PEER REVIEWS

IMPROVING NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEMS:

THE ROLE OF PEER REVIEWS

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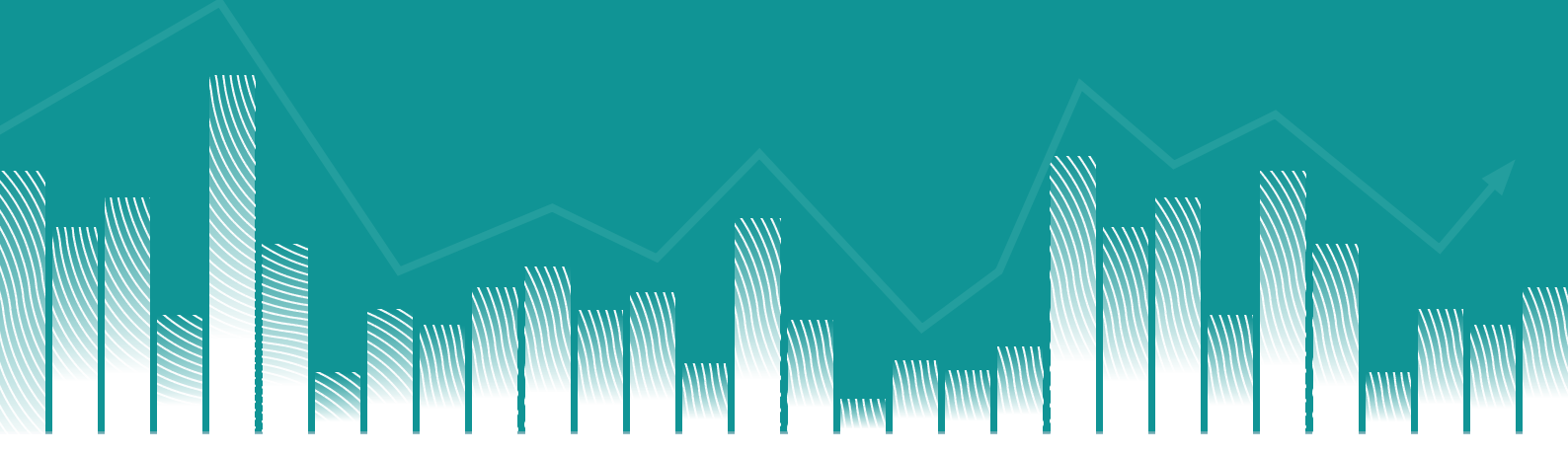

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Improving national statistical systems: The role of peer reviews

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Executive Summary

This document provides an overview of national statistical system (NSS) peer reviews by presenting the mechanisms in place to ensure their transparency and accountability and ways to enhance their effectiveness for disseminating good practices between countries. This document is geared towards national statistical authorities who are interested in enhancing compliance with United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UNFPOS) and regional codes of practice and practitioners from the international community and aid agencies who are interested in assessing compliance with international standards in partner countries.

NSSs are crucial for good governance: they supply the evidence base for policy making and they provide the necessary information for holding government representatives to account. At the same time, as public institutions, NSSs must observe good governance themselves. In this context, governance is understood as the *principles* governing the functioning of public institutions, the *processes* through which decisions are taken and implemented and finally, the *outcomes* of their activity.

International assessments produce diagnostics of how the practices of NSSs are faring against a benchmark and suggest the best courses of action for enhancing performance in the medium-term. These stocktaking exercises are crucial to any NSS seeking to provide reliable data to meet user needs and ensure society's trust. When results are made public, transparency – one of the main principles of good governance – is enhanced. Assessments elaborated by international organisations focus on one or more aspects: statistical capacity (processes), data quality (outputs/outcomes) and/or compliance with codes of practice and international standards (principles).

These exercises take various forms: they can either be external assessments, peer reviews or self-assessments. External assessments are conducted by an expert or committee that emits a verdict about an institution's performance or compliance. The findings of these assessments are usually followed up by technical support. Self-assessments, on the contrary, rely on the institution to provide an account of its own performance, and encourage self-reflection. Peer reviews – in their current format – incorporate elements from both self-assessments and external assessments and complement them with examples from peers on how to perform better.

Our research shows that peer reviews are beneficial to both reviewed countries and reviewers. Peer reviews are an effective mechanism to encourage action that does not unnecessarily speed reform beyond a countries' capacity, avoiding capacity traps. The paper also shows that the credibility and

impartiality of the reviewers and the assurance of a trustful environment for the conduct of the review are essential elements of a successful peer review. Finally, the selection of the peer review methodology is essential to ensure that they contribute to improving national statistical systems.

1. What are peer reviews?

a) Definition

A peer is an individual or institution who holds a similar position or status as another, and shares certain characteristics with him/her/it. Relevant common characteristics include experience and involvement in a specific domain, and responsibilities and duties in that domain. Due to their similar background, peers encounter similar issues. Knowledge exchange is a way of socialising solutions to recurring problems that institutions or individual practitioners face. When new issues arise, peers work together to find innovative practices to tackle them.

Peer reviews are a common practice for peer learning between members of a community of practice[1], since they allow for a convivial discussion that does not result in duties nor verdicts. These are opportunities for providing advice on how to improve and advance knowledge in a specific domain. The peer review can also be valuable to a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), at various stages - for instance as consultation to the design stage or to review progress during the implementation stage.

In the public sector, peer reviews are examinations of the practices of a State in a particular area by (representatives of) other States against a range of standards and criteria with the purpose of helping the reviewee improve their work. Moreover, these are opportunities for exchange between equals, rather than an audit by a superior body that emits a judgement. From a theoretical point of view, peer reviews serve the purposes of both aiding in national planning (forward-looking) and assessing compliance with international standards (backward-looking).

b) Statistical codes of practice and peer reviews

Through SDG Target 17.18 and CTGAP objective 2.1[2], countries committed to comply with UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UNFPOS) adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in 1994. The UNFPOS is also the basis for existing regional codes of practice (European Statistics Code of Practice, African Charter on Statistics, Código Regional de Buenas Prácticas en Estadísticas para

[1] Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2008). This concept can also be applied to institutions.

[2] Cape-Town Global Action Plan (CTGAP), objective 2.1: Modernize governance and institutional frameworks to allow national statistical systems to meet the demands and opportunities of constantly evolving data ecosystems. And Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17, target 18: By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

América Latina y el Caribe). The UNFPOS and regional codes are an ethical background for guiding the decisions and the activities of an NSS.

Upon subscribing to UNFPOS and regional codes, countries committed to work individually and collectively on their implementation. Peer reviews are a key element of this co-operation, since they allow individual member states to identify strengths and improvement areas and to provide tailored recommendations on how to improve compliance. These exercises provide Heads of NSOs the possibility of sharing their experience and exchanging views with peers on how to address concrete issues. Insights feed into strategic plans, such as National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), helping accelerate the development of NSSs.

Some have argued that an assessment by a supranational institution would provide a more credible account on UNFPOS implementation than peer reviews. Such an institution would perform impartial audits and indicate which countries are not adhering to the principles. The arguments supporting a new assessment system include 1) the leniency of peers, 2) their inability to provide an impartial view (required for arbitrating in national issues) and 3) the lack of harmonisation of current peer review methods (Georgiou, A. V., 2017).

Regarding such arguments, it is worth noting that adherence to the principles (as guidance) does not imply the ability to put them into practice. Therefore, "naming and shaming" may induce NSSs to undertake reforms for mimicking the forms of highly functioning states while masking deficiencies in order to meet international implementation standards – falling into capacity traps (Pritchett, L. and Woolcock, M. and Andrews, M., 2010). This may occur when an auditor forces a country to pass a law, which cannot be implemented because of lack of resources and/or consensus.

New approaches to capacity development, such as Capacity Development 4.0[3], encourage system-wide approaches that include focusing on the political economy of statistics. This implies acknowledging that more needs to be done to build consensus between relevant stakeholders and motivate them to support statistical capacity development. Recent work on statistical assessments has shown that peer reviews, as compared to self-assessments and external assessments, are better positioned to assess the political aspects of the National Statistical System, and the system as a whole, rather than particular organisations (Fonteneau, F, Baredes, B. and Mayard, C., 2018).

[3] https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/CD4.0-Framework_final.pdf

Peer reviews provide an opportunity for national statistical authorities to raise their profile within the government, advocate for compliance with UNFPOS and demonstrate the need of investing in the NSS. Visits by regional or international organisations and representatives from foreign NSSs provide local authorities with an opportunity for joint advocacy and reform. Representatives of the government can be encouraged to implement reforms, without indiscriminately replicating "best-practices". The opportunity can also serve as a basis for further co-operation between participating countries in order to adopt the recommendations of peers (Pagani, F., 2002).

c) Peer reviews in other sectors

Peer reviews are an important assessment mechanism for a large number of countries and international organisations to attain multiple governance-related objectives.

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) introduced their peer review process to enhance the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation policies, and to promote good partnerships. The objectives of such assessments are to discuss overall policy direction, to hold members accountable and to advocate for development co-operation. This process uses benchmarks, such as DAC good practice guidelines, national commitments and other internationally agreed targets. (Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD, 2018).

The Financial Stability Board (FSB) focuses primarily on the implementation and effectiveness of international financial standards and of policies agreed within the board. The overall aim is to promote complete and consistent implementation of agreed G20/FSB financial reforms (Financial Stability Board, 2017).

Additionally, peer review mechanisms are also used to assess anti-corruption policies in the global governance of corruption, in which it represents the most commonly used monitoring instrument. Today the Council of Europe, the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of American States use peer reviews to monitor compliance with their conventions (Jongen, H., 2018)

2. Benefits of peer reviews

a) Benefits for the reviewers

Although the benefits of participating in peer reviews appear more obvious for the reviewed country, there are several important beneficial aspects for the reviewer as well[4]. In most cases, peer reviewers are senior employees who could become heads of NSOs in the near future. In this sense, peer reviews are useful in mentoring them through the experience of learning about different practices and challenges. Reviewers are provided an opportunity to:

- "Benchmark" and learn from innovative practices that the reviewee may be implementing. For instance, one interviewer believed that the peer review experience illustrated how NSOs differ from one country to another in terms of vision, mission, and role in the NSS and in managing the impact of statistical activities.

- Take stock of the achievements of their own NSS, by reflecting on how to overcome challenges and recurring issues. Interviewers recognised that sharing their experience and knowledge with others was energising, and reinforced their commitment to strengthen their own NSS and provide support to others.

- Consult stakeholders (from the NSS, the government and the civil society) and learn from their points of view. This is relevant because, as leaders, they will need to understand and balance diverging interests in order to steer the NSS.

b) Benefits for the reviewed country

A peer review has the ultimate objective of assisting in the statistical capacity development of the reviewed country, adopt best practices, and comply with established standards and principles. Reviewed countries mentioned the following benefits:

- Reflection on own practices: The peer review is an opportunity to draw the attention of the NSO and other statistical organisations towards their internal practices through a self-reflection process, and also to reflect on its compliance with the statistical principles to which it has

[4] Lessons from the experience of countries who have recently participated in peer-reviews were gathered via interviews with representatives of NSOs that participated as reviewers (October – December 2018)

committed. Interviewees described the external review as a useful "wake-up call", that worked as an opportunity to make the office evaluate its own practices thoroughly.

- Implementable recommendations: Since reviewers generally belong to the same region as the reviewed country, the exercise highlights NSSs' needs and challenges, and provides clear and implementable recommendations for the whole system. A reviewed country emphasised that these were particularly useful when provided by a peer from a comparable NSO that previously had solved similar challenges.

- Leveraging all stakeholders: The peer review provides opportunities to call for statistical development since it involves the various agents that affect the NSSs' functioning – especially those who contribute to its financing, such as the government and financing partners. According to one interviewee, the peer review provided an opportunity to advance the finalisation and approval of a new statistical law and development plans in the country.

c) Additional benefits

Peer reviews strengthen national statistical coordination as they ensure main data producers and users are consulted and their functions and contributions to coordination are clarified based on international best practice.

In addition, peer reviews have a positive impact on international co-operation. As an outcome, reviewed countries commit to implementing recommendations issued by peers. As a follow-up, the regional or international body can issue and monitor an action plan with concrete milestones, deadlines and distribute responsibilities to which the authorities of the NSS and the government commit. In this way, peer reviews can accelerate compliance of countries with international codes of practice.

These opportunities reinforce the links between countries by bringing cross-cutting issues to the attention of both the regional/international organisation and its members. Discussions within the organisation can then focus on understanding what issues different states have in common and how to find novel solutions to such challenges. These proposed solutions can feed into Regional Strategies for the Development of Statistics and/or work programmes.

Peer reviews are an effective means for advocating in favour of compliance with international standards, since they stimulate dialogue between member states. Both peer reviewers and peer reviewees are encouraged to reflect consciously on the principles they committed to, which places

them back on the agenda of statistical authorities. Bilateral exchanges in the frame of a peer review can conclude in co-operation agreements to improve the practice.

d) Challenges

Peer reviews also encounter drawbacks relating to the necessary commitment of the reviewed country, the time intensity of the exercise and its cost, as well as its potential limited impact on the improvement of an NSS.

- Commitment: Peer reviews require a strong commitment of the country. Staff, stakeholders and documents need to be made available to the peer review. But above all, they require commitment to undergo potential identification of shortcomings and agree to put in place remedial actions and monitor the impact of these actions.

- Cost and sustainability: the peer review requires staff time to review documents and consultant fees. In addition, travel costs and workshop costs are also incurred. In the cases analysed here, an international/regional organisation supported this exercise and coordinated the exercise.

- Transformative capacity: some of the challenges identified in a peer review may require structural changes that are beyond the capacity of the NSO to implement. Some of the recommendations made may require a governance setup that cannot be triggered by the NSO itself and may create frustration at the end of the exercise with only minimal changes undertaken.

3. Types of peer reviews by methodology

The outcomes of peer reviews (assessing compliance and aiding in national planning) often focus on very different issues. For example the peer reviews in the European Statistical System (2015 version) by Eurostat-EFTA[5] stress the purpose of looking backwards and assessing compliance. Others emphasise the aim of looking into the future and aiding in national planning, such as PARIS21's ASEAN region peer reviews.

This section addresses the differences and similarities between the two models of peer reviews in terms of the structural elements that compose them: the basis for the assessment (objectives and origin), the set of principles and criteria for reviewing country performance, the involved actors and the procedures that lead to the final result. These elements are later summarised in Table 1 (more information is available in Annexes 1 and 2). Despite their differences, the two models take provisions for ensuring the highest degree of neutrality and transparency throughout the process and of the outcomes.

The core objective of the Eurostat-EFTA model is assessing progress made in adherence to the principles of the code of practice (backward-looking). This exercise intends to be standardised to the highest possible degree to resemble an audit. The assessment is mandatory for all member countries, and takes place almost simultaneously in all of them. The co-ordinator notifies countries of the dates when they will be held.

On the other hand, PARIS21's peer reviews have the core objective of improving the governance and operation of an NSS (forward-looking). The exercise intends to be tailored to country needs, with the aim of contributing to the NSDS. The assessment is voluntary, and the reviewee decides on the appropriate moment to participate.

The content of the review in the case of Eurostat-EFTA are all the principles of the Code of Practice. Only European statistics are considered relevant to the exercise. PARIS21's review covers a range of themes based on the codes of practice that the reviewee subscribed to (national and/or regional). The focus of the exercise is narrower, according to consultations with the reviewed country, and covers national statistics.

[5] The Eurostat-EFTA methodology provides the foundation for other peer reviews, such as the assessment of "enlargement" countries (Light peer reviews), the current Pan African Statistics Programme (African Union) and the Evaluaciones Globales (CEPAL's Grupo de Fortalecimiento). These are not covered in this section.

The flow of both exercises is similar (Table 1), and both take approximately six to seven months. The main difference is that PARIS21's peer reviews take one more month of preparatory work for consultations with the reviewed country regarding the composition of the reviewer team and the validation questionnaire for the visit.

Table 1: Comparison between Eurostat-EFTA and PARIS21 peer-reviews

	Eurostat-EFTA Peer-reviews	PARIS21 Peer-reviews
Basis for review	European Statistical System Committee resolution	Country request
Main objective	Assess compliance	Improve performance
Principles and criteria	European Code of Practice (CoP) Decided by reviewers	UNFPOS, regional code and country code Decided in consultation with country
Involved actors	Two peer reviewers nominated by members of the Statistical Programme Committee Eurostat expert (observer) NSS (statistical office staff, limited number of other producers) Providers of data/respondents Users (government, media, research)	Two peer reviewers proposed by PARIS21 and agreed by country Expert proposed by PARIS21 and agreed by country Observer(s) NSS (statistical office staff from various departments, other producers) Providers of data Users (government, CSOs, businesses, media, research, donors)
Procedures	Pre-assessment reviewing self-assessment questionnaire and documentation (3 months) Country visit to interview stakeholders and present initial findings (5 days) Final report with country's comments (3 months)	Proposal for the assessment and expert engagement (1 month) Pre-assessment reviewing self-assessment questionnaire and documentation and engagement of peers (3 months) Country visit to interview stakeholders and present initial findings (5 days) Final report with country's comments (3 months)
Final result	Two reports - one on integration with the European Statistical System and another on compliance with CoP	One report highlighting strengths, challenges and action points

The reviewers, in the case of Eurostat-EFTA, are two peers from the NSO nominated by members of the Statistical Programme Committee and one Eurostat expert to act as observer. They define the focus of the visit after analysing the documentation submitted by the reviewee. In the case of PARIS21, the reviewers (two peers from different countries) and an expert are selected in consultation with the country. The focus of the peer review is discussed with the reviewed country as well, taking into account that results should feed into the NSDS. Observers are also required for the visit.

In-country consultations for Eurostat-EFTA involve managers, senior staff and junior staff of the statistical office, a small number of other producers in the NSS and providers of administrative data. Governmental and non-governmental users, represented by researchers and journalists, are also interviewed. An expert from the statistical office is required to attend most interviews in order to have access to direct feedback from stakeholders. The only closed session is the meeting with junior staff, in order to encourage open feedback on the management of the NSO.

PARIS21's methodology involves additional external stakeholders: representatives from civil society, private sector, international organisations and bilateral donors are consulted. On the NSS side, representatives from departments such as human resources, IT, finance, and a large number of producers outside the statistical office are also interviewed. The sessions are held with only representatives of each group - without presence of the heads of the NSO - in order to allow free exchange between participants and open feedback on the NSS.

The result of the peer review of Eurostat-EFTA are two reports, one on compliance with the European Code of Practice (CoP) and the other on integration with the European Statistical System. The main findings and action points are then discussed with the head of the statistical office before the reviewers leave the country. The reviewed country can send comments to the drafts before they are finalised and published. As a result of PARIS21's peer review, a report covering the focus-issues and discussing main finding and action points is issued. The process is the same as in Eurostat-EFTA, although the country's approval for publishing the reports is requested. This is the main limitation of voluntary peer reviews.

Comparing reports, the audit-like objective of the Eurostat-EFTA model comes into sight. The main focus is establishing whether the country complies or not, and recommends actions to enhance compliance. Innovative practices that could be replicated in other countries are also highlighted, and improvement recommendations are also indicated. Box 1 provides an example of a Eurostat-EFTA report.

Box 1: Outline of Poland's Peer Review (on Compliance with CoP), May 2015

Introduction
Brief description of the NSS
Compliance with the code of practice and the co-ordination role within the NSS
- Strengths of the National Statistical Institute in relation to its compliance with the Code of Practice and to its co-ordination role
- Issues and recommendations
- Governance and professional independence
- A sustainable and competent organisation
- Quality and efficiency of data processing
- Dissemination
- National Statistical Institute views where they diverge from peer reviewers' assessment

The PARIS21 reports highlight the voluntary nature of the exercise. Although not standardised, the reports are descriptive, including positive aspects, challenges and improvement recommendations. Box 2 provides details on the outline of a PARIS21/ASEAN peer review report.

Box 2: Outline of Myanmar's Peer Review, July 2016

Introduction
- Myanmar National Statistical System
- Rationale for peer reviews
- Methodology

Observations and Findings
- Organisation and Management of NSS
- Managing Statistical Production
- Commitment to Quality
- Dissemination, Communication and Use of Statistics

Recommendations
- Organisation and Management of NSS
- Managing Statistical Production
- Commitment to Quality
- Dissemination, Communication and Use of Statistics

After the report is issued, countries are expected and required to apply the recommendations. The body responsible for the peer reviews (Eurostat and PARIS21) follows the implementation of the action plan and requests regular updates. This increases the accountability of the NSS, by showing responsiveness to peers' suggestions. The follow-up is another provision to ensure the neutrality and usefulness of the peer reviews.

The comparison of EFTA-Eurostat's and PARIS21's methodology is intended to illustrate the elements that make a peer review. Several regional and international organisations have their own assessments with distinct characteristics (Annex 1 provides a comparison between regional codes of practice and Annex 2 expands on the content of existing assessments). All of them hold the purposes of both assessing compliance with international standards and assisting in national planning, despite stressing one of them more than the other. With varying degrees of standardisation, all of them guarantee transparency by involving actors outside the NSS, as well as observers, and encourage the authorities to publish the final reports.

4. Improving peer reviews

Assessments are crucial for enhancing performance and reinforcing good-governance of public institutions. As exemplified by the two methodologies described in the previous section, peer reviews include elements of both self-assessments and external reviews. Countries must give an account of their compliance with UNFPOS, as well as with regional and national codes of practice. Peer reviewers then validate the information by interviewing stakeholders on the implementation of such principles and share recommendations on how to enhance compliance. The organisations that co-ordinate the exercises guarantee the impartiality of the process and outcomes, while leaving room for peer-exchange and learning. Based on previous experiences from NSOs, the outputs of peer reviews are further improved when the objectives are specific in nature.

A further step to enhance accountability, which has not been implemented by any institution so far, would be to present the final report to the authority responsible for statistics in the country (e.g. planning commission, minister of planning) in order to raise awareness of the recommendations. The approach to high-level policy-makers resonates well with an interviewee's statement that if the recommended solutions were already represented as objectives in a national context, the probability of implemented actions increases significantly.

Deciding on what type of methodology is suitable for a specific organisation or region depends on the agreements binding countries to peer reviews. When membership is contingent on compliance with specific codes of practice, then an audit-style may be appropriate. The organisation can take unilateral decisions to harmonise the process and results between countries, such as deciding on the appropriate time, the content to be evaluated, the structure of the agenda and of the reports, the involved peer reviewers, etc. The focus of these assessments is ensuring that countries get the same treatment, in case sanctions need to be applied.

When reviews are voluntary, there must be incentives for countries to participate. The reviewee must respond to reviewers' requests for information, organise interviews between them and representatives of the relevant groups, etc. This preparation requires diverting resources away from regular or strategic activities. Focusing the assessment on the priority-areas of the country leads to a loss of standardisation, but an increase in participation and willingness to apply the recommendations. Therefore, when there is no possibility of applying sanctions, selecting a methodology that considers country needs and resource constraints is a recommended approach.

The composition of the reviewer team is another aspect that requires deliberation. Peer reviews aim to foster discussion between countries of the same region or members of an international organisation. The heads of NSOs of these countries form a community of practice: they regularly exchange information, they share learning needs, and most importantly, they are able to put the collective knowledge into practice. Supporting each other in the learning process, finding ways to solve common problems, tools, techniques, etc. is core to advance statistical capacity of the NSS. In this sense, the contribution of peers is relevant for the forward-looking aspect of the assessment. Before making decisions regarding the design of a peer review assessment, the following factors that contribute to its effectiveness should be taken into consideration:

- Credibility of reviewers. Interviewees mentioned that the peer reviewers must fully understand the specificities of the NSS and be knowledgeable about the regional context in order to motivate the NSS to complete the preparatory work of the assessment. The credibility of the peer will also improve the acceptance and implementation of resulting recommendations. Reviewed countries acknowledged a link between the credibility of the process and its capacity to influence the NSS.

- Trust**.** Since a peer review is a co-operative process, trust is key to its effectiveness. The peer review can contribute to building confidence between the various stakeholders of the NSS. However, individual participants should be reassured that the data, information, documentation, opinions or feedback will not be used against them. The representatives of the NSS must either be open to critique from stakeholders or receive a summarised version from reviewers. The participation of observers is also relevant to this end.

- Impartiality of experts. Experts are generally considered impartial, since they do not belong to the same community of practice. They may be consultants or representatives of statistical systems of a different region. Their participation contributes to the backward-looking exercise: experts can detach themselves from the reviewed country and assess whether the NSS has complied with UNFPOS and regional codes so far. Because of their background, they bring a different point of view, which injects new ideas into the community of practice.

- Willingness to participate. The success of the UNFPOS and regional codes of practice acting as sets of principles to guide the operations of national statistical systems depends on the willingness of countries to implement them and to support others in doing the same. Peer reviews are an effective mechanism to encourage action that does not unnecessarily speed reform beyond a countries' capacity, avoiding capacity traps. Communicating the benefits of

the exercise, reducing the burden on countries and continuously incorporating feedback to improve the process is relevant to encourage participation.

Deciding on a peer review methodology requires careful consideration, in order to ensure that they contribute to statistical capacity development in reviewed countries.

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Annex 1: UNFPOS and regional codes of practice

UNFPOS	European Code of Practice - Eurostat	Código Regional de Buenas Prácticas (CRBP) - CEPAL	African Charter on Statistics - African Union	Code of Practice - ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS)
Principle 1. Official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honour citizens' entitlement to public information	Principle 11: Relevance	Principle 13: Relevance	Principle 2: Quality: Relevance Principle 2: Quality: Topicality Principle 2: Quality: Specificities Principle 4: Dissemination: Dialogue with users	C. Statistical Output. Key Principle 8. Commitment to Quality. 1. Relevance
Principle 2. Statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.	Principle 1: Professional Independence Principle 7: Sound methodology Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures	Principle 1: Professional Independence Principle 9: Sound methodology Principle 10: Adequate statistical procedures	Principle 1: Professional independence: Scientific independence	A. Institutional Environment. Key Principle 2: Professionalism and Integrity
Principle 3. To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.	Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity	Principle 7: Impartiality and objectivity	Principle 1: Professional independence: Impartiality Principle 1: Professional independence: Responsibility Principle 4: Dissemination: Simultaneity Principle 4: Dissemination: Correction	A. Institutional Environment. Key principle 4: Accountability
	Principle 15: Accessibility and Clarity	Principle 17: Accessibility and Clarity	Principle 1: Professional independence: Transparency Principle 4: Dissemination: Clarity and understanding Principle 4: Accessibility	C. Statistical Output. Key Principle 8. Commitment to Quality. 5. Accessibility
	Principle 12: Accuracy and Reliability	Principle 14: Accuracy and Reliability	Principle 2: Quality: Accuracy and reliability Principle 2: Quality Sustainability	C. Statistical Output. Key Principle 8. Commitment to Quality. 2. Reliability
Principle 4. The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.			Principle 2: Quality: Awareness-building	A. Institutional Environment. Key principle 4: Accountability
Principle 5. Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records. Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality,	Principle 2: Mandate for data collection and Access to Data Principle 3: Adequate resources Principle 10: Cost - Effectiveness	Principle 3: Mandate for data collection Principle 5: Adequate resources Principle 12: Cost-effectiveness	Principle 3: Mandate for data collection and resources: Mandate Principle 3: Mandate for data collection and resources: Resource adequacy Principle 3: Mandate for data collection and resources: Cost-effectiveness	A. Institutional Environment. Key Principle 1: Mandate for data collection B. Statistical Processes. Key Principle 6: Cost-Effectiveness and Adequacy of Resources

timeliness, costs and the burden on respondents.	Principle 4: Commitment to quality Principle 9: Non-excessive Burden on Respondents	Principle 6: Quality commitment Principle 11: Non-excessive demand of information	Principle 2: Quality: Data sources Principle 5: Protection of individual data, information sources and respondents: Rationality	B. Statistical Processes. Key Principle 7: Reduced Respondent Burden
	Principle 13: Timeliness and Punctuality	Principle 15: Timeliness and punctuality	Principle 2: Quality: Timeliness	C. Statistical Output. Key Principle 8. Commitment to Quality. 3. Timeliness
Principle 6. Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.	Principle 5: Statistical confidentiality and data protection	Principle 4: Statistical confidentiality	Principle 5: Protection of individual data, information sources and respondents: Confidentiality Principle 5: Protection of individual data, information sources and respondents: Objective	A. Institutional Environment. Key Principle 3: Confidentiality
Principle 7. The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.			Principle 5: Protection of individual data, information sources and respondents: Giving assurances to Data providers	
Principle 8. Coordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.	Principle 1bis: Coordination and Cooperation	Principle 2: Coordination of the National Statistical System	Principle 6: Coordination and cooperation: Coordination	A. Institutional Environment. Key Principle 5: Statistical Cooperation and Coordination
Principle 9. The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.	Principle 14: Coherence and comparability	Principle 16: Coherence and comparability	Principle 2: Quality: Coherence and comparability Principle 2: Quality: Continuity	C. Statistical Output. Key Principle 8. Commitment to Quality. 4. Comparability
Principle 10. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries.	Principle 1bis: Coordination and Cooperation	Principle 8: Cooperation and international participation	Principle 6: Coordination and cooperation: Co-operation	A. Institutional Environment. Key Principle 5: Statistical Cooperation and Coordination

Annex 2: Contents of Regional Peer Reviews

Institution	EUROSTAT	Grupo de Fortalecimiento CEPAL	African Union	PARIS21/ ASEAN
Name	European Statistical System Peer-reviews	Evaluaciones globales de los principios del CRBP	Peer-reviews of NSIs/NSS in African Countries	Peer-review of Lao PDR
Content of assessment	All principles of European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP)	Selected principles of Código Regional de Buenas Prácticas (CRBP)	Themes based on African Charter on Statistics or UNFPOS	17 principles, adaptation of the 10 of UNFPOS further elaborated in the 8 ACSS CoP. These change according to the country to be assessed
Principles to be assessed	Principle 1: Professional Independence	Principle 1: Professional Independence	Theme 2: Institutional environment. Issue 2.2 Professional Independence. Scientific Independence	Theme 1: Organization and management of the NSS. Sub theme: Managing the institutional environment. Pple 5: Independence, professionalism and integrity
	Principle 1bis: Coordination and Cooperation	Principle 2: Coordination of the National Statistical System	Theme 1: Organization and coordination of NSS. Issue 1.1: Composition, governance and coordination. Issue 1.2: Statistics in the National Development Policy. Issue 1.3 Strategic plan on statistics	Theme 1: Organization and management of the NSS. Sub theme: Coordination of the NSS. Pple 1: Governance of the NSS, Pple 2: Statistics in national development policy and Pple 3: Strategic plan on Statistics
		Principle 8: Cooperation and international participation		
	Principle 2: Mandate for data collection and Access to Data	Principle 3: Mandate for data collection	Theme 2: Institutional Environment: Issue 2.4: Mandate for data collection. Issue 2.1: Statistical law and other legal documents	Theme 1: Organization and management of the NSS. Sub theme: Managing the institutional environment. Pple 6: Mandate for data collection
			Theme 5: Dissemination (Issue 5.4: Access to and use of micro data)	
	Principle 5: Statistical confidentiality and data protection	Principle 4: Statistical confidentiality	Theme 2: Institutional environment. Issue 2.3: Confidentiality	Theme 1: Organization and management of the NSS. Sub theme: Managing the institutional environment. Pple 7: Confidentiality and protection of personal data
	Principle 3: Adequate resources	Principle 5: Adequate resources	Theme 2: Institutional Environment. Issue 2.5: Adequacy of Resources	Theme 1: Organization and management of the NSS. Sub theme: Managing the institutional environment. Pple 8: Adequacy of resources
	Principle 4: Commitment to quality	Principle 6: Quality commitment	Theme 3: Quality, Issue 3.5 Revision Policies. Issue 3.6 measures and practices for assuring quality of processes and outputs	Theme 3: Assuring quality of Statistical Outputs. Pple 13: Commitment to quality and 14: Quality measures
	Principle 6: Impartiality and objectivity	Principle 7: Impartiality and objectivity	Theme 2 Institutional Environment. Issue 2.2 Professional independence. Impartiality Theme 2 Institutional Environment. Issue 2.2 Professional independence. Responsibility	

		Theme 5: Dissemination. Issue 5.3 Simultaneity, pre-release access	
		Theme 3: Quality. Issue 3.4 Correction rules and practices	
Principle 13: Timeliness and Punctuality	Principle 15: Timeliness and punctuality	Theme 3: Quality. Issue 3.3 Accuracy, reliability, timeliness Theme 5: Dissemination. Issue 5.2 Application of pre-release calendar	
Principle 15: Accessibility and Clarity	Principle 17: Accessibility and Clarity	Theme 2: Institutional environment. Issue 2.2 Professional independence. Transparency	Theme 4: Dissemination, Communication and Use of Statistics. Principle 15: Accessibility, availability of data
Principle 7: Sound methodology		Theme 4: Statistical processes. Issue 4.1: use of international standards and classifications. Issue 4.2 methodological soundness	Theme 2: Managing statistical processes. Principle 9: Methodological soundness
Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures			Theme 2: Managing statistical processes. Principle 12: Appropriate statistical procedures
Principle 9: Non-excessive Burden on Respondents		Theme 4: Statistical processes. Issue 4.3 Use of Admin Data	
		Theme 3: Quality. Issue 3.1 Relevance - user relations	Theme 2: Managing statistical processes. Principle 11: Respondent burden
Principle 10: Cost - Effectiveness			Theme 2: Managing statistical processes. Principle 10: Cost-Effectiveness
Principle 11: Relevance		Theme 3: Quality. Issue 3.1 Relevance - user relations	
Principle 12: Accuracy and Reliability		Theme 3: Quality. Issue 3.3: Accuracy, reliability and timeliness	
Principle 14: Coherence and comparability		Theme 3: Quality. Issue 3.2 Coherence and Comparability	
		Theme 1: Organization and coordination of the NSS. Issue 1.4: Relationship with Stakeholders	Theme 1: Organization and management of the NSS. Sub theme: Coordination of the NSS. Pple 4: Relationship with stakeholders
			Theme 4: Dissemination, Communication and Use of Statistics. Principle 16: Communication and advocacy on statistics
			Theme 4: Dissemination, Communication and Use of Statistics. Principle 17: Use of Statistics

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