



Terms of Reference of the SPECA Project Working Group on Statistics
ECE-ESCAP-SPECA/PWG-Statistics/2009/8
ECE/CES/GE57/2009/8

Draft presented to the 4th PWG on Statistics in Istanbul on the 24th of March 2009

Preamble

1. At the International Conference on Strengthening Sub-Regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and the Future Role of SPECA and the meeting of the SPECA Regional Advisory Committee in Astana in 2005, it was decided to establish a SPECA Project Working Group (PWG) on Statistics. The PWG on Statistics was established in Paris in 2006.
2. The PWG on Statistics is a subsidiary body within the governing structure of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). The member countries are Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
3. The statistical activities within the SPECA framework are also part of the UNECE Statistical Programme, which is supervised by the competent sectoral committee of UNECE, the Conference of European Statisticians, as well as of the UNESCAP Programme on Statistics, which is supervised by the Committee on Statistics. For this reason the reports of the PWG can also be presented to and discussed by these UN bodies.

Objectives

4. In line with the overall objectives of SPECA to support its member countries in developing sub-regional cooperation and integrating their economies into the world economy, the PWG on Statistics promotes core functions in building up statistical capacity in the SPECA member countries, strengthening their capacities to monitor their demographic, social and economic progress. The activities overseen by the PWG
 - facilitates development and cooperation in the field of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, adopted by the UNECE in 1992 and the UN Statistical Commission in 1994;
 - supports the development of the national statistical systems in the region in developing their capacities to produce and disseminate authoritative statistics that responds to user needs; and
 - promotes knowledge-based development of the economy and the society, in particular in the use of statistical information, for development and interaction between the SPECA member countries as well as with the world economy.

Participants

5. The PWG on Statistics is comprised of the Heads of the National Statistical offices in their double capacities as main producers of statistics on the national level and the main coordinators of the national statistical systems, as well as the Chief Statisticians of UNECE and UNESCAP.

6. Each participating country can also nominate, on a permanent or on an ad hoc basis, experts on various aspects in the three activities, mentioned in paragraph 9 and for any additional component following decisions based on paragraph 10.

7. United Nations bodies as well as other multilateral agencies and organizations operating in monitoring development and the enhancement of evidence based decision making in the SPECA member countries are invited to participate in the work of the PWG on Statistics and to nominate liaison officers on matters related to its work.

Programme of work and activities

8. The PWG on Statistics shall develop, agree upon and oversee the implementations of annual work programmes.

9. Continuing the achievements of the activities in 2006-2008, the work programme in 2009-2011 will focus on producing and disseminating Millennium Development (MDG) Indicators together with work on short-term economic statistics, gender statistics, migration issues, disability statistics and statistics on sustainable development.

10. Additional components, not listed in paragraph 9, may be added by the PWG, provided that

- they fit into the overall framework of SPECA;
- they contribute to the capacity building of official statistics in the SPECA member countries; and
- possible sources for funding these activities have been identified.

Any participant of the PWG may initiate proposals for such activities. The PWG on Statistics shall formulate and agree upon the specific activities to be carried out and seek funding from other resources for their implementation. Recommendations along with agreed investment and project ideas shall be presented to relevant international organizations and international programmes.

Modalities of operation

11. The PWG on Statistics shall elect its officers from among the Heads of the National Statistical offices of the SPECA member countries.

12. The PWG adopts its Terms of Reference within the overall frame of SPECA.

13. The implementation modalities for any additional component based on paragraph 10 will be laid down by the PWG on Statistics.

14. The Secretariats of UNECE and UNESCAP will provide secretarial support to the PWG. The Secretariats will facilitate the preparation and organization of the sessions of the Group and will maintain records of its activities.

15. The PWG on Statistics shall hold annual sessions at a date and venue agreed by the participating countries.

16. Important policy conclusions should be brought to the attention of high-level policy making authorities in the SPECA member countries.

Funding

17. Within the limits defined in the project document “1287 - UNECE: Capacity Building Program on New Challenges in Economic Statistics in Central Asia and Eastern European Countries 2009 - 2011” as approved by the Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB) in March 2009, the operational cost of activities initiated by the PWG on Statistics as well as the costs of participation of National Representatives in its sessions shall be borne by the Project mentioned. The UNECE and UNESCAP shall, within their available resources, provide secretariat support and substantive inputs to seminar, training and meeting activities of the project and the functioning of the PWG.

18. All other cost shall be borne by

- the funding agencies for additional activities based on paragraph 10; and
- the Governments of the participating countries.

Other matters

19. The current Terms of Reference shall be reviewed after 3 years or sooner if the PWG of Statistics or the SPECA Governing Council so decides.

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