Activities implemented in the field of statistics

Activities of the Technical Advisory Group on Economic Statistics

Note by the ESCWA secretariat

The secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) transmits to the Statistical Committee the report of fourth meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Economic Statistics (TAGES), held online on 6 and 7 July 2021. It was attended by 128 participants from 10 member States, and by experts from international and regional organizations. Participants reviewed the outcome of the Inception Webinar for the Arab Region towards the 2025 System of National Accounts, held virtually on 5 July 2021. The Chair of TAGES and the representative of the ESCWA secretariat provided updates on the implementation of previous recommendations and on the problems encountered in compiling economic statistics in member States during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants discussed priority issues with regard to regional economic statistics programmes; methodological and technical issues related to the development and periodic revision of the programmes; means to enhance coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels; and the production and dissemination of economic indicators for use in following-up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

The meeting also addressed several emerging and priority topics, such as the informal economy in national accounts; the guidelines of the International Monetary Fund and the International Labour Organization; digitization and the digital economy through supply and use tables; measuring digital trade in general and in national accounts; and regional accounts. Representatives of members of United Nations global groups on big data and business and trade statistics and of the ESCWA secretariat provided briefings on modern methods of collecting price statistics, climate change and disaster-related statistics, and environmental accounts for informing the 2030 Agenda. The Statistical Committee is invited to take note of the meeting’s report with a view to endorsing its recommendations.
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Introduction

1. The Technical Advisory Group for Economic Statistics (TAGES) was established pursuant to the recommendation of the Statistical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) at its eleventh session, held in Amman on 4 and 5 February 2015. Its tasks include highlighting priority issues with regard to regional economic statistics programmes; providing guidance to the ESCWA secretariat on methodological and technical issues related to the development and periodic revision of such programmes; helping to enhance coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels; and producing and disseminating economic indicators for use in implementing the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). TAGES held its fourth meeting online on 6 and 7 July 2021, in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the Statistical Centre for the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC-Stat), with a broad participation of 128 delegates and independent experts, representing 16 ESCWA member States and 10 organizations.

2. Preceding the fourth meeting of TAGES, the Inception Webinar for the Arab Region towards the 2025 System of National Accounts was held online on 5 July 2021, to present new developments in updating the System of National Accounts (SNA) for 2025. UNSD and partners in the update gave an overview of the guidance notes and the status of the research agenda. The co-chairs leading the joint task team on Islamic finance and national accounts and other experts presented progress on the guidance note under preparation and the main results of the meetings of subtask teams. UNSD also presented the inclusion of a baseline assessment and compilation of experimental estimates to be conducted in a number of volunteering countries.

3. The fourth meeting of TAGES reviewed discussions that took place during the Inception Webinar, as well as activities and programmes in economic statistics, adopted methodologies, and problems encountered in applications in countries within a set of regional priorities recommended by TAGES at its previous meeting. The meeting also addressed several emerging and priority topics, such as the informal economy in national accounts, digitization and the digital economy through supply and use tables, digitization and e-commerce, and foreign trade data exchange. The discussions covered various modern methods of collecting economic statistics (price statistics and statistical business register), sustainability and the SDGs, statistics on climate change and disasters, and environmental accounts.

I. Recommendations

4. The fourth TAGES meeting concluded with the following recommendations:

   a) Realign the TAGES programme agreed at the Group’s third meeting, including recommendations and priority areas, so as to focus on emerging needs in economic statistics in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2025 SNA update;

   b) Consider as immediate priorities the themes resulting from the polling questions covered during the Inception Webinar (annex II to the present report) and the fourth meeting of TAGES, namely the informal/non-observed economy; digitalization (digital supply and use tables); Islamic finance in national accounts for 2021 and 2022; digital trade; wellbeing and sustainability, including income distribution; and environmental-economic accounting for 2022-2023;

   c) Establish task teams to provide the above priority themes with terms of reference and work plans, whose work would be facilitated by ESCWA (annex III to the present report);

   d) Invite countries to volunteer for the task teams, so as to share their experience and advance the work on the thematic areas (the task team work modality is set out in annex IV to the present report);

   e) Invite countries to review the guidance notes on the SNA update when they become available, such as the concept note on the informal economy prepared by a task team, so as to study the possibility of implementing the updated guidance notes depending on the situation in countries;
(f) Invite countries to volunteer for the experimental estimates of the guidance notes on the SNA update, depending on their interest and experience, to allow for adjustments before issuing the new SNA;

(g) Request that the ESCWA secretariat build capacity in the non-observed/informal economy and national accounts in the Arab region, in partnership with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), GCC-Stat and the International Labour Organization (ILO), and coordinate with the Middle East Technical Assistance Center (METAC) and the Middle East Center for Economics and Finance on the organization of a workshop on the non-observed economy and national accounts to be held in November 2021;

(h) Request that the ESCWA secretariat build capacity on digital supply and use tables (SUTs) in national accounts in the Arab region, and organize a workshop with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UNSD and regional partners;

(i) Request that ESCWA build capacity in measuring digital trade with the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UNSD;

(j) Build capacity on income distribution, regional accounts, and environmental accounts, and invite countries that have experience to transfer knowledge to interested countries;

(k) Explore the use of alternative data sources in all the areas considered as priorities, such as remote sensing, web scraping, scanners and other sources.

II. Topics of discussion

A. First session

5. The first session of the fourth TAGES meeting was chaired by Ms. Wafa Aboul Hosn, Chief of the ESCWA Economic Statistics Section and TAGES Chair; and Mr. Saleh AlKafri, Head of Economic Statistics at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. They presented the outcome of the Inception Webinar for the Arab Region Towards the 2025 System of National Accounts. They also updated the group on the implementation of previous recommendations, the problems encountered in compiling economic statistics in countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, the regional priorities recommended by TAGES at its previous meeting, and priority issues with regard to regional economic statistics programmes. The presentation was followed by a proposal to elect a chair for the fourth meeting of TAGES. Countries were invited to nominate their representative and appoint the candidate with the most votes.

B. Second session: digital economy and national accounts

6. The second session was chaired by Ms. Aboul Hosn, who briefed participants on the methodological work and technical assistance ESCWA had provided on SUTs. The session also included presentations on the digital economy and national accounts, and a brief from the members of the following global working groups on economic statistics: the United Nations Global Platform Regional Hubs; the United Nations Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics, and the United Nations Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics.

7. The representative of the ESCWA secretariat presented the methodological material on SUTs regional guidelines for Arab countries, including case studies from Morocco and the State of Palestine. He also shared the support ESCWA had provided through technical assistance on the compilation of SUTs, and the available IT tools that met countries’ collaboration needs with METAC/IMF.

8. The representative of GCC-Stat presented advances in GCC countries in compiling SUTs, including the various commitments that had been achieved and others that were underway concerning the implementation of 2008 SNA recommendations and the national accounts working programme for GCC countries (2021-2025)
related to SUTs. He also reviewed progress in implementing and updating internationally recommended procedures for data series, such as benchmarking, revision, chain indexing, and seasonal adjustment.

9. The representative of OECD presented the framework for digital SUTs, focusing on the importance of SUTs for the digital economy as the current framework was not able to capture their transactions and added value. He also reviewed transactions, products, industries, digital trade and the outputs of digital SUTs, and provided information on the practical implementation of the framework through a digital toolkit, while working closely with national statistical offices in augmenting their current SUTs to include the digital economy, and leveraging household surveys to collect such data and modelling techniques to estimate those figures. The session ended with a brief on future efforts for the compilation of digital SUTs.

10. Members of the various global working groups briefed participants on progress in several areas, including the role of the United Arab Emirates in the regional hubs working group of the United Nations Global Platform, and the membership of Oman in the United Nations Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics. The representative of the ESCWA secretariat suggested that the Regional Hub of the United Arab Emirates submit joint proposals from Arab or GCC countries to give statistical offices access to data on resident and tourist expenditures from credit cards providers, or data on mobile call records from telecom companies, to be used in the compilation of national accounts and in regional economic data flows, such as remittances and digital trade. The representative of the State of Palestine made a presentation on the United Nations Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics and the seven task teams that it comprised. He listed the various outputs, manuals, toolkits, assessments and models related to business and trade statistics expected to be delivered in 2021. He also stressed the importance of active country participation and of collaboration between relevant international and regional organizations to shape priorities and advance work.

11. Mr. Majed Skaini of ESCWA presented the initiatives undertaken by ESCWA in the use of new data sources and methods for capturing data, such as web scraping to collect price data from multiple sources and to keep track of any changes, and scanner data that could be used for several purposes such as public-private partnerships, detailed average prices, and advanced economic analysis.

C. Third session: non-observed economy in national accounts

12. The session was chaired by Mr. AlKafari, who gave the floor to Mr. Paul Austin, IMF Senior Economist, to review the non-observed economy in national accounts, including policy interests in measuring the informal economy, and conceptual variants regarding the informal and non-observed economy. He introduced an IMF policy paper on measuring the informal economy, along with the mandate of the task team created for the informal economy to produce guidance notes on statistical definitions and scopes of cross border flows and digitization by October 2021, and a presentational framework for the informal economy by February 2022. He also presented the work of METAC on the informal economy, which focused on technical assistance provided to countries.

13. The ILO representative made a presentation on the non-observed economy, focusing on the standards for informality statistics. He discussed the need to align the statistical framework for informality to the latest statistical developments, and provided some findings regarding country practices and experiences in the informal sector and informal employment and their measurements. He also reviewed the status of the revision process to better align, define and measure the different areas of statistical informality and the statistical framework it would require.

14. Mr. Omar Hakouz of ESCWA discussed informal activities in Arab countries, including conceptual differences between the non-observed economy and the informal sector, and identified which areas of the non-observed economy were being covered and measured in ESCWA member States. He highlighted the problems and issues with measurement and coverage of those areas, and provided solutions to mitigate those difficulties.
through three approaches in GDP measurement (expenditure, income and production approach), and by employing administrative data and SUTs for more accurate results.

D. Fourth session: digital trade measurement, e-commerce, and external trade data sharing

15. The session was chaired by Mr. Mohamad Al-Awa, ESCWA Regional Advisor on Technology for Development. It focused on the definition of digital trade, including the relationship between the growth of digital trade and cross-border data flows, the impact of new technologies on digital commerce (blockchains, artificial intelligence, and electronic data interchange), the impact of the pandemic on the growth of digital trade, and the status of the Arab region in digital trade.

16. Mr. Majed Hamoud, Team Leader of External Trade Statistics at ESCWA, presented the regional perspective on measuring digital trade. He highlighted the impact of the pandemic on trade in general, including retail sales; e-commerce measurement challenges, including random numbers and difficulties in building realistic policies; and the legal and legislative aspects of e-commerce, such as electronic transactions and trade regulation. He also reviewed the WTO digital trade guide. He noted the roles of different actors in measuring digital trade, and the role of ESCWA in supporting Arab statistical agencies in the field of digital commerce.

17. Ms. Barbara Adrian, Senior Statistician at WTO, presented the digital trade conceptual framework and its components, the definitions of digital trade, its boundaries and scope, and the transactions it included and excluded. She reviewed transactions on digital intermediation platforms, classification challenges, and the differences between the various types of transactions.

18. Mr. Ahmed Alfred of GCC-Stat made a presentation on the status of e-commerce in GCC countries, including the basic concepts of e-commerce, and growth in GCC countries, especially during last year given the impact of the pandemic.


20. In the ensuing discussion, questions were raised on the impact of taxes on digital brokerage platforms, the possibility of generating revenue from digital games, the importance of identifying the sources of data necessary for digital trade, the novelty of digital trade, and the small number of countries that had measured international digital trade.

21. Ms. Rania Abu Ghaboush of PCBS highlighted the methodology for developing the questionnaire design for ICT use in business in the State of Palestine, and the methodology for surveying businesses. She also presented the proposed plan to implement this survey in 2022.

22. Mr. Viet Vu, expert at GCC-Stat, presented the advantages of compiling SUTs in general, and in GCC countries in particular. He also reviewed the compilation status of SUTs in some GCC countries.

23. The following recommendations were made at the end of the fourth session:

- Strengthen cooperation between national digital trade authorities, including ministries of communications, telecommunications regulators, banks and customs.
- Support statistical agencies in Arab countries technically in identifying the sources of data needed for digital trade, and present best practices to benefit from them.
- Encourage Arab countries to share experiences related to measuring digital trade and the use of ICT in business.
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- Take advantage of the big data platform developed in the United Arab Emirates by all Arab countries to negotiate on behalf of the region with corporations that have headquarters in the United Arab Emirates and that own data sources on digital trade.

E. Fifth session: regional accounts sustainability

24. Mr. Michael Stanger of UNSD presented the uses, approaches and challenges faced in the compilation of regional accounts. He reviewed the need for regional accounts, the various approaches to them, and the three methods for regional accounts compilation (bottom-up, top-down, and mixed methods). He also discussed the main related challenges, such as allocation of cross-regional economic transactions, the non-observed economy, statistical discrepancies, concepts accuracy/data availability, population and demographic statistics availability, allocation of taxes, distribution of financial intermediation services indirectly measured (FISIM), survey representativity, price and volume dimensions, and compilation frequency.

25. Mr. Omar Hakouz made a presentation on the various challenges faced in the compilation of regional accounts in the Arab region by different compilation approaches (production, expenditure and income). He also discussed the various challenges by nature and size of each country, and by the availability of data sources. He suggested using administrative sources rather than surveys, noting the challenges in developing surveys and sampling methods that served the purpose of regional representativity.

26. Mr. Mohamad Rabya discussed the regional account compilation in Morocco over 12 regions, and presented the six goals of the regional account compilation, providing examples of the work on each of them. He noted that the methodology was customized to fit the Moroccan situation, and that details could be provided to participants.

27. The main recommendation emanating from session five, in view of the difficulties and lack of country experiences in compiling regional accounts, was the creation of a task team to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned to write useful recommendations on how to overcome challenges, and to work on evaluating available data and what could be achieved.

28. Ms. Aboul Hosn made a presentation listing the various activities ESCWA conducted and the training material translated to Arabic under the framework of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA). Regarding climate change, she noted 30 suggested indicators and the global consultation that had taken place. Regarding disaster-related statistics, she said that ESCWA was consolidating efforts to work with statistical offices that had the required data. Various data sources were available, such as national statistical offices, other administrative sources for environmental data, general government finance statistics on expenditure on environment and disaster reduction, and infrastructure maps. She also mentioned data sources from other regional and global offices, and the formation of inter-agency groups on disaster-related statistics that had held their first meetings. She noted that the Economic Commission for Europe had hosted the first Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster-related Statistics (online, 7-10 June 2021), and that the next forum would be hosted by ESCWA in Beirut from 6 to 8 September 2022. She stressed that there should be cooperation between national statistical offices and the various data sources, and the importance of data consolidation in a single database, preferably by national statistical offices. She also discussed big data and complementary sources, stating that it was vital to use geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing data, which were available publicly and for free.

29. Mr. Julian Chow of UNSD also made a presentation on SEEA. He provided an update on SEEA and capacity development. He introduced the mandate of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNEEA), and listed the four working groups and their main achievements. He reviewed SNA and SEEA systems of integrated information and SEEA implementation, and provided an update on the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting. He shared the SEEA-related decisions made by UNSC at its fifty-second session held in 2021, and provided a summary of them. He then summarized the SNA
update and discussed the SEEA Central Framework update, especially information related to classification. He also reviewed the updates on SEEA and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

30. Ms. Aboul Hosn noted that many countries were requesting technical guidance in that area, and mentioned the availability of various training materials that countries could start making use of before the technical guidance.

### III. Organization of work

#### A. Date and venue

31. ESCWA, in collaboration with UNSD and GCC-Stat, organized the fourth meeting of TAGES, which was held online on 6 and 7 July 2021. Two sessions were convened each day, from 9.30 a.m. to 12 p.m., and from 1.30 to 4 p.m.

32. The Inception Webinar for the Arab Region Towards the 2025 SNA was held virtually on 5 July 2021, in collaboration with UNSD and GCC-Stat, to present to TAGES members and other participants new developments in the update of SNA for 2025.

#### B. Opening

33. Mr. Juraj Riecan, Director of the ESCWA Statistics Division, welcomed participants and thanked the co-organizers and all participating agencies. He stressed the importance of meeting annually to discuss challenges and progress in sectoral and economic statistics, specifically the implementation of the 2008 SNA. He also noted the importance of ambition to address emerging topics, of short-term economic indicators in increasing the availability of trade statistics at six digits, and of other areas such as transport, energy and industry statistics.

34. Mr. Ivo Havinga made a statement on behalf of UNSD, in which he highlighted the close collaboration with ESCWA on economic statistics that was reflected in the organization of the webinar on the implementation of the 2008 SNA. He said that after the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to move forward and start updating many economic standards. He congratulated ESCWA on bringing together regional and international organizations and related agencies on economic statistics and national accounts, given that coordination was needed to take the work forward, in accordance with country priorities. He added that it was important to preserve inhouse expertise on national accounts and economic statistics to guide the work and make better use of administrative data, while encouraging experimentation and testing by pilot countries.

35. Mr. Konrad Pesendorfer, Director of the General Authority of Statistics (GASTAT) in Saudi Arabia, delivered a keynote speech on the status of economic statistics in Saudi Arabia during and post-pandemic, and on how GASTAT had succeeded in producing economic statistics in a crisis mode, taking into account user needs and long-term changes on statistics after the pandemic. He noted the following three main issues: disruption of data collection from the field that had delayed the census and the labour force survey, the challenges of changes in methodologies, and ensuring the business continuity. He also reviewed the economic impact of the pandemic on Saudi Arabia, which caused a sharp decrease in GDP driven by its energy sector, with a rebound in non-oil and overall GDP growth. He also shared his thoughts on how statistical life would be different post-pandemic.

#### C. Attendance

36. The meeting was attended by 128 delegates and independent experts, representing 16 ESCWA member States and 10 organizations.
Annex I

List of participants

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Annex II

Survey results

Survey results of the polling questions during the Inception Webinar on the SNA Update.

Session 1. Overview of the SNA update.

Q1.1. What would be the main priority or most relevant issues for your country?

Q1.2. Do you plan to participate in the global consultation?

Q1.3. Which of the following support can we provide to encourage you to participate?

1. What would be the main priority or most relevant issues for your country?

2. Do you plan to participate in the global consultation?

3. Which of the following support can we provide to encourage you to participate?
Session 2. Task Teams and Guidance Notes.

Q2.1. Are any/some of these topics already (being) developed in your country?

Q2.1.1. If Yes, which ones?

Q2.2. What topics would you like to be covered in more detail on the next webinar(s)?

### 1. Are any/some of these topics already (being) developed in your country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance of payments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-being and sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. If Yes, which ones?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitalization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance of payments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-being and sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. What topics would you like to be covered in more detail on the next webinar(s)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-being and sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance of payments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digitalization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 3. Assessment and Experimental Estimates.

Q3.1. Do you have development plans that may be used to include some of the new issues to be implemented?

Q3.2. Would you consider volunteering to be part of the early implementation of some GNs recommendations as experimental estimates?

Q3.2.1. If yes, check which ones.

Q3.3. Would your authorities support those developments?

1. Do you have development plans that may be used to include some of the new issues to be implemented?

- No
- Yes
- I don't know

2. Would you consider volunteering to be part of the early implementation of some GNs recommendations as experimental estimates?

- Yes
- I don't know
- No

3. If yes, check which ones

- Digitalization
- Informal Economy
- Financial issues
- Islamic Finance
- Globalization
- Communication
- Well-being and sustainability

4. Would your authorities support those developments

- No
- Yes
- I don't know
### Annex III

**Areas of priorities, task teams and timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Interested or not in joining task team</th>
<th>Focal point from country for the task team (expert in the field, name and function and contact details).</th>
<th>Focal point for the task team from ESCWA and other organizations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themes that came as priorities in the polling questions during the Inception Webinar on the SNA update and during the TAGES sessions.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Informal/non-observed economy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>مسؤول الاتصال من فريق العمل في الدولة موثقة من أجل الانضمام إلى فريق العمل (اسم ووظيفة)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Digitalization (digital SUTs).</td>
<td></td>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Islamic finance and national accounts.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Digital trade.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2022-2023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wellbeing and sustainability: income distribution and regional accounts (result of the polling question on areas to be covered in next webinars and upon request from the United Arab Emirates).</td>
<td></td>
<td>2022-2023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore the use of alternative data sources in all the areas such as remote sensing, web scraping, scanners and other sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2021-2023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Themes that came as priorities in the polling questions during the Inception Webinar on the SNA update and during the TAGES sessions.**

1. Informal/non-observed economy.
2. Digitalization (digital SUTs).
3. Islamic finance and national accounts.
4. Digital trade.
5. Wellbeing and sustainability: income distribution and regional accounts.

**Themes that came as priorities during the Inception Webinar on the SNA update and during the TAGES sessions.**

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2. Digitalization (digital SUTs).
3. Islamic finance and national accounts.
4. Digital trade.
5. Wellbeing and sustainability: income distribution and regional accounts.
### Annex IV

**Work modality for TAGES task teams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Establishing task teams to work on three to five priority issues identified during the meeting and the webinar for one to two years will be accomplished according to the following modality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>ESCWA and the TAGES Chair will propose, within two months of the fourth TAGES meeting, terms of reference for the task teams with a work plan, clear outputs, frequency of meetings and reporting on progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>ESCWA will invite countries to become members of the proposed task teams (four to five members) with a lead country, ESCWA as secretariat, and in collaboration with GCC-Stat, UNSD, IMF/METAC and other organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Coordinate with other task teams, groups, or international organization, or other national statistical systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Evaluation of the meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Strongly agree/Agree</th>
<th>Neutral/Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting content/presentations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overall quality of the meeting met my expectations</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting objective(s) was/were achieved</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting combined different presentation methods and examples from the region</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital economy and national accounts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session was well-facilitated, and purpose and concepts clearly explained</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session engaged my interest and addressed my needs</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of the material was well prepared and included examples</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presentation style/moderation of the session was interactive and engaging</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-observed economy in national accounts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session was well-facilitated, and purpose and concepts clearly explained</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session engaged my interest and addressed my needs</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of the material was well prepared and included examples</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presentation style/moderation of the session was interactive and engaging</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital trade measurement, e-commerce, and external trade data sharing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session was well-facilitated, and purpose and concepts clearly explained</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>93%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presentation style/moderation of the session was interactive and engaging</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional accounts and sustainability</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session was well-facilitated, and purpose and concepts clearly explained</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The session engaged my interest and addressed my needs</td>
<td>71%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of the material was well prepared and included examples</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presentation style/moderation of the session was interactive and engaging</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization of the meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I received preparatory material for the meeting in a timely manner</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The time allocated for the meeting and each session was appropriate</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting and all sessions were overall well organized and structured</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Do you have any additional comments/suggestions?