

**Meeting of UN entities on Statistical Programmes**  
**Bangkok, Thailand, 9 September 2009**  
**United Nations Conference Center, UNESCAP**  
**9:30 am – 12:30 pm**

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**Minutes**

Attendance:

1. The meeting was attended by representatives from UNSD, UN Population Division, ECA, ECE, ESCAP, ESCWA, ILO, UNWTO, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNEP and FAO.

Briefing on recent or planned system-wide cross cutting activities:

2. UN entities gave a brief overview of the recent or planned system-wide cross-cutting activities in their respective organizations. Coordination of 2010 Programme on Population and Housing Censuses activities were identified in the subsequent discussion as one of the potential cross-cutting issues for the UN system. The participants agreed to take up this topic in the agenda for the February 2010 meeting.
3. Several other issues on which UN system could benefit from a coordinated approach like, SNA 2008 implementation, MDGs, etc., were also discussed. To facilitate the process of collaboration, it was suggested that a matrix, listing the projects/activities and UN entities involved could be helpful. A possible prototype format and the necessary mechanism of updating such a matrix would be discussed at the February 2010 meeting

Reporting of Technical Cooperation Activities:

4. The meeting discussed the latest PRESS report prepared by PARIS21, which shows a very negligible contribution of UN entities to statistical development. This is due mainly to the format of the questionnaire, which makes it difficult for agencies with highly decentralized organizational schemes to respond. Concerns were expressed that in overall the report underestimates the role of UN system in statistical capacity building. The participants were urged to raise their voices and concerns during the plenary discussion of PRESS reporting mechanism at the 14<sup>th</sup> session of CCSA. Finally, the meeting agreed that each UN agency would respond to PRESS on an individual basis and suggested that compilation of aggregated results for the UN System as a whole in future PRESS reports would be misleading and should not be published.

Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System – GIVAS:

5. The Director of UNSD briefed the meeting about the Secretary-General's new initiative for the establishment of an early warning mechanism that should capture

signs of natural and economic disasters and should at the same time monitor their impact on the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Initially the initiative did not cover statistical issues; however, the proposed Global Alert System, and more specifically its core analytical products are entirely derived from a proposed Global Data Platform that will bring together high and low frequency statistical information. Many of the UN entities had already communicated their official positions on GIVAS to the SG. The meeting observed that the initiative is very ambitious that it would require substantial resources to establish and keep such a data platform continuously updated. This would also crucially depend from the member states' capacity to produce the relevant data. It was further noted that there exist currently already a number of data collection programmes in some of the UN entities, that are designed as early warning of impact measurement systems.

6. There was a general consensus that UN entities should respond in principle positively to this initiative. It was suggested that a special interagency task force could be formed, to prepare among other things an inventory of data already available at each agency. The group could also act as technical advisory group evaluating proposals to collect additional indicators, including rapid estimates.

#### UN –Data:

7. UNSD briefed the meeting about the recent and future developments of the UNdata portal. At the second UNdata Data Managers' meeting held in New York from 22 to 24 June 2009, experts from international agencies had exchanged views on the functionalities of the portal, current initiatives in the data dissemination practices in UNdata partner agencies, ways of strengthening cooperation and formalizing data sharing agreements. UN entities were invited to send more specific comments regarding the platform to UNSD.

#### Official country names and groupings – briefing on the M.49 Classification “Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use”

8. UNSD informed the meeting about the M49 Classification of countries and areas used as a common reference for statistical processing purposes by UNSD. The meeting acknowledged the usefulness of the common classification, particularly in cases when statistical data by countries should be aggregated into various regional groupings.

#### Other business:

9. UNSD informed the meeting about a web-based Inventory of Global Statistical Standards created by the Mexican Statistical Office (INEGI). As a national institution INEGI does not have the capacity to maintain an inventory of an international type, therefore, it had just recently donated its English version to the global statistical community. A document to this effect will be presented to the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Statistical Commission, while a demonstration how the inventory works will be made at the 15<sup>th</sup> session of CCSA in February 2010.

UNSD intends to enrich and develop the inventory further and counts on the UN entities to help keeping the inventory up-to-date.

10. UNSD informed the UN entities that several member states had expressed their conviction, that there is considerable scope for analytical value added by integrating geographical and statistical information. However, the process to develop global standards in the area of geographical information was at this point fragmented. Several regional cartographic initiatives have been organized by UNSD yet a mechanism for efficient coordination and management at the global level was still missing. The Statistical Commission will consider this issue at its forthcoming session in February 2010.
11. The meeting discussed the nominations for a Co-chair of CCSA for the next two-year term. Mr. Henri Laurencin, Chief, Central Statistics and Information Retrieval Branch of Division on Globalization and Development Strategies of UNCTAD was nominated to become the UN System Co-chair of the Committee for the period 2010-2011.
12. The group agreed to hold its next meeting in New York in conjunction with the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission in February 2010.

## **Annex 1: Agenda**

1. Briefing on recent or planned system-wide cross cutting activities
2. Reporting of Technical Cooperation Activities
3. Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System – GIVAS (note prepared by UNSD)
4. UN -Data (project briefing by UNSD)
5. Official country names and groupings – briefing on the M.49 Classification “Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use”
6. Other business

## **Annex 2: Meeting documents**

1. Minutes from the February 2009 meeting of UN entities (UNE/2009/1)
2. Reporting of Technical Cooperation Activities – PRESS (UNE/2009/2)
3. Concept note: The Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) (UNE/2009/3)
4. Governance of UN-Data (UNE/2009/4)
5. Official country names and groupings – briefing on the M.49 Classification “Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use” (UNE/2009/5)