

**Meeting of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System**  
**Paris, 28 September 2016**  
**OECD Headquarters, Room MB 1122**  
**13:00 – 17:00**

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**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 list of participants are included as annexes I, II and III, respectively.

**B. Data reporting/sharing for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**

3. UNSD briefed the Meeting on the current status of the global indicator framework (GIF) for monitoring the SDGs. Some of the indicators of the list endorsed "... as a practical starting point..." by the UN Statistical Commission at its 47<sup>th</sup> session are being refined by the IAEG-SDGs. In order to comply with the explicit mandate contained in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda the Commission at its next session is expected to adopt a draft resolution to be subsequently endorsed by ECOSOC with the suggested revised indicator list.
4. UNSD and the Chair suggested that this Meeting compile a document of principles which could guide global data reporting and data sharing among the UN System Organizations for the SDGs. Such a document could include the following:
  - Recognition of the need for both national and international reporting (different purposes);
  - All global data should comply with international statistical standards;
  - Global data should be nationally sourced to the extent possible;
  - Definition of the rules under which circumstances national data can be adjusted/estimated (no data, non-compliance with international standards);
  - Methods for the compilation of international estimates should be published on the Organizations' website;
  - Prior communication with countries before publishing international estimates;
  - Commitment to reducing the reporting burden (SDMX, custodian agency as unique data collector, data sharing at no cost between UN agencies).

**Conclusions**

5. UNSD will prepare an initial note based on the principles outlined above and the discussion at the meeting. This will be presented to the CCSA on 29 September. A small

working group, consisting of UNSD, UIS, UNODC and UNCTAD, has been tasked to finalize the document, ensuring consistency with the terminology of the new UN-QAF (see next chapter).<sup>1</sup> The document should be ready to be presented at the next IAEG-SDG meeting on 20-21 October 2016.

### **C. Generic UN Quality assurance frameworks**

6. UNCTAD introduced document UNSYSTEM/2016/7, “Quality Assuring UN Statistics including Generic Statistics Quality Assurance Framework” (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/unsystem/Documents-Sept2016/UNSystem-2016-7-QAF.pdf>). Main changes introduced since the last meeting include: merging the two documents into a single document, the introduction of peer reviews and the distinction between national and international official statistics, which has increased in importance in the context of reporting on the SDGs.

7. Further amendments are needed to finalize the document: in particular, adding a section on the definition of “chief statisticians” and making sure that the terminology is consistent with the Sustainable Development Agenda. The document should also be more concise.

8. UNODC informed the Meeting that they are engaged in a first round of peer review and offered to share their experience at one of the next sessions.

#### **Conclusions:**

9. UNCTAD will revise the draft as outlined in the previous paragraphs and recirculate it to members by the end of October. Members will have until mid-November for providing final comments. UNCTAD will then finalize the document by the end of November based on the comments received. The Meeting also agreed to include in the report to the UNSC a well phrased commitment that all members will adopt and implement the new UN Quality Assurance Framework.

### **D. Principles Governing International Statistical Activities**

10. UNSD introduced the background document containing a draft letter from the Undersecretary-General of DESA, Mr. Wu, to the heads of agencies (EC-ESA Plus).

#### **Conclusions:**

11. The Meeting decided to provide comments on the draft letter within the next two weeks (by 14 October 2016). UNSD will finalize the draft and submit it to the USG. UNSD will also send a copy of the final letter with members as soon as it is sent to their Principals.

### **E. Follow-up Actions from the System-Wide Statistical Capacity Building Evaluation**

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<sup>1</sup> At the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of CCSA (29-30 September 2016) it was decided that this UN System task team be “converted” into a CCSA task team, adding UNESCAP and the WB as additional members.

12. UNSD introduced the background document “Evaluation of the contribution of the United Nations Development System to Strengthening National Capacities for Statistical Analysis and Data Collection to Support the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Other Internationally-Agreed Development Goals (JIU/REP/2016/5)” (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/unsystem/Documents-Sept2016/2016-Sept-Item5-BG.pdf>) and its technical appendix (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/unsystem/Documents-Sept2016/2016-Sept-Item5-BG-Appendix.pdf>).

13. Members in general agreed with the main conclusions and recommendations of the report. Some agencies questioned the central role assigned to UNSD and the UN Regional Commissions in coordinating the statistical capacity development efforts of the UN System. Other members questioned the recommendation according to which the primary objective of future capacity development activities of the UN System in support of the SDGs should be to foster the use of statistics for decision-making. Given that countries have the huge task ahead of producing the necessary data to monitor the 230 SDG indicators, substantial support will still have to be dedicated to improve data availability and data quality, in a context of limited resources.

#### **Conclusions:**

14. UNSD committed to keep the Meeting informed on the outcome of the discussions at the intergovernmental meetings and, in particular, brief the meeting on the status of the recommendations. If the recommendations are accepted, the Meeting will discuss a joint implementation. The meeting decided to include in the agenda of the next session an item on which statistical capacity building initiatives could be implemented to promote the use of statistics in policy-making.

#### **F. UNGGIM**

15. UNSD briefed the Meeting on recent developments in the area of GGIM. After a five year initial period, ECOSOC provided UN-GGIM with an upgraded, open-ended mandate. A letter from the USG-DESA to ECESA Plus members dated 7 July 2016 seeking to establish an inventory of existing geospatial resources in the UN System (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/unsystem/Documents-Sept2016/2016-Sept-Item6-BG.pdf>) was shared.

#### **Conclusions:**

16. UNSD will inform members on whether their head of agency has replied to the USG letter. Members will follow up if necessary with their head of agency and also liaise with the geospatial focal point in their agency (if applicable).

## **G. Terms of Reference**

17. ILO introduced the new Terms of Reference of the Meeting of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System, which now include a new name, chapeau and key functions (document UNSYSTEM/2016/6 at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/unsystem/Documents-Sept2016/UNSystem-2016-6-Chapeau.pdf>). Members agreed that the current draft contained all key points and was close to final. Some streamlining and editing however is still necessary to finalize the Terms of Reference.

### **Conclusions:**

18. Members will send final comments within the next two weeks (by 14 October 2016). ILO and the chair will finalize the document based on comments received. The final terms of reference will be presented as background document to the Commission.

## **H. Other business**

19. The Meeting will hold its next session on 5 March 2017 on the margins of the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission (7-10 March 2017).

## **I. Actions to be taken**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Output</b>
B. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	UNSD UIS	UNCTAD, ODC	29 Sep 2016  Oct 2016	First draft of principles of data reporting/sharing to be presented to the CCSA meeting  Document on principles finalized
C. Quality assurance frameworks	UNCTAD	All members	31 Oct 2016 mid-Nov 2016 30 Nov 2016	Final draft distributed by UNCTAD Comments by members received Final document by UNCTAD
D. Principles Governing International Statistical Activities	UNSD	All members	14 Oct 2016 Nov 2016	Comments by members received Letter signed and sent by USG Wu Follow up within agencies
E. System-wide Statistical Capacity Building Evaluation	Secretariat	---	Mar 2016	Add "Capacity Development Initiatives to promote the use of statistics in decision-making" to agenda of the next session
F. UN-GGIM	UNSD	All members	Oct 2016	UNSD to share with members whether their head of agency has replied; members to follow up if applicable
G. Working Methods	ILO/chair  Chair	All members  All members	14 Oct 2016 Nov 2016  mid Nov 2016  end Nov 2016	Comments by members received Final document by ILO and the Chair Draft report of the Meeting to UNSC circulated for comments; Final report to the UNSC submitted based on comments received

## **Annex I**

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome and adoption of agenda
2. Data reporting/sharing for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (oral update by UNSD)
3. Generic United Nations Quality Assurance Framework (document by UNCTAD)
4. Principles Governing International Statistical Activities (oral update by the Secretariat, background document)
5. Follow-up actions from System-wide Statistical Capacity Building Evaluation (oral update by UNSD, background document)
6. UN-GGIM (oral update by UNSD, background document)
7. Terms of Reference (document by ILO and the Chair)
8. Other business (venue and dates of the next meeting)

## **Annex II**

### **List of documents**

- UNSYSTEM/2016/5 Agenda
- UNSYSTEM/2016/6 Draft TOR: Chapeau and modalities for reporting to UN Statistical Commission
- UNSYSTEM/2016/7 Quality Assuring UN Statistics including Generic Statistics Quality Assurance Framework
- Background document for agenda item 4: Draft letter from USG-DESA to CEB members
- Background document for agenda item 5: Independent system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development and Technical Appendix
- Background document for agenda item 6: UN-GGIM:Directory of geospatial services of international organizations

## Annex III

### List of Participants

*(In alphabetical order of the organization)*

<b>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</b>	Pietro Gennari Stephen Katz	Pietro.Gennari@fao.org Stephen.katz@fao.org
<b>International Labour Organization (ILO)</b>	Rafael Diez de Medina	diez@ilo.org
<b>United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)</b>	Claes Johansson	cjohansson@unicef.org
<b>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)</b>	Steve MacFeely	steve.macfeely@unctad.org
<b>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)</b>	Margarita Guerrero	guerrero@un.org
<b>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)</b>	Juraj Riecan	riecan@un.org
<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</b>	Sylvia Montoya	s.montoya@unesco.org
<b>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</b>	Petra Nahmias	nahmias@unhcr.org
<b>United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)</b>	Robert Ndugwa	robert.ndugwa@unhabitat.org
<b>United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)</b>	Shyam Upadhyaya	s.upadhyaya@unido.org
<b>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)</b>	Javier Teran	teran1@un.org
<b>United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)</b>	Benoit Kalasa Edilberto Loaiza	kalasa@unfpa.org loaiza@unfpa.org
<b>United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)</b>	Stefan Schweinfest Sabine Warschburger Matthias Reister <sup>2</sup>	schweinfest@un.org warschburger@un.org reister@un.org
<b>World Bank (as observer)</b>	Gero Carletto	gcarletto@worldbank.org
<b><u>Joined the meeting by phone</u></b>		
<b>United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)</b>	Jacqueline McGlade	jacqueline.mcglade@unep.org
<b>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)</b>	Angela Me	angela.me@unodc.org

<sup>2</sup> Via phone for agenda item 3 only.