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2010 LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN SEMINAR ON NATIONAL ACCOUNTS: REGIONAL
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS,
9 TO 12 NOVEMBER 2010 , LIMA, PERU
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2010 Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on National Accounts: Regional implementation of the System of National Accounts

9 to 12 November 2010
Lima, Peru

Conclusions and Recommendations

The seminar was organised by the ECLAC, in collaboration with UNSD and hosted by INEI, Peru.

The purpose of the seminar is to assist the Working Group on National Accounts of the Statistical Conference of the Americas in implementing the Regional implementation programme of the 2008 SNA and supporting economic statistics with the objective of developing comparable economic statistics for countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region as a whole to monitor the integration of their economies. This regional programme forms part of the global implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.

The expected outcome for seminars was to reach consensus among participants on the regional programme for the implementation of the 2008 SNA in the Latin American and Caribbean region which include:

- a comprehensive, region-wide assessment of countries' current capacity and needs to produce the basic economic statistics and national accounts for policy and decision making;
- a region-wide roadmap to enhance the scope and quality of basic economic statistics and national accounts for improved policy and decision making; and
- a minimum common data set of annual and high frequency statistics.

The seminar discussed six themes namely: **i)** Overview of main changes from the 1993 SNA to the 2008 SNA. **ii)** The financial crisis and statistical initiatives to meet the challenge. **iii)** The global 2008 SNA implementation strategy. **iv)** 2008 SNA implementation tools. **v)** Regional initiatives for improving the scope, detail and quality of the national accounts and supporting economic statistics in the region. **vi)** The work programme of the National Accounts Work Group of the Statistical Conference of the America (SCA-WGNA).

The seminar came to the conclusion that in order to ensure the ability to compile the desired scope and detail of the national accounts in a sustainable manner there is a need for strengthening all aspects of the statistical production process and the need for closer cooperation between the national statistical offices and central banks responsible for compiling national accounts. The seminar also identified the need for a high-level advocacy and outreach actions to explain the use of national accounts to data providers, policy makers, academia and other users. The seminar supported continued efforts by task forces to investigate practical issues for implementing the new guidelines of the 2008 SNA. The main conclusions and recommendations of the seminar are presented below in more detail.

Participants of the Seminar:

1. Reaffirmed that the *Implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics*, adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission, is the overarching framework for formulating their national and regional implementation programmes for the 2008 SNA.
2. Took note of the progress with the translation of the 2008 SNA into Spanish and welcomed the availability of the draft translated chapters on the website of ECLAC.
3. Agreed that the Statistical Conference of the Americas which supports, advises and directs the development and monitors progress of statistical capacity building in the region has a leading role within the governance structure for the implementation programme of the 2008 SNA.
4. Recognised that the efficient implementation of the 2008 SNA and its supporting economic statistics requires close cooperation between the national statistical offices and central banks, especially when the responsibility for collection of basic economic statistics and the compilation of national accounts is shared between both institutions.
5. Agreed to request the SCA to formally invite those central banks and other institutions that are responsible for the collection of economic statistics and compilation of the national accounts to fully participate in the activities of the SCA and its executive committee.
6. Agreed to request the SCA to carry out high-level advocacy and outreach actions to explain the use of national accounts to data providers, policy makers, academia and other users.
7. Recognized the importance of high frequency indicators for the early detection of changes in economic trends and will review the appropriateness and feasibility of collecting high frequency indicators, as reflected in the Ottawa data template, as part of the implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.
8. Welcomed the proposed implementation tools, the *Statistical System Information* sheet and the *Self Assessment Diagnostic Tool*, and agreed that the *Self Assessment Diagnostic Tool* provides a useful framework to assess the current status of the statistical capacity in the country.
9. Agreed that a vision document, based on the self assessment, is an important step to establish a road map for the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics. The vision document identifies a set of actions to accomplish statistical and institutional goals and is instrumental in the improvement of the statistical agenda to ensure adherence to best practices in official statistics.
10. Agreed to propose to the SCA to encourage countries to use the *Self Assessment Diagnostic Tool* to assess the current status of the statistical capacity in the country and to encourage countries to develop a vision document to establish a road map for the

implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.

11. Welcomed the initiative by the UNSD to establish a dedicated website to track and support the implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics, as well as the Knowledge Base for economic statistics and macroeconomic standards, and agreed to provide material on country practises to be housed in this Knowledge Base.
12. Welcomed the questionnaire management platform proposed by ECLAC, which aims to reduce the response burden of countries that need to respond to various questionnaires requiring overlapping information and agreed to provide comments on its structure and type of questions by 31 January 2011.
13. Agreed that the UNSD *Self Assessment Diagnostic Tool* should be included in the ECLAC proposed questionnaire platform.
14. Recognized the different levels of statistical development in countries of the region and the ensuing challenges to implement the 2008 SNA, a process that will necessarily be gradual and take in to account differences in initial conditions. To support the better synchronization of the implementation process, and participants of the seminar agreed to include a programme of horizontal co-operation on the development of basic economic statistics and national accounts compilation, as well as the implementation of an advanced course in national accounts (including fundraising efforts), in the regional implementation plan for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.
15. Welcomed efforts currently being carried out to coordinate actions of donor institutions with the aim to improve statistical capacity in the countries (development of basic statistics; institutional strengthening, improved management practices, training, etc.)
16. Took note of the programme of activities of the 2011 Round of the ICP, and expressed their concerns with respect to the feasibility to comply with the proposed timetable in view of lack of planning and tight implementation deadlines, as well as, in some cases, the lack of human and financial resources within national coordination teams that have already closed their 2011 budgets..
17. Agreed on the following actions on the outputs of the SCA task forces set up in the Montevideo seminar 2009:
 - i) The outcome of the work by the three task forces will undergo a peer-review process aimed to its publication as working documents
 - ii) An abstract of each paper will be submitted to the SCA for its consideration
 - iii) Submission of outstanding questionnaires on FISIM and goods for processing by 31 January 2011
18. Agreed to propose to the SCA the establishment of a work group on a minimum common dataset, including high frequency indicators, of basic statistics supporting the compilation of the national accounts and monitoring of changes in economic trends and to endorse the creation of two new Wiki platforms to exchange documents and experiences in the following subject areas:

- Basic economic statistics
- 2011 Round of the ICP in Latin America and the Caribbean.

19. Recognized the existence of difficulties faced by countries in the implementation of some recommendations of the 2008 SNA, particularly in the modification of the treatment of goods for processing. In this regard, the representatives of UNSD, ECLAC and other international agencies reaffirmed their commitment to provide technical support and methodological guidance where needed to adopt the 2008 SNA recommendations.
20. Recognized as an important issue the need to exert efforts to integrate statistics and analysis in the social and economic fields.