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Sixth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Bávaro, Dominican Republic

16-18 November 2011

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON INSTITUTION-BUILDING OF THE STATISTICAL
CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ***

* This report was prepared by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia, coordinator of the working group.



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Name of working group and coordinator	Working Group on Institution-building; National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia.
Member countries and other participants	Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay; ECLAC as the technical secretariat.
Results of the 2009-2011 programme of work: summary of the results and outputs to be presented at the sixth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	<p>The National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia took on the role of coordinator of the Working Group on Institution-building for the period 2009-2011. Details are provided below of the activities undertaken for each of the assigned areas of work.</p> <p>1. Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online self-assessment questionnaire enabling national statistical offices to evaluate their institutional environment was devised, prepared and administered. • An initial proposal for the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean was sketched out and drafted. It was then presented at the second workshop on drafting the code for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Luxembourg in 2010. The proposal comprised three sections (institutional environment and coordination, statistical procedures, and statistical production) and 14 principles. • Based on the outcomes of the workshop, the proposal was amended to include three further principles, while maintaining the original structure. • A virtual workshop was devised, prepared and run to share progress to date and validate the compliance criteria. Seventeen representatives from offices and international organizations took part. • A self-administered questionnaire for national statistical offices on the proposed Code was designed and prepared. • The December 2010 version of the proposed framework for the Code was circulated. It was sent to eight countries in Latin America, eight in Central America, three in North America and two in Europe, as well as five international organizations and five national entities. • A pilot test was run of the self-assessment forms relating to the sections on statistical procedures and production in the proposed framework for the Code. The four member countries of the Working Group participated actively in this process. • The questionnaire on the principles of the proposed Code was completed by 14 countries of the region. • The information provided by the countries in the questionnaire on the principles of the proposed Code was consolidated. • A report on the results of implementation of the self-assessment questionnaire was prepared. • Final adjustments were made to the proposed Code, taking into consideration the recommendations of the collaborating countries. • A strategic plan for implementing the Code was formulated.

2. Global statistical standards

- The use of international statistical standards has continued to be promoted via the website http://mapserver.inegi.org.mx/estandares/en/Consulta_Produccion/Index.cfm, which contains the inventory of global standards, and the Knowledge Transfer Network website (see [online, in Spanish only] http://www.ceacepal-rtc.org/rtc_sitio/).
- The inventory was presented at the forty-first session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, held from 23 to 26 February 2010. The aim was to share it with the international statistical community, invite the plenary to consider its usefulness, and discuss mechanisms for updating and maintaining it in the future.

In this regard, the Statistical Commission:

- (a) expressed its thanks to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico for offering to make its inventory of statistical standards available to the international statistical community in order to convert it into a global database, managed and updated by international organizations and by the United Nations Statistics Division;
- (b) welcomed the proposal of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities to create appropriate mechanisms for the further development and maintenance of the inventory of global statistical standards and requested it to propose a proper classification of those standards;
- (c) was in agreement with the proposal to publish the INEGI inventory database on the website of the United Nations Statistics Division, to provide for its wide use and access by the public, countries and other users for the purposes of harmonization, and as a reference tool for quantifying the level of compliance with internationally recommended statistical standards, and
- (d) requested that the United Nations Statistics Division take the necessary steps to translate the inventory into the other official languages of the United Nations so as to facilitate its use.

At the request of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, a group composed of representatives from the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with INEGI, prepared a concept paper on the appropriate mechanisms for the further development and maintenance of the inventory of global statistical standards. In September 2011, the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities reviewed the report¹ prepared by the task team and concluded as follows:

¹ United Nations, Report of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities on the inventory of global statistical standards. Note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/2011/30), Statistical Commission, December 2010.

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- The inventory is intended to provide a knowledge centre and reference system for international statistical standards. It therefore needs to be complete, up-to-date, trustworthy and readily available for users. As a reference system, the inventory can also serve as an analytical tool for international organizations and groups, to help identify statistical areas requiring recommendations or standards as well as to identify overlapping standards. The inventory must be developed in phases, the first of which will have a limited level of detail. User feedback will help to determine the content and priorities of future phases.
 - As well as the Statistical Commission and international organizations, the inventory is expected to be used by professionals in national statistical organizations, the research community and the general public.
 - Concerning the scope of the inventory, it must include all official methodological publications of Committee members; internationally agreed statistical classifications; standards published by a body outside the international statistical system, but widely used by statistical organizations (for example, some International Organization for Standardization standards); global and regional standards adopted by the relevant global or regional statistical bodies, including regional versions of global standards; and information about previous versions of standards where these are still used. In the first phase of the project, the main entry for the inventory must be the official publication, although it is acknowledged that more details will be needed.
 - It was suggested that the classification of statistical activities developed by the ECE for the international statistical activities database be used.
 - It was suggested that an editor be appointed for each subject group or domain. This person would be an expert in his/her field from a national or international statistical organization. There should also be an editorial board to take responsibility for matters of content, such as changes to the template, classifying statistical standards by domain and deciding whether specific standards meet the criteria for inclusion in the inventory.
 - All members of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities must participate in the maintenance project.
 - On 29 October 2010, the National Director of the National Statistics Office of the Dominican Republic, the current Chair of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, congratulated INEGI and acknowledged that its inventory would serve as a model for a global inventory.
 - Within the Virtual Statistical System of the World Bank (see [online] <https://www.virtualstatisticalsystem.org/>), there is a section for commenting on the online resources available to national statistical offices, other data-producing organizations and data users, including formulators of public policy, academics, students and anyone requiring more information about official statistics. Comments about INEGI's inventory of international standards are captured in this section.
 - Finally, at the fifty-eighth World Statistics Congress of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) held in August 2011, a presentation was delivered on the use of global statistical standards, during the special topics session "Standardization and Integration of Statistical Production Processes". The usefulness of international standards for harmonizing and comparing international information was examined.
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Programme of work 2012-2013:

1. Description of goals

General goal: The aim of the Working Group on Institutional-building is to build and apply the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean and to identify, harmonize and promote the use of international statistical standards together with organizational methods for their implementation.

Specific goals:

- Dissemination and implementation of the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean.
 - Proposal for a bank of good statistical practices.
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2. Main activities proposed for the period 2012-2013, including the countries and organizations in charge and likely dates of execution
Activities

- Design and prepare tools for the dissemination and implementation of the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean.
 - Prepare a proposal for a bank of good statistical practices in the region.
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In charge

Working Group on Institution-building

