

ANNEX 1

Joint sub-Task Team on the Development of Collaborative Hubs for Compilers of economic statistics

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

1.1. The Joint sub-Task Team responsible for the development of Collaborative Hubs for Compilers of economic statistics will seek to enhance access by compilers to the international macroeconomic accounting manuals, classifications, related material, tools, and research initiatives. The Hubs will address the need to centralize and share knowledge and facilitate global collaboration and discourse by developing a digital solution for the international economic statistical standards community.

1.2. This initiative will require collaboration of different statistical domains such as National Accounts, Balance of Payments Statistics, Government Finance Statistics, Monetary and Financial Statistics, and Environmental-Economic Accounting, Price Statistics, Business and Trade Statistics, and International Classifications. This collaboration builds on the principles of networking set forth by the Friends of the Chair Group on Economic Statistics on developing interlinked digital versions of the manuals and the establishment of a concentric network model for the macroeconomic statistical standards and their links with business, trade and price statistics and international classifications. Potentially this collaboration can be extended to agriculture and labor statistics.

1.3. For each of the statistical domains of economic statistics, custodian international organizations of the various domains maintain their own separate websites. A representative example of these websites is the SNA website of the ISWGNA, hosted by UNSD, which (i) provides information about the ISWGNA activities; (ii) is a platform for monitoring the SNA implementation; (iii) contains links to the work programmes of the ISWGNA members and regional commissions; (iv) provides information on the SNA research agenda; and (v) on the Advisory Expert Group (AEG) activities. The website is available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/default.asp>.

1.4. At its 13th Meeting, the AEG recognized the need to develop a more collaborative space for compilers to exchange ideas and share tools. In addition, the AEG noted that it would be beneficial if linkages between the various statistical domains could be improved in order to facilitate cross-referencing and co-development. For example, one way to improve communication is to significantly invest in the enhancement of the current ISWGNA SNA website hosted by UNSD. The update could be a proof of concept which demonstrates the interrelationship between the international standards and classifications to users and statistical compilers.

2. Objectives

1.5. The Committee of Experts on national accounts, represented by the ISWGNA and AEG agreed to establish a Joint sub-Task Team with representatives from the ISWGNA organizations, other international organizations, such as the European Central Bank (ECB), and country experts from the various statistical Committees to facilitate the development of Collaborative Compilers Hubs for statistical standards and classifications.

1.6. Through collaboration and networking of the Committees, it is envisaged that their individual subject-matters hubs maintained by individual Committees are better aligned in structure and content which is expected to allow for mutual discoverability and interoperability where appropriate. Initial discussions with the members of the Committee of Experts on national accounts, represented by the ISWGNA and AEG on communication have led to propose the following main features.

1.7. In addition to information about the Committees' activities and their research agendas, the Collaborative Compilers Hubs are expected to include:

- i. **Digital documents:** the foundation of the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will be a digital version of the standards. Currently the *2008 SNA* is only available in print copy or as a PDF version of the print copy. A digital version of the SNA would dramatically increase the efficiency of use across countries and international organizations. The digital version of the standards and classifications, and other related manuals, handbooks, and guides is going to be developed with support of a dedicated Joint sub-Task Team.
- ii. **Digital library:** the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will contain a digital library with links to all supporting manuals, handbooks, and guides. Where appropriate, these manuals, handbooks, and guides will be digitalized and linked to the appropriate sections in the SNA. Examples are available in the current SNA website (<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/pubsDB.asp?pType=0>), and include the IMF's *Quarterly National Accounts Manual* and the UN/ECB handbook on *Financial Production, Flows and Stocks in the System of National Accounts*. The key benefit for the country compiler is that all the information will be available in one location and digitally integrated.
- iii. **Research corner:** the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will contain a research corner where approved international agencies, national statistical offices, and other agencies can upload abstracts and links to published research, working papers, conference papers, or other documents related to national accounts measurement. The abstracts and titles will be tagged to ensure ease of search. The research corner can also be used to indicate current areas of research and research agendas, to increase the awareness of global research on specific topics.
- iv. **Tools section:** the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will contain a tools section where international organizations, professional researchers, and national agencies can post links

to tools such as worksheets, algorithms, or other procedures that may be useful and appropriate for compilers or other researchers.

- v. **Discussion forum:** the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will include a discussion forum where compilers, researchers, and other stakeholders across the world can interact and discuss accounting related questions and exchange ideas.
- vi. **Contact forum:** the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will include a contact area where national accounts compilers can make available their contact information, along with their expertise, and identify current areas of research and interest.
- vii. **Training:** the Collaborative Compilers Hubs will contain a training section with links to training opportunities including links to the growing list of online training.

3. Main activities of the Joint sub-Task Team

1.8. It is proposed that the initial development of the Collaborative Compilers Hubs is undertaken by the IMF IT and Communication Departments, in collaboration the other international organizations to ensure effective design and usability. Responsibilities regarding the financing of the on-going development and maintenance activities will be determined by the joint TT

1.9. Specifically, the Joint sub-Task Team is expected to:

- i. **Provide input to develop the Hub:** the Joint sub-Task Team will be requested to assist in identifying content and contribute to make this resource useful for capacity development. In general, the Joint sub-Task Team will contribute to the design, content, functionality, administration, and roll-on of the SNA Collaborative Hub. Among other, this includes the definition of:
 - a. Target users;
 - b. Main features;
 - c. Different layers of access;
 - d. Forum characteristics and role of the moderator;
 - e. Outreach strategy;
 - f. Factors to evaluate the success of the project.
- ii. **Meet with the IMF Creative Lab** to organize the discovery phase (definition of needs and users), if needed by teleconference. The IMF Creative Lab is currently working in collaboration with the IMF Statistics Department and the IMF IT Department in the development of the Collaborative Compiler Hubs. The Lab features collaborative spaces and the latest technology to analyze problems, identify goals and generate creative products and solutions. A summary of the Project Plan developed by the IMF Creative Lab is included in Annex 1.1.

- iii. **Collaborate with the Joint sub-Task Team assigned to develop the digitalized version of the macroeconomic accounting manuals and other related manuals, handbooks, and guides**, to ensure the compatibility of the technological features.
- iv. **Collaborate with other statistical domains**, including the initiative of the Friends of the Chair Group on economic statistics, to ensure that the cross-cutting issues and interlinkages are suitably addressed on the Collaborative Compilers Hubs.

1.10. The Joint sub-Task Team will be responsible for working with the IMF Creative Lab to test the Hub and provide guidance regarding the launch. Following the launch, the Committee of Experts on national accounts, represented by the ISWGNA and AEG will provide strategic direction regarding the maintenance and evolution of the SNA Collaborative Compilers Hub. Similarly, the Balance of Payments Committee and GFSAC will provide strategic direction regarding the maintenance and evolution of the respective BPM and GFS Collaborative Compilers Hubs.

4. Governance and participation

1.11. The Joint sub-Task Team on the Collaborative Compilers Hubs for statistical standards and classifications will be chaired by a country and the secretariat will be held by both IMF and UNSD. The members of the Joint sub-Task Team will consist of representatives from the ECB, Eurostat, IMF, OECD, UNSD, and World Bank and country representatives from various Committees, such as the BOPCOM, UNCEEA, UNCEBTS, international classifications, etc. Being a Joint sub-Task Team, the progress of work will be reported to the governing Committees of the representatives in the Joint sub-Task Team.

1.12. The working arrangements are expected to consist mainly of electronic communication through the circulation of documentation, web-based data and code hosting services like GitHub, and the collection of comments on specific topics. Face-to-face meetings of the Joint sub-Task Team could be organized if necessary.

5. Reporting

1.13. The Joint sub-Task Team reports to the Joint Task Team on Communications.

6. Deliverables and timeline

1.14. The expected deliverables of the Joint sub-Task Team include:

- i. **Description of the features of the Collaborative Compilers Hub of statistical standards and classifications**
- ii. **Prototype of Collaborative Hub**, initially as a prototype, and in a next step as the final version to be launched to the public.

1.15. The expected timeline of the deliverables is as follows:

August 2020: Draft description note and prototype of the Collaborative Hubs, for discussion within the governing Committees participating in the Joint sub-Task Team.

October 2020: Discussion of the Collaborative Hub by the participating Committees.

In the course of 2021: Launch of the Collaborative Hub.

ANNEX 1.1: SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT PLAN DEVELOPED BY THE IMF CREATIVE LAB

Project Milestones

i. Discovery & Strategy

- Define and prioritize problem statements and goals.
- Define and map the stakeholders.
- Conduct interviews/ group sessions with stakeholders and target users define users' Personas.
- Conduct market research on existing platforms and resources on this topic.
- Define impact matrix and brainstorm solution's functionalities and features based on Personas' needs and goals.
- Draw potential users' journeys.

ii. Content Strategy & Information Architecture

- Take stock of all required information and knowledge desired to be part of the Hub.
- Prototype Information Architecture (IA) and form content strategy (text, video, audio, interactive data visualizations, animations, infographics, etc.).
- Author any additional text and kick off work on other content forms (if decided on) such as video and audio.

iii. Design concept & Prototype

- Draft design concept; look and feel for user interface.
- Build a low fidelity prototype capturing information architecture and flow.
- Develop outline for moderators' guide for managing the community.
- Conduct a robust user testing on the prototype and refine current concept, structures and labels (usually done in two cycles).

iv. Production

- Develop branding for the Hub, including its name and final look and feel.
- Production of high-fidelity design including front-end coding.
- Production of graphics, video, photo, audio, and animation – if applicable.
- Author moderators guide for community managers.

- Conduct users' testing and heuristic reviews focused on the usability of the high-fidelity model.
- Execute Quality Assurance (QA) testing with stakeholders.

v. Implementation and launch

- Implement into AEM as per ITD's processes and guidance.
- Execute QA testing with all stakeholders.
- Training on moderator tasks and develop preliminary editorial calendar.
- Develop and execute marketing and communication plan.

vi. Conclusion

- Report on the process, findings and logic.
- Set up the means of performance measurement.