

# **Quality assurance as a tool of official statistics in the new emerging data ecosystem**

**Wednesday, 4 March 2020, 1:15 – 2:30 pm**

**Venue: Conference Room C, Conference Building**

**Organizer: Expert Group on National Quality Assurance Frameworks (EG-NQAF) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)**

In recent years, new data sources, data providers and statistics producers have emerged, fueled by technological advances and new demands for detailed and timely data for policymaking in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This new data ecosystem poses challenges and opportunities for official statistics. Quality assurance and the new United Nations National Quality Assurance Frameworks Manual for Official Statistics (*Manual*) supports countries in safeguarding the role of official statistics as a trusted source of information in a changing environment. Quality assurance is an operational and strategic tool.

## **Brief summary by UNSD**

1. UNSD briefly introduced the Manual and the work of the Expert Group which was followed by five concise presentations:
  - a. Colombia's experience in implementing statistical quality assurance instruments including a quality certification based on a national technical norm
  - b. Statistics Norway's quality reports for administrative data
  - c. Development of national quality assurance frameworks and quality assurance tools: Cameroon's experience with the technical support of STATCAN and AFRISTAT
  - d. Understanding and improving quality in the United Kingdom statistical system
  - e. Challenges and steps forward to implement and monitor quality assurance, especially in the Latin American region
2. The presentations illustrated advanced and exemplary approaches to statistical quality assurance such as (i) development and implementation of a rigorous evaluation and certification process throughout the national statistical system (Colombia), (ii) the quality assurance of statistical registers, including the correction of errors at the source, in a largely register-based statistical system (Norway), (iii) development and adoption of a national quality assurance framework (Cameroon), (iv) quality assurance in a highly decentralized statistical system based on tools, standards, accreditation, guidance and support, and with the aim to foster innovation (United Kingdom) and (v) regional cooperation on quality assurance (Colombia).
3. The subsequent Q&A session and panel discussion focused on (i) the need for the independence of any quality assessment and emphasized the usefulness of peer reviews and (ii) the step-by-step process to gain confidence and experience in the use of register data and to assure its quality. A third question focused on the use of different checklists for different statistical domains, producers, data sources and processes.

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