

**Meeting of the UN entities on Statistical Programmes**  
**Vienna, Austria, 1 September 2010**  
**Vienna International Centre (VIC), Conference Room M4**  
**10:00 am – 12:30 pm**

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**Minutes**

Attendance:

1. The meeting was attended by representatives from ECA, ECE, ESCWA, UNSD, UNODC, UNIDO, IAEA, ILO, ITU, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UN Population Division, UNEP and UNFPA.

Preparations for the World Statistics Day:

2. UNSD briefed the meeting on the final preparations for World Statistics Day (WSD). Two events had created a special momentum for the preparations: the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly on the observance of WSD (A/64/267) acknowledging the fundamental importance of national statistical capacity and a letter sent by the Secretary-General to the Heads of State/Government bringing WSD celebration to the attention of all member states. A similar letter by Mr. Sha, the Under-Secretary-General for the Economic and Social Affairs, was sent to the Heads/Executive Secretaries of International Organizations. UNSD strongly encouraged UN entities to prepare a formal reply to this letter. This would not only raise awareness and promote the importance of statistics among their organizations but it provided also an opportunity to seek a dialogue with their senior management on the significance of their work. UNSD informed the group that as part of the WSD preparations, UNSD had created a special website and hired the services of a professional communications specialist. The meeting was also informed that as a follow up to the WSD celebrations, UNSD will prepare a comprehensive review of the experience to be presented to the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission.
3. All UN entities attending the meeting shared their plans for the observance of WSD. Collaborative events such as conferences and inter-agencies seminars will be organized in duty stations with more than one UN entity. A variety of other activities ranging from public launches of statistical products, exhibitions, preparation of brochures, websites, press releases and interviews, open house for academia and other users, articles in newspapers, etc. had also been planned. Some participants expressed disappointment about the lack of support from their respective public information divisions/centres and reported about difficulties with trying to reach out to media. The issue of how the statistical programmes of the UN entities can get the attention of media was identified as a potential topic

for the future agenda of this meeting. UNSD agreed to share the prepared statements of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General and UNSD Director about WSD with all UN entities so they could use them in their addresses.

Ongoing briefing on key system wide cross-cutting activities:

4. The group continued its practice of having an informal dialogue on issues that have a cross-cutting dimension and concern several UN entities. UNSD informed the meeting about preparations for the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission and planned side events. In this context, UNSD briefed the meeting on the concerns raised by some countries regarding the new UNDP Human Development Report, due to be released in October. UNSD agreed to send to the interested agencies the report of the Consultative EG meeting on the proposed changes to the Human Development Index (HDI), which had been mandated by the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Commission. Other UN entities also briefed the meeting on their new initiatives and joint projects. The meeting agreed that keeping each other informed on their key activities and priority areas of work is very useful not only for ongoing activities but also for making future collaborative arrangements.

UN Data:

5. UNSD informed the meeting that the UN Data project had won a prestigious UN21 Award in the category “Improvements in Client Services”. The award is considered to be a recognition of the team’s hard work and generally helps to enhance the profile of statistics within the UN System.
6. The next meeting of the Data Managers group will be held in New York, on 6-8 October 2010. The meeting will cover several specific topics, such as SDMX, data quality processes, etc. The issue of relations with private sector organizations, more specifically with Google and Microsoft, was identified by several UN entities as an important topic to be considered at a forthcoming meeting. It was noted that this informal gathering of UN systems statistical managers was not a decision making body, however, it could usefully work out some basic principles on how to deal effectively and conjointly with private sector companies. The group agreed that the Data Managers meetings are very useful as they in addition to discussing issues related to the UN Data and data dissemination, facilitate the establishment of a network of experts working in this particular professional field.
7. Some UN agencies expressed concerns that the transmission of data to the portal required some resources from their side and that they did not really see real benefits. UNSD restated its commitment to reduce the work of delivering agencies and to increase their visibility in the portal.

### Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System – GIVAS:

8. UNSD briefed the meeting on the recent developments with GIVAS, which include among others the appointment of a new Director and a new name for this initiative - Global Pulse. The Global Pulse office had expressed its interest to keep good contacts with the statistical community. UNSD had been informed of plans for the Global Pulse office to hire a data advisor. The group agreed that whilst there is a potential for complementarities with the Global Pulse initiative, UN entities needed to remain cautious and watchful. A reference was made in this regard to the initial draft MDG 2010 summit outcome document, which inappropriately contained a reference in the same paragraph on official statistics and the need to strengthen the national statistical capacity and the Global Pulse. Representatives from the various UN agencies reported that the Global Pulse office is also reaching out to UN funds and programmes. It does not seem to have intentions for involvement in data collection, but their interest lies more in data analysis. One of the Pulse's useful current activities is the attempt to establish an inventory of rapid estimates on food, health, etc. UNODC shared some positive experiences in their cooperation with the Global Pulse office.
9. The group decided that this issue requires further discussion and placed it on the agenda for its next meeting. The proposal was made that representatives from the Global Pulse office may be invited to attend in order to have a dialogue with the statistical managers of the UN entities.

### Other coordination issues:

10. The group agreed to hold its next meeting in conjunction with the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission in New York, in the afternoon of 24 February 2010 (Thursday).

## **Annex 1: Agenda**

1. Preparations for the World Statistics Day
2. Ongoing briefing on key system wide cross-cutting activities
3. UN Data
4. Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System – GIVAS
5. Other coordination issues