Brief overview of activities of the United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians

Joint Meeting of the Steering Group for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics (RSG-PSS)

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Co-chair of the Network
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Background

Established by 52nd Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (decision 52/105) to:

• Facilitate networking, co-ordination and communication on new innovations, experiments, and best practices for the purpose of making progress on priorities to keep economic statistics relevant.

• Operate under a clearly defined mandate to provide a transparent and collaborative horizontal co-ordination mechanism for all existing statistical committees and groups

• Co-ordinate with statistical committees and groups, as appropriate, for the purpose of measuring the multidimensional relationships between the economy, environment and society of the 2030 Agenda
## Membership

<table>
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<th>Co-chairs</th>
<th>Argentina</th>
<th>Mongolia</th>
<th>Asian Development Bank</th>
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<td>Economic Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Islamic Development Bank</td>
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Network’s four key outcomes supported by its priority activities

• Better cooperation and networking among partners of the statistical system and users of official statistics.
• Better data solutions provided by better statistical processes and infrastructure
• Better working methods and aligned governance arrangements
• Better and more responsive statistical system
Sprints under the workstreams

Building an agile, collaborative and responsive system of economic statistics:

- Organizational Sprint
- Data Access Sprint
- Global and regional consultations
- Measurement of inflation of owner-occupied housing (OOH)
- Beyond GDP Sprints
- International Classifications Sprint
The Synthesis report of the Network identified three 2023 UNSC priorities based on the UNSC reports

- **Data integration** – keynotes introduced in quarterly Network meetings followed by deep dives in informal Network meetings

- **Collaborating with regional commissions**: RCs and Network consultations on priority setting for Global South in the Network work program 2024

- **Updating of the statistical standards**: advancing the Framework on Inclusive and Sustainable Well-being (FISW) (from Beyond GDP Sprint), international Classification Sprint, OOH in CPI Sprint, GVC and use of privately held data Sprint
Core Proposal

Presented in the Network’s Report to the UNSC’s 54th meeting:

The Commission supported the “exploration of the feasibility of a research agenda for a new integrated statistical framework for measuring inclusive and sustainable well-being in accordance with the research prospectus, in collaboration with the Friends of the Chair group;”
Beyond GDP Sprints

- First Beyond GDP sprint sessions, which covered a broad canvas,
- Second series aimed to dive deeper into key topics in greater depth.
- To enable this, the Network designed a new series of webinars in 2023, designed at tackling the key aspects of the proposed workstreams of the integrated system
- The Sprint will shed light on how far existing methodologies and guidance exist to support the development of a framework of inclusive and sustainable wellbeing measurement, building upon the SNA, SEEA, and SPSA.
- Collaboration with other NSIs, Academia and organizations
Second Beyond GDP Sprint Series

✓ 1st session explored initiatives to measure and monitor inclusive and sustainable wellbeing and quality of life
✓ 2nd session provided a picture of key advances made with respect to measuring well-being, and showcased examples of combining existing metrics to track well-being
✓ 3rd session tackled the progress made in the development of the standards to measure Environment, Social and Governance performance;
✓ 4th session provided examples of the current state of domestic wellbeing dashboards, their uses and impact on policy making; many common challenges were identified;
✓ 5th session covered the synergies among the different distributional frameworks used for measuring economic inequality
✓ 6th session discussed the relative benefits and trade-offs between dashboards and composite (single measure) indices
✓ Last session provided a summary of the previous six sessions, considering the key issues discussed and how they fit together
Some reflections: at end of 2nd beyond GDP series

Breadth and depth of topics in the beyond GDP space implies it is not possible for a single group to work in this space alone.

Thus, need for strategic and collaborative partnerships between groups such as the newly formed Friends of the Chair group on social and demographic statistics, national accounts, environmental-economic and environment statistics, and geospatial communities.

Suggest Network can assess feasibility of forming a specific group comprising high-level experts from these communities and, where appropriate, academia, and private sector representatives to bring the work forward.
International Classification Sprint (ongoing)

• Sprint is jointly organized with the UN Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications

• To raise awareness of the importance of international classifications with both internal and external users; advance outreach by the Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications to engage NSOs; provide an additional forum for discussing and sharing modern ways of updating and implementing classifications; and highlight the importance of investing in classification work as a foundation for data integration;
  • 1st webinar: Statistical Classifications: a Foundational Block for Data Integration - 25 October 2023 (completed)
Quarterly meetings of network

• To increase its communication and engagement with Network members and update them on the progress of the activities of the Network, quarterly online Network meetings, were initiated in June 2023

• In line with its mission and mandate to experiment and test new ideas, each meeting featured a keynote presentation on a particular emerging issue.
Upcoming events

- Informal Meeting of the United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians - 6 Nov 2023:
  - Aimed to provide an opportunity for members to continue the fruitful discussion that had started at the last Network Quarterly meeting on the topic of utilizing alternative data sources
  - Administrative data, scanner data, big data, etc. for statistical purposes.
  - Additionally, the participants will also address the challenges related to data integration in support of evidence-based policymaking and other user demands.
  - Network secretariat will present an overview of the Network’s report to the 55th session of the Statistical Commission

- Classification Sprint webinars
  - 2nd webinar: Mechanisms for rendering the classification process more efficient through collaboration and coordination - 29 November 2023
  - 3rd webinar: The role of technology in the classification work - 31 January 2024
Thank you for listening

United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians Secretariat
https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/groups/NetEconStat/