

A more efficient UN Statistical System in the era of the 2030 Agenda

Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the UN System

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1. Looking back (I)

- * Audit report by Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in 2016:
 - * “DESA should, in **consultation with the Statistical Commission**, explore the possibility of designating a **senior statistician as United Nations Chief Statistician to coordinate statistical matters across the United Nations entities**”;
- * 48th Session of the UNSC (2017) – Decision 48/117:
 - * “The **UNSC took note** of the recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services [...] and agreed that this topic should be **discussed further by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB)**.”;
- * ***Independent system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development:***
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 MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals (JIU/REP/2016/5).

1. Looking back (II)

Background paper to the 49th Session of the UNSC by the HLG-PCCB in March 2018:

- (1) Introduction and brief history;
- (2) Audit report by Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS);
- (3) Current structure of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA);
- (4) Coordination mechanism and legal framework**
 - (1) Among the five regional commissions and UNSD;
 - (2) “Cluster” level, which includes UNSD and the regional commissions as well as other entities from the UN Secretariat, namely UNODC, UNCTAD, UNEP and UN Habitat;
 - (3) Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System (CCS-UNS);
 - (4) Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA)
- (5) Overview on structures in other international organizations and selected countries;
- (6) What could be the role of a UN Chief Statistician?
- (7) Summary;
- (8) Points for discussion and next steps.

1. Looking back (III)

* 49th Session of the UNSC 49/103:

- e) Recognized the need for **stronger coordination** and a **more efficient United Nations statistical system**, as well as the need for a **stronger voice for official statistics** within the United Nations system;
- f) Considered, in this context, an early proposal to establish a United Nations chief statistician, and requested the High-level Group to report back to the Commission at its fiftieth session with a proposal that further clarifies the role, seniority and functions of this possible position, among other options, taking into account what is likely to **improve global statistical performance in a wider context of ongoing reform processes in the United Nations**;
- g) Requested the High-level Group to **conduct consultations with relevant actors**, especially the **Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System**.

2. Aim of the work done by the HLG-PCCB (I)

* Challenges:

- * High request for data and statistics;
- * Modernization of official statistics;
- * More involvement in politics;

* Risks:

- * New players active in the field;
- * Funding;

* Opportunities:

- * Modernizing the statistical system (and production) – thanks to the 2030 Agenda;
- * Collaboration in official statistics can lead to partnerships;
- * Higher understanding for the value of official statistics.

2. Aim of the work done by the HLG-PCCB (II)

1. Having a higher coordinated system
⇒ More efficient UN Statistical System;
2. Having a higher voice in the United Nations System
⇒ Better advocacy for official statistics.

3. Different options (I)

- * Option 1: **Strengthening existing mechanisms** and positions – no change in the institutional structure;
- * Option 2: **UNSD is the basis for a UN CSO**. The position of the Director of the UNSD may be elevated to a senior post;
 - * Option 2.1: Dual reporting, units remain where they are, administrative report to current management, report program functionality to UN CSO;
 - * Option 2.2: Reposition all UN statistical units into the UNSD, who will direct statistical work with agreement from regional commissions and selected other UN units;
 - * Option 2.3: Establish a UN CSO;

3. Different options (II)

- * **Option 3: Establish a senior position in the UN DESA:**
 - * Option 3.1: Independent from UNSD;
 - * Option 3.2: As the head of UNSD;
- * **Option 4: Establish a senior position independent of UN DESA;**
- * **Option 5: Complete reorganization of UN Statistical System.**

4. Recommendations (I)

- * Recommendation 1:

- * R 1.1: The existing mechanism needs to be strengthened immediately;
- * R 1.2: The organization of the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System (CCS-UNS) shall be modernized and strengthened;
- * R 1.3: The director of the UNSD shall be the main coordinator and main ambassador for UN statistics;
- * R 1.4: The UNSD shall have (human and financial) resources to do this work – this should be reflected in the work program of UNSD;
- * R 1.5: CCS-UNS and UNSD will report back to the 51st Session of the UNSC in 2019 on the progress;

4. Recommendations (II)

* Recommendation 2:

- * R 2.1: The ECOSOC should be informed that a modernization is needed and should be linked with the on-going UN reforms (e.g. UN Development Group (UNDG) – Task Team 3: Country-Focused Data and Reporting Terms of Reference) (this should be based on the report to the UNSC and includes the different options presented to the UNSC – including the option having a UN Chief Statistician);
 - * Option a) UNSC gives a clear message through the report to ECOSOC;
 - * Option b) UNSC disuses and adopts a UN resolution that raises the challenges and the need to modernize the UN statistical system;
- * R 2.2: The Bureau of the UNSC, in collaboration with the HLG-PCCB, shall be in contact with the ECOSOC Bureau to support the future process;
- * R 2.3: The Bureau of the UNSC, with support of the HLG-PCCB and CCS-UNS, shall identify on-going and future (negotiation) processes in the UN that need technical support by the UNSC (being proactive);
- * R 2.4: The Bureau of the UNSC, the HLG-PCCB and CCS-UNS will report back to the 51st Session of the UNSC in 2019 on the progress.

4. Recommendations (III)

- * Recommendation 3:

- * R 3.1: The chair of the UNSC (together with the bureau of the UNSC) should become an active partner in the UN reforms discussions to advocate the modernization of the UN Statistical System;
- * R3.2: UNSC Bureau reports back to the 51st Session of the UNSC in 2019 on the progress.

5. Next steps

- * Including the comments made in the tailored questionnaire by 28 September 2018;
- * Including the comments made by the CCS-UNS by 28 September 2018;
- * Conducting a global questionnaire (*end of September*);
- * Session at the UNWDF in Dubai on 22 October 2018;
- * Finalizing the report by end of November 2018;
- * Report to the UNSC by end of the year 2018;
- * Meeting of the bureau of the UNSC in March 2019 with UNSG;
- * Discussion and decisions by the UNSC in March 2019.

Discussion

- a) What should be the aim of the report of the HLG-PCCB to the UNSC?
- b) How do you evaluate the different options? Are there other options?
- c) What kind of function do you see of a senior position (may be the UN Chief Statistician)?
- d) How do you evaluate the recommendations?
- e) What should the next steps be?