



United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians in collaboration with UNESCWA and UNECA

Beyond GDP Webinar

Priorities in measuring wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability in African and Arab Countries and findings of the Network's Beyond GDP Sprint

BACKGROUND

GDP measures a country's domestic production of goods and services. This indicator and the System of National Accounts (SNA) on which it is based are available in virtually all countries worldwide. As a result, GDP is widely used to summarize countries' development, even beyond the purpose for which it was designed.

In September 2021, the United Nations Secretary-General presented the report "Our Common Agenda", with his vision for the future of global cooperation and multilateralism. He calls for "new measures to complement GDP, so that people can fully understand the impacts of business activities and how we can and must do better to support people and our planet". The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination has set out to discuss the development of metrics to measure progress beyond GDP, supporting the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Our Common Agenda report.

At the request of the UN Secretary-General (SG) and the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the High-Level Committee on Programme prepared a UN system-wide contribution to the progress Beyond GDP discussions. It considers two types of response to the challenges and limitations outlined above: on the one hand, support the improvements to the measurement of GDP and the update of the System of National Accounts 2008 and, on the other hand, identify a set of complementary indicators.

The United Nations Network of Economic Statisticians, established by the 52nd Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (in March 2021), has launched a consultation on the Beyond GDP agenda as part of its mandate to facilitate horizontal coordination for statistical programs in measuring the multidimensional relationships between the economy, environment, and society of the 2030 Agenda.

The Network findings can be summarized by shared research and testing agenda for a new integrated statistical system organized around four thematic areas:

- accounting framework – describe the relationships between socio-demographic statistics and indicators in new System of Population and Social Accounts in support of the measurement of wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability
- central framework on wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability with following components:
 - wellbeing – develop a dashboard of core indicators and composite indices, including the link to SDGs
 - inclusion – enhance wellbeing and distributions in aggregated and disaggregated accounting
 - sustainability– bring together comprehensive and inclusive wealth accounting, broader scope of capital than that in the SNA, with a focus on consistent measurement to derive ‘objective’ composite indices to provide a fuller landscape of the trade-offs involved in achieving economic welfare.

This Beyond GDP webinar is part of the Network consultations on regional statistical program priorities and initiatives to identify and promote collaboration and networking for economic, socio-demographic, and environment statistics, indicators, and accounts for the multidimensional measurement of sustainable development.



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Priorities in measuring wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability in African and Arab Countries and findings of the Network's Beyond GDP Sprint virtual meeting, Thursday, 1 December 2022 7 am – 10 am EST

DRAFT AGENDA

Session 1 7:00 - 7:10	Opening Welcome remarks
Session 2 7:10 - 7:30	Statistical Priorities for the UNECA and UNESCWA Mr. Xiaoning Gong (Greg), Chief of Economic Statistics Section, African Center for Statistics – Statistical Priorities for the UNECA in measuring wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability
7:30 - 7:40	Q&A
7:40 - 8:00	Ms. Wafa Aboul Hosn, Chief Economic Statistics, UNESCWA, Statistical Priorities for the UNESCWA in measuring wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability
8:00 – 8:20	Q&A
Session 3 8:20 - 8:40	Findings of the UN Network of Economic Statisticians from Beyond GDP Consultations Mr. Andre Loranger, Statistics Canada and Co-Chair of the Network of Economic Statisticians- Introduction of the Network and the Beyond GDP Sprint
8:40 - 8:45	Q&A and Polling Questions
8.45 - 9:05	Mr. Tim Miller, UN Population Division -Towards a System for demographic-economic accounting: building on existing practices - disaggregated national accounts by age, gender, and other socio-demographic statistics explained by National Transfer Accounts, National Time Transfer Accounts and National Inclusion Accounts
9:05 - 9:10	Q&A and Polling Questions
9:10 - 9:30	Mr. Richard Heys, UK Office of National Statistics Towards a System for inclusive and sustainable wellbeing covering the metrics for the economy, society, and environment
9.30 - 9.35	Q&A and Polling Questions
Session 4 9:35 – 10:00	Concluding session Exploring joint priorities for the Beyond GDP program and concluding remarks