered the coordination of statistical activities in the UN system during the past three sessions (see decisions 45/112, 44/112 and 43/112). In its latest decision (45/112) the Commission “endorsed the proposal that the United Nations chief statisticians hold regular meetings, and mandated the Group to follow up on the recommendations of the Friends of the Chair¹ for improved coordination and report back to the Commission.”

II. Mission Statement

3. The Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System promotes UN system-wide integrated and coherent actions towards the modernization of national statistical systems and the reinforcement of their capacity to respond to new data demands for monitoring global, regional and national development goals. It supports the development and full implementation of international statistical standards in member countries for the production of high-quality and internationally comparable data, in line with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (FPOS) adopted by the UN General Assembly.

4. The Committee promotes the coordination of the statistical programmes of the UN System Organizations with the aim of “delivering as one”, by fostering synergies, avoiding duplications and overlaps, and facilitating data exchange. It promotes sharing of knowledge and good practices, reaching a consensus on issues related to the UN system and agreed

¹ See E/CN.3/2014/13 at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc14/2014-13-UNCoordination-E.pdf>

common positions to be reported at the UN Statistical Commission or at other coordination bodies like the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA).

III. Key activities and functions

5. Establishes a network of the UN System with the objective of enhancing mutual cooperation, coordination and assistance in facing common problems to the UN System at the global level. In achieving enhanced coordination, the group contributes to better assistance to member states and improved support to national statistical agencies in their role as coordinators of national statistical systems.

6. Promotes the use of harmonised international statistical standards and classifications and the implementation of the FPOS. Supports mutual accountability with a view to improving the transparency of statistical practices globally.

7. Provides common positions and statements to the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) in order to provide member states with a single and coherent view from the UN and participates actively in the UNSC debate and discussion.

8. Tackles administrative and organizational issues, such as, human resources, financing, resource mobilization, quality frameworks and global programmes in order to achieve and share better results for all individual members.

9. Discusses ways of coordinating activities at the field level through UN country teams and national programmes, by sharing and promoting coherence and producing joint products. It organises its work in inter-agency groups, expert groups and city groups in order to achieve more efficient outcomes.

10. Promotes coordinated data compilation and exchange to reduce the burden on reporting countries. The group facilitates the use of modern platforms and mechanisms to provide countries with the best solutions and accessibility to databases.

11. Enhances the visibility and strengthens support for statistical activities by promoting them with the senior management of the UN, by actively involving the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and the High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and through them to the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Also promotes the coordination of national statistical systems through the various constituencies at the national and global level.

12. Promotes the coordination of common capacity building and technical assistance activities by undertaking common actions on specific topics, at the national, regional and global level, to meet more efficiently the demands for skills for sound statisticians and data analysts, both for member states and for international organizations.

13. Discusses emerging topics related to new technical challenges, new data sources and ways of disseminating, and changes in UN donors' strategies in order to achieve better results and enhance the statistical activities carried out by the various agencies, organizations, funds and programs.

14. Discusses and contributes to the discussions on international global frameworks and monitoring systems like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and others in order to achieve a better division of work and assure quality in statistical outcomes.

IV. Working modalities

A. Membership and level of representation

15. The Committee comprises the statistical services of United Nations Funds and Programmes, United Nations Specialized Agencies and the UN Secretariat, as well as the regional Economic and Social Commissions whose mandate includes the provision of international official statistics in the context of the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities.

16. Prospective members should register with the secretariat.

17. Representation in meetings is expected to be at the level of Director of an organization's statistical service or equivalent.

B. Organization

18. The Committee elects a **chair**, who will serve for a two-year period and is eligible for re-election for a second two-year term. The chair may be identical to the CCSA co-chair representing the UN members of the CCSA to ensure close coordination with the activities of the CCSA.

19. The **functions of the chair** are to:

- (a) Decide on the draft agenda items as proposed by the secretariat, based on decisions taken at the previous meeting and on subsequent requests by members;
- (b) Conduct the sessions of the Committee, including summarizing the discussion of each agenda item as a basis for preparing the report of the session;
- (c) Propose draft minutes of the meetings, as prepared by the secretariat, to be approved by written procedure by all the members who attended the session;
- (d) Represent the Committee whenever its members consider it necessary;
- (e) Invite, on a proposal from one or more of the members, observers to participate in the work of Committee.

20. The **secretariat** of the Committee is situated at the United Nations Statistics Division.

21. The **functions of the secretariat** are to:

- (a) Prepare the draft agenda in collaboration with the chair and following consultation with members;
- (b) Ensure that all documentation is made available to its members in time;
- (c) Organizing the Committee's sessions and coordinate with the agreed host of a given session;

- (d) Prepare draft minutes of each session in cooperation with the chair, to be approved by written procedure by all the members who attended the session;
- (e) Create, host and keep up-to-date a protected website for the Committee;
- (f) Prepare the draft report to the Statistical Commission for approval by the chair as necessary.

C. Meetings, decisions, minutes and reporting

22. The Committee meets twice a year. The first meeting takes place in spring in New York on the margins of the UN Statistical Commission (“Spring session”) and the second meeting takes place on the margins of the Fall meeting of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (“Fall meeting”), at the CCSA venue. The exact timing and length of these meetings are decided by the chair in consultation with the members upon the proposal by the secretariat. The draft agenda is prepared by the chair with assistance by the secretariat and in consultation with members based on decisions taken at the previous meeting and on subsequent requests by members;

23. Coordination of activities between meetings, for example, through electronic discussion groups, is an important and integral part of the work of the Committee.

24. Consensus during sessions is determined by the chair and reported in the minutes of the meeting. A report on decisions and actions is prepared for adoption after each meeting by the secretariat in a timely manner. The report specifies the lead agencies responsible for any action and follow-up.

25. The Committee reports at least every two years to the UN Statistical Commission. Such reports are drafted by the secretariat, under the guidance of the chair, and approved by the members.