

United Nations Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Terms of Reference

Thematic Working Group on Statistics (TWG-STAT) August 2016

Objective

1. To support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development through effective and efficient support for SDG monitoring at the country-level and a sustainable approach to statistical capacity development of national statistical systems and stakeholders of the national data ecosystem.
2. To provide a coordinated strategy, process and mechanisms for statistics and data inputs for regional inputs to the global processes, and for regional implementation of global mandates, including follow-up and review of SDGs progress.

Functions

3. The main functions that may be undertaken by the TWGs are regional analyses and knowledge products that can be used for policy and advocacy work at the global, regional and country levels; information sharing and mapping of programmes and activities across the region; joint programming, including support to regional sectoral coordination mechanisms and organization of regional meetings; mobilize partners, including at the country level, in the development of and support to countries for utilization of regional analytical, normative and advocacy products as appropriate.¹
4. The role of the TWG-STAT is to enhance synergy and complementarity among programmes and activities of UN agencies in the region around SDG monitoring and statistical development and to address the statistics and data concerns of the other TWGs of the RCM. Its core functions will be:
 - a. To give support to regional analyses and creation of knowledge products, including through a shared regional statistical database and expert reviews to strengthen the data and statistics used for regional analyses and publications on SDGs
 - b. To undertake information sharing and mapping of programmes and activities across the region on identifying statistical gaps, developing and applying

¹ RCM chapeau text for TWG TORs, 26 April 2016

statistical capacity building tools and statistical capacity building programmes at both the regional and national levels

- c. To provide a forum for developing a strategic regional approach to statistical capacity building and advocating for statistics and data strengthening for SDGs implementation
- d. To support ongoing UN country level efforts to strengthen national statistical capacity such as through: organization of regional meetings and collaborative training courses/workshops and support to partners in the utilization of regional analytical, normative and advocacy products, as appropriate
- e. To give particular priority to promoting a UN System-wide effort to promote the use of statistics to identify exclusions and inequalities to ensure that 'no one is left behind' in the region's progress toward the SDGs.

Organization

5. ESCAP and UNFPA will serve as Co-Chairs, and act as the joint secretariat to the TWG-STAT. The Co-chairs will chair the TWG meetings in rotation. The Co-chairs can make decisions on behalf of the TWG-STAT if required, within the parameters of this Terms of Reference, summary record of previous meetings, and the TWG-STAT Annual Work Plan [Annex 1].
6. The core members/participants of the TWG-STAT include UN and related entities working at the regional level on monitoring and capacity development on data and statistics for the SDGs. The TWG may decide to open participation on a case-by-case basis to representatives of other concerned entities such as members' Asia-Pacific sub regional offices, sub regional intergovernmental bodies, CSO and bilateral agencies.
7. Each member agency will designate a focal point and an alternate at the highest level possible to facilitate collaboration. The cost of participation will be met by each participating agency. Member agencies may send observers to TWG-STAT meetings if they wish. Observers for the TWG-STAT meetings may also be invited on a case-by-case basis by the Co-chairs. The focal points represent their agency and are responsible for providing updates on their environment, related activities and plans. The focal point is also responsible for keeping their colleagues in the respective agencies informed on the activities of the TWG-STAT.
8. The TWG-STAT will meet as deemed necessary, but at least two times a year. The agenda of each meeting will be circulated to members in advance by the TWG secretariat, including relevant background documents. A summary record of each TWG-STAT meeting, reflecting recommended actions and outcomes, will be prepared by the

secretariat, endorsed by the members and submitted to the RCM Secretariat for centralized records.

9. The TWG-STAT will prepare an Annual Work Plan [Annex 1] with responsibilities, success indicators and projected timelines for activities, at the first quarter of each calendar year. The TWG-STAT Co-chairs will report on implementation of planned activities at the meetings of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) as required.
10. The TWG-STAT could decide to establish mechanisms such as Working Groups and Task Forces, drawing on its members, to focus on longer term areas of shared work as well as time-bound specific tasks. These mechanisms will report on their work, including recommendations for consideration where appropriate, to the TWG-STAT on a regular basis. Reports may also be made available to the Co-chairs between TWG-STAT meetings as required. Cost of participation will be met by each participating agency.

Monitoring and Evaluation

11. The TWG-STAT will regularly assess its organization and functioning, including the mandates, relevance and responsibilities of its task forces and working groups. The TWG will prepare an annual work plan at the beginning of each year with the identification of a specific agenda for discussion at each TWG meeting. Implementation of the annual work plan will be monitored through meetings and reporting. Towards this end, the TWG will produce a summary record of each TWG meeting (prepared by the agency chairing the meeting) which will be circulated to RCM members. A detailed assessment of the TWG's relevance and effectiveness will be conducted after two years.

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2016 to 2017 Work plan

	Activity Description	Success Indicators	Responsible Lead Agency	Expected output	Delivery time line	Resources/ Budget
1a	<i>Inventory of activities related to statistical capacity development at the (sub)regional and country-levels (highlighting those with SDG focus and include activities of other TWGs such as on gender statistics)</i>	- Initial inventory completed - Database of activities set-up and made available for information exchange	ESCAP / members of the group to provide input to the inventory	A database of activities that reflects sub-regional, regional and national SDG-related statistical capacity building activities	June 2017	Research assistant/ (consultant for 4 months)
1b	<i>Analyze gaps in capacity development activities and identify synergies in addressing existing gaps</i>	- Gap analysis conducted	ESCAP	Report of the gap analysis	June 2017	
2	<i>Formulate regional capacity-building strategy and identify TWG collaborative initiatives</i>	- Joint 2-year statistical capacity building programme endorsed by RCM	ESCAP & UNFPA	Joint 2-year statistical capacity building programme	- Workshop - Implement in 2017	A task team established by TWG-STAT

	Activity Description	Success Indicators	Responsible Lead Agency	Expected output	Delivery time line	Resources/ Budget
3	<i>Create a common regional database for SDGs data and statistics</i>	Statistical database of individual agencies feed into a regional database	ESCAP	<i>Common regional database for SDGs data and statistics</i>	Working model of regional database accessible by last quarter 2017	Database expert (consultant)
4	<i>Review regional good practices in the use of statistical data to identify vulnerable and marginalized populations</i>	Compendium of good practices disseminated	UNFPA & UNDP		- Disseminate in 2017	