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## Statistical Commission

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**Items for discussion and decision: crime and criminal justice statistics**

## **Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico on crime and criminal justice statistics**

### **Note by the Secretary-General**

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2021/224 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI) on crime and criminal justice statistics, which is submitted to the Statistical Commission for discussion. The report contains a review of activities and accomplishments since 2019 on progress made to improve crime and criminal justice statistics. It presents new methodological tools, such as the new conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows, the statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as “femicide/feminicide”, and the common initiative by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on standardized Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey modules. Furthermore, it highlights initiatives undertaken to support countries to strengthen crime and criminal justice statistics also in the context of monitoring Goal 16 and describes existing challenges and future activities to be undertaken at the international level.

Action to be taken by the Commission is set out in paragraph 41.

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\* E/CN.3/2022/1.



# Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico on crime and criminal justice statistics

## I. Introduction

1. At the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission, in 2019, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported (see [E/CN.3/2019/19](#)) on the progress made on the five-year workplan submitted in 2015 by UNODC and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI) ([E/CN.3/2015/8](#)) to implement the road map to improve the quality and availability of crime and criminal justice statistics ([E/CN.3/2013/11](#)), approved by the Commission in 2013 and updated in 2019. The key future activities that will shape the third phase of implementation of the road map at the national, regional and global levels are structured around three main pillars:

- (a) Development of new methodological tools;
- (b) Promotion of capacity-building activities;
- (c) Strengthening of international data collection and analysis.

2. The Statistical Commission expressed its appreciation for the progress achieved in the implementation of the road map to improve the quality and availability of crime and criminal justice statistics at the national and international levels and endorsed the updated road map to support countries in their production of relevant data needed to monitor the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. The Statistical Commission recognized the key role of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) to improve crime and criminal justice statistics and encouraged national statistical offices to promote its implementation and to facilitate collaboration among data producers at the national level. Furthermore, it welcomed the development of new methodological tools, such as the *Manual on Corruption Surveys: Methodological Guidelines on the Measurement of Bribery and Other Forms of Corruption through Sample Surveys*.<sup>1</sup>

## II. Major achievements in the implementation of the updated road map

4. Since the Statistical Commission previously discussed crime and criminal justice statistics, there have been major achievements in this field. Of major importance is the progress made by countries in the implementation of ICCS and of national victimization surveys.

5. Since its adoption in 2015, several countries throughout the world have started to implement ICCS at the national level. According to a recent assessment, of the 45 countries that responded to a UNODC questionnaire, 60 per cent were able to produce crime data compliant with ICCS for most offences. For data produced at other levels of the criminal justice system the percentage of ICCS compliance was lower (for example, just over 50 per cent can provide ICCS-compliant data on convictions). Furthermore, several of the 45 countries produced (or reviewed) national crime classifications in line with ICCS or produced other methodological documentation to support its implementation by the various agencies. When a national focal point for ICCS implementation was identified, in the large majority of cases it was the national

<sup>1</sup> Produced jointly by UNODC, the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence and UNDP.

statistical agency. Various regional organizations have recognized or adopted ICCS in their statistical activities, including Eurostat, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the Americas. In Latin America, countries have shown a growing interest in adopting ICCS as a blueprint to develop or adapt their own national crime classifications. The UNODC-National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI) Centre of Excellence in Statistical Information on Government, Crime, Victimization and Justice has supported 10 countries which have already launched or initiated their implementation processes. In Latin America, four countries have published or reviewed their national crime classification in accordance with ICCS. Caribbean countries have also been active in terms of ICCS adoption and have either been trained or started outlining their national crime correspondence tables. In Asia and the Pacific, seven countries have begun to adopt ICCS and some Asian States have also requested ICCS mentoring workshops from the Statistics Korea (KOSTAT)-UNODC Centre of Excellence for Statistics on Crime and Criminal Justice in Asia and the Pacific.

6. The number of countries that have implemented national victimization surveys has increased, in particular in the Americas, thanks also to the continued provision of technical assistance by the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence. Victimization surveys conducted among households and businesses continue to be a best practice and a key component of crime and criminal justice statistics.

7. The following section highlights the overall achievements in crime and criminal justice statistics in the three years since 2019, when the Statistical Commission reviewed and updated the road map. The achievements are shown under the three areas of the road map: development of methodology (three standards are now submitted to the Commission), capacity-building activities and international data collection and analysis.

#### **A. Development of new methodological tools: standards methodology submitted to the Statistical Commission**

8. The activities related to the development of methodological tools envisaged in the road map submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2019 (see [E/CN.3/2019/19](#)) have all been completed or are ongoing, with some close to finalization and others just at the initial stage. This section shows the methodologies finalized and submitted to the Commission; section III shows those still ongoing.

Table 1  
**Achievements in road map implementation since 2019 (methodological tools pillar)**

<i>Methodological tools planned in the updated road map submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2019</i>	<i>Achievements by end 2021</i>	<i>Comments</i>
ICCS implementation manual	✓	Ongoing
Assessment of ICCS implementation	✓✓	
New victimization survey modules in relation to additional topics	✓	Finalized for Latin America
Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey	✓✓	Presented to the fifty-third session of the Commission

<i>Methodological tools planned in the updated road map submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2019</i>	<i>Achievements by end 2021</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Comprehensive statistical framework on gender-relevant crime statistics	✓	Statistical framework for gender-related killing submitted to the Commission
Guidelines for the measurement of illicit financial flows	✓✓	Presented to the fifty-third session of the Commission
Guidelines for the measurement of illicit financial flows in relation to additional criminal activities	✓	Ongoing
Testing and extension of survey methods for measuring trafficking in persons	✓	Ongoing
Measurement of other forms of corruption, including grand corruption	✓	First meeting of the Task Force held
Guidelines on the measurement of organized crime	✓	Finalized for Balkan countries
Assessment study on the use of big data for statistical crime analysis	✓✓	
Access to justice and efficiency of the criminal justice system: development of standard indicators based on administrative and survey data	✓	New indicator approved by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators; guidelines ongoing

*Note:* ✓ partially achieved or ongoing activity; ✓✓ fully achieved.

## 1. Conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows

9. In 2017, as co-custodians of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.1 (Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UNODC started a consultation process to develop a new conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows on the basis of inputs from a wide range of experts. After two large-scale expert consultations involving experts from national statistical offices, financial intelligence units, tax authorities, academia, international organizations, think tanks, and other crime, tax and illicit financial flows experts from 2017 to 2018, the Task Force<sup>2</sup> on the Statistical Measurement of Illicit Financial Flows was established in January 2019 to define statistical concepts, assess data availability, develop statistical methods and review country-level activities. In parallel, country pilots were launched in Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru jointly with the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, and in Nigeria and the United Republic of Tanzania jointly with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union. In 2020, the task force finalized the comprehensive conceptual

<sup>2</sup> The Task Force is composed of representatives from national statistical offices, central banks, customs or tax authorities. It also includes experts from international organizations with recognized expertise in this field. Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Statistics Division are represented, in addition to UNCTAD and UNODC.

framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows, available online on the Statistical Commission portal in a background document.<sup>3,4,5</sup>

10. Thanks to the work of the task force and its comprehensive conceptual approach to measuring illicit financial flows, the reclassification of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.1 from tier III to tier II was approved at the tenth meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.<sup>6</sup>

11. The framework is a cornerstone for illicit financial flows measurement, as it provides a standard definition of illicit financial flows for statistical purposes, a harmonized and policy-relevant typology of existing illicit financial flows, a framework based on existing statistical definitions, classifications and methodologies – taking into account the System of National Accounts, the balance of payments and other existing statistical frameworks – and a direct, bottom-up measurement approach to illicit financial flows. Based on the conceptual framework, work is ongoing within the UNCTAD-UNODC task force to develop methodological guidelines for the measurement of the various types of illicit financial flows.

## 2. Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as “femicide/feminicide”)

12. At its fiftieth session (5–8 March 2019), the Statistical Commission requested UNODC to develop a “statistical framework on gender-sensitive crime statistics, with a focus on the gender-related killing of women and girls (femicide/feminicide)” (E/CN.3/2019/19). In response to this request, UNODC partnered with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and, in 2019, launched a consultation process that led to the development of the statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as femicides or feminicides), available online on Commission portal in a background document.<sup>7</sup> The framework is in full alignment with ICCS. The joint work was implemented by the Global Centre of Excellence on Gender Statistics, the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence and the UNODC Research and Trend Analysis Branch.

13. The process built upon internationally agreed normative instruments and on previous analytical and statistical work and included:

(a) Expert inter-agency meeting held in Vienna, on 20 and 21 June 2019, with the participation of representatives from UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNODC, UN-Women, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the European Institute for Gender Equality and the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI);

(b) Online global consultation (April–July 2021) on a broad list of variables to operationalize gender-related motivations behind the killing of women and girls. The consultation was open to national institutions from all Member States (national statistical offices, law enforcement entities, national prosecutors’ offices, judiciary, public health institutions and women’s advancement and gender equality entities) and to organizations promoting women’s empowerment, academia and other relevant

<sup>3</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/>.

<sup>4</sup> Available at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/IFF/IFF\\_Conceptual\\_Framework\\_for\\_publication\\_FINAL\\_16Oct\\_print.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/IFF/IFF_Conceptual_Framework_for_publication_FINAL_16Oct_print.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-10/10th%20IAEG-SDG%20Meeting%20Report\\_14.02.2020.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/meetings/iaeg-sdgs-meeting-10/10th%20IAEG-SDG%20Meeting%20Report_14.02.2020.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/>.

international organizations. In total, 67 national institutions from 54 countries participated in the consultation and provided the inputs used to build the statistical framework on gender-related killings.

14. The new statistical framework provides a statistical definition of gender-related killings of women and girls, a list of variables that can be used to record gender-related motivations of killings and the data blocks that constitute the total number of such killings. The statistical framework also provides implementation guidance to national statistical systems. Several institutions, including entities of the criminal justice system, can be guided by the framework to record and standardize data on gender-related killings. National statistical offices have a clear role, as coordinators of national statistical systems, to support and directly implement the framework producing statistics not only on the magnitude of the killings but also on the State response to these killings.

15. The framework is aligned to the structure and definitions of ICCS and can therefore be applied by countries regardless of the national legislation on gender-related killings of women and girls.

### **3. Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey initiative**

16. The limited availability of data for measuring progress in the areas of peace, access to justice, rule of law and effective institutions constitutes a major impediment to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2021, 13 of the Sustainable Development Goal 16 indicators had a coverage below 25 per cent. In order to support countries in addressing these data gaps, UNODC, UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) joined forces in late 2019 to develop an internationally standardized and tested survey instrument whose aim was to assist countries in collecting timely and comparable data for 13 survey-based indicators under Goal 16. The Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey questionnaire is divided into six modules: access to justice, corruption, governance, discrimination, trafficking in persons and violence. The Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey instrument is designed as a flexible tool that can be adapted to national needs and can be applied either as a stand-alone population survey, or, if necessary, countries can implement selected modules as part of other ongoing survey operations.

17. To ensure sound methodology and international comparability, the Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey questionnaire has gone through a number of development steps, including review by experts, cognitive testing and pilot testing. Cognitive tests were conducted in three countries, and the methodology was successfully piloted in eight countries (Cabo Verde, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania), and these steps have significantly contributed to refining the instrument. In all countries, the piloting has been conducted by or in partnership with the national statistics office.

18. In addition to the Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey questionnaire, comprising six thematic modules and one on sociodemographic characteristics, a support package is provided that includes, inter alia, an implementation manual, a script to facilitate the development of the computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) and computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) questionnaire and a standard syntax to compute the indicators. As resources become available, the documentation will gradually be translated into several languages. The Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey tool is available online on the Statistical Commission portal in a background document.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/>.

## B. Capacity-building activities

19. All the targets of capacity-building included in the updated 2019 road map have been met, with the exception of the establishment of a centre of excellence on crime and criminal justice statistics in Africa. Despite reaching out to possible donors, UNODC was not successful in securing the resources needed.

Table 2

### Achievements in road map implementation since 2019 (capacity-building pillar)

<i>Capacity-building activities planned in the updated road map submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2019</i>	<i>Achievements by end 2021</i>
Capacity-building programme at the global level	✓✓
Capacity-building activities on ICCS implementation, victimization and corruption surveys; national reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicators	✓✓
Centres of Excellence to provide direct support to countries (upon request) for developing and implementing victimization and corruption surveys and improve administrative data	✓✓
Promote the creation of a regional centre of excellence in Africa	X

Note: ✓✓ fully achieved; X not achieved.

#### 1. Centres of excellence as effective regional hubs to deliver technical support to countries

20. Two regional centres established in partnership with national statistical agencies have had a pivotal role in supporting countries in strengthening crime and criminal justice statistics:

(a) UNODC-INEGI (National Institute for Statistics and Geography, Mexico) Centre of Excellence in Statistical Information on Government, Crime, Victimization and Justice, Mexico City, since 2011;

(b) UNODC-KOSTAT (Statistics Korea) Centre of Excellence for Statistics on Crime and Criminal Justice in Asia and the Pacific, Daejeon, since 2019.

21. The impact of their work in supporting countries in the two regions is testimony of the successful partnership model between national statistical offices and United Nations agencies, combining peer support with the promulgation of international standards.

22. Since 2019, the Centres have continued to conduct capacity-building programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Asia and the Pacific, respectively. The activities involved on-site and online training on crime victimization and corruption surveys, measurement of homicide, implementation of ICCS, upgrading of statistical quality standards for crime and criminal justice statistics and on streamlining gender in crime and criminal justice statistics. While the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had a significant impact on the organization of country-level activities, the level of interaction with national authorities and experts remained high in terms of advice and/or support for the implementation of surveys or the improvement of administrative data on crime and criminal justice. When needed, the Centres also played a central role in the development of new methodological tools, as did the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence did in relation to the statistical framework for measuring gender-related

killings of women and girls, the conceptual framework to measure illicit financial flows and the work to improve the measurement of corruption. This Centre also contributed to the chapter on safety and security of the *Handbook on Governance Statistics*, prepared by the Praia Group on Governance Statistics, and led the development of new survey modules to measure physical and sexual harassment, cybercrime and firearms possession within the framework of the Latin America and the Caribbean Crime Victimization Survey Initiative, which has been adopted by almost half of the countries in that region. Finally, it has continued to serve as the technical secretariat of the working group on public security within the ECLAC Statistical Conference of the Americas. The focus of this group for 2022 and 2023 is to map national capacity on prison statistics.

23. The Centres of Excellence have promoted and organized several activities at the regional and international level, expanding and developing partnerships with other entities, including the fifth International Conference on Governance, Crime and Justice Statistics, co-organized, in virtual format, by INEGI, KOSTAT and UNODC, and supported by both Centres of Excellence, in July 2021, which was attended by over 2,500 participants from 60 countries. In the Asia-Pacific region, the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence, with the Crime Prevention Research Institute of the Ministry of Justice of China, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Thailand Institute of Justice and UNODC, organized the third Regional Meeting on Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics: Towards Modern and Efficient Crime Statistics Systems, held in Chengdu, China, in October 2019. Through all such activities, the Centres have developed and strengthened networks of experts in various areas of crime and criminal justice and fostered the exchange of practices among national and international experts, academia, civil society organizations and the private sector.

24. With the objective of supporting countries in better mainstreaming gender into crime and criminal justice statistics, in 2020, the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence, in collaboration with the Statistical Institute for Asia and Pacific, launched an e-learning course “Crime statistics from a gender perspective”. The four-week course featured four modules on the need for mainstreaming gender into crime statistics. The UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, in partnership with ECLAC and its Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean adapted this training for the Latin American region and will launch it in January 2022.

## **2. International and regional partnerships in delivering capacity-building activities**

25. In addition to the work of the two Centres of Excellence, a number of capacity-building activities have been conducted in broad partnerships among international and regional agencies, thanks to the unifying framework provided by the 2030 Agenda and its monitoring tools. During 2020 and 2021, UNODC, UNDP, OHCHR and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) implemented four series of regional webinars to strengthen national capacities to monitor Sustainable Development Goal 16, in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and for Arabic-speaking countries in Northern Africa and Western Asia, respectively. The webinars strengthened the technical skills of representatives of national authorities and raised awareness about existing methodological and data reporting tools. They also fostered dialogue between data producers and users on existing challenges to data generation and

use Goal 16 indicators.<sup>9</sup> They were implemented with the support of the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence and the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence, and in partnership with regional organizations, such as the African Union and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, and regional Commissions (ESCAP and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)).

### 3. Other capacity-building activities

26. Other dedicated activities to support countries in producing accurate, relevant and timely crime and criminal justice statistics have been delivered by UNODC in the past three years. They included technical support to conduct corruption surveys in Nigeria and Ghana, training on victimization surveys in Kazakhstan and Bangladesh and workshops on administrative crime statistics and ICCS implementation in Uzbekistan and India. In the area of statistics and indicators to monitor organized crime, regional training was conducted to promote the collection and dissemination of relevant data by institutions in the criminal justice system in countries of the Western Balkans. A significant component of the training was on the role of ICCS in improving the quality and comparability of crime and criminal justice data in monitoring organized crime.

27. In the area of trafficking in persons, capacity-building activities on data collection, data analysis and national reporting were conducted during 2019 and 2021 in Africa, Asia and the Pacific (seven countries) and at the regional level in Africa, in partnership with the Pan-African Institute for Statistics and the African Union. Beneficiaries include criminal justice institutions, crime reporting agencies and specialized anti-trafficking agencies.

28. Support for countries in measuring illicit financial flows has been an important area of work in recent years. National statistical offices and other relevant authorities have been involved in Development Account projects implemented in Latin America (with the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence and UNODC), Africa (in partnership with ECA and UNCTAD) and Asia (with ESCAP) and have involved more than 10 countries in relation to methodologies to estimate illicit financial flows due to illegal markets such as drug trafficking, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.

## C. International data collection and analysis

Table 3

### Achievements in road map implementation since 2019 (international data collection pillar)

<i>International data collection and analysis planned in the updated road map submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2019</i>	<i>Achievements by end 2021</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Maintain regular data collection on crime and criminal justice, trafficking in persons and wildlife, including requirements for Sustainable Development Goal-related reporting	✓✓	
Strengthen national focal points for the United Nations surveys of crime trends and operations of criminal justice systems	✓	Crime trends survey activities have been reduced due to freezing of human resources

<sup>9</sup> The four regional series targeted, respectively, countries in Africa (five webinars, November–December 2020, more than 100 participants per session from 38 countries), in Latin America and the Caribbean (seven webinars, April–June 2021, approximately 500 participants per session from 27 countries), in Asia (eight webinars, September–November 2021, more than 600 participants per session from 83 countries) and in Arabic-speaking countries in Northern Africa and Western Asia (four webinars, October 2021, 130 participants from 16 countries).

<i>International data collection and analysis planned in the updated road map submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2019</i>	<i>Achievements by end 2021</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Global reports on trafficking in persons, homicide, firearms trafficking and wildlife	✓✓	
New global study on smuggling of migrants and new global data collections	✓	An observatory on smuggling of migrants has been established for West and North Africa
Global reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals related to crime and criminal justice	✓✓	
Comprehensive dissemination strategy for crime and criminal justice data, including for reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals	✓✓	New data portal developed; new series of analytical briefs launched

*Note:* ✓ partially achieved or ongoing activity; ✓✓ fully achieved.

## 1. International data collections

29. The United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS), the most comprehensive global data collection on crime and criminal justice, continues to be the backbone for global and regional analyses on crime trends and on the functioning of criminal justice systems, collecting country data used for global monitoring of several Sustainable Development Goal indicators in the areas of violence, rule of law, access to justice and corruption. It continues to be a tool for promoting statistical coordination at the national level among data producers and for providing guidance on key data and indicators. The Survey is based on a system of national focal points and, where possible, UNODC manages it in partnership with regional organizations: currently Eurostat and OAS for Europe and the Americas, respectively. In several countries, national statistical offices play an important role in coordinating this exercise as an important practice for harmonizing and improving the quality of data in the area of crime and criminal justice. Specialized global data collections are conducted every year also on trafficking in persons, on firearms trafficking and, through the Secretariat to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), on illicit trafficking in protected species. These data collections are used to produce global analytical reports at the international level and for the global monitoring of the relevant Goal.

30. UNODC flagship analytical reports produced in recent years on the basis of the data collections mentioned above include the *Global Study on Homicide* (2019), the *Global Study on Firearms Trafficking* (2020), the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (2020) and the *World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in Protected Species* (2020). *Data Matters* is a new series launched by UNODC in 2021 to foster the use of data through short data-driven knowledge products on specific policy issues. In the second half of 2021, three briefs were produced as part of this new line on prison population, selected targets of Sustainable Development Goal 16 and on gender-based killings of women and girls.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> UNODC analytical reports are available at: [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/index.html); data matters issues are available at: [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/data-matters.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/data-matters.html).

## 2. Big data

31. In order to address significant data gaps, both in terms of coverage and timeliness, the use of big data on selected illegal activities has been tested since 2020 by UNODC. More specifically, research on illicit trafficking has expanded in content and methodologically through the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning to track illicit global trafficking events such as seizures of drugs and of falsified medical products related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This type of approach can generate real-time data, which are needed to improve understanding of the transnational dimensions of crime and enable Member States to monitor the extent of certain forms of trafficking by producing rapid pictures of emerging and evolving threats. These methods require a combination of expertise and the establishment of a significant and secure information technology infrastructure<sup>11</sup> but can deliver important results in terms of coverage, timeliness and granularity of information.<sup>12</sup> A different, but connected, area of work relates to harvesting data from dark web marketplaces, which represent a component of illicit drug markets. Partnerships with specialized private sector entities have been explored with a view to accessing these data sources.

## III. Key ongoing development of standards and tools

### 1. Statistical framework for the measurement of corruption

32. In recent years, important improvements have been made on the measurement of corruption, also triggered by the inclusion of two relevant indicators in the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring framework (indicators 16.5.1 and 16.5.2). In 2018, the *Manual on Corruption Surveys* was published and welcomed by the Statistical Commission. These standards cover the measurement of some but not all forms of corruption, and the need for additional methodological developments to produce a comprehensive framework to measure corruption was acknowledged in the 2019 road map. In addition, at its eighth session in December 2018, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, requested UNODC to develop a “comprehensive, scientifically sound and objective framework” to measure corruption.<sup>13</sup>

33. In order to address these requests, and following the Task Force established to develop the *Manual on Corruption Surveys*, a second Task Force on the Measurement of Corruption was launched in mid-2021 to develop a statistical framework for measuring corruption, grounded in objective methodologies and reliable data sources. The new Task Force had its first meeting in July 2021 and is planning to continue its work in 2022. Members of the Task Force include experts from national statistical offices, anti-corruption agencies, international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and UNDP and academia. It is expected that the final product will provide guidance for countries to strengthen their national information systems, the quality and availability of data

<sup>11</sup> A series of artificial intelligence procedures centred around machine learning modelling are needed to produce good quality data by extracting, standardizing and de-duplicating information harvested from the Internet. Targeted automation processes are also critical in order to analyse text-based data efficiently and process the vast quantity of unstructured data that are generated on a daily basis.

<sup>12</sup> A series of publications based on real-time data to assess the impact of COVID-19 on various illegal markets is available at: [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/coronavirus.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/coronavirus.html).

<sup>13</sup> See resolution 8/10, entitled “Measurement of corruption”, adopted by the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption at its eighth session, held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 December 2019.

on corruption and will define analytical approaches to understanding corruption and its interlinkages with other social and economic challenges. A pilot phase of corruption measurement is expected to be conducted in volunteer countries during 2022 and 2023.

## 2. Standards on the recording and maintenance of criminal justice data

34. The production of data on the functioning of the criminal justice system and of its accessibility is central to Sustainable Development Goal target 16.3 (“promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all”). Given the heterogeneity of criminal justice systems across the world and the multidimensional nature of the rule of law and delivery of justice (concerning issues such as accessibility, capability, efficiency and effectiveness) there is a great need to develop harmonized concepts and frameworks that can guide national statistical systems in the collection and harmonization of data on issues such as the efficiency of criminal procedures, access to and provision of legal aid, the use of non-custodial sentences and the outcome of criminal proceedings. In recent years some advances have been made in conceptualizing relevant metrics and promoting the implementation of statistical tools<sup>14</sup> but many gaps still remain. With the aim of supporting countries to foster the implementation of ICCS at the various levels of the criminal justice system and to increase the relevance and comparability of criminal justice data, UNODC has started to conceptualize a manual to guide the various entities of the criminal justice system (law enforcement, prosecutorial and judicial agencies, prison administration) to effectively record, store, manage and disseminate consistent data. Such methodological guidance would comprise a statistical framework to operationalize the dimensions of justice functioning (including accessibility, capability, efficiency and effectiveness) and will provide standard concepts for harmonizing data at the various stages of the process by the different entities of the criminal justice systems.

## 3. Standards to improve measurement of trafficking in persons

35. While the collection of data on detected victims of trafficking in person is gradually improving, the production of metrics on the undetected share of victims remains a challenge, and information on the actual magnitude of trafficking in persons remains unknown. One promising statistical approach to estimate the total number of victims (detected and undetected) is the multiple systems estimation methodology.<sup>15</sup> In order to support countries in using such methodology, UNODC is developing a manual on its implementation, due for publication in 2022, in cooperation with national, international and academic experts. Other ongoing initiatives to develop standards that can support countries in improving trafficking in persons statistics are: the development of a standardized survey module to measure trafficking in persons related to forced labour (see section II.A.3, on the Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey initiative); the development of statistical tools to estimate the number of trafficking victims for the purpose of forced labour in the fishing industry, jointly

<sup>14</sup> In 2020, an additional Sustainable Development Goal indicator on access to justice was included in the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring framework (indicator 16.3.3 on access to civil justice). In 2019, the report on *Legal Needs Surveys and Access to Justice* (Paris, OECD, 2019) provided guidance on the implementation of surveys on the experience of legal disputes by citizens. In 2020, a dedicated chapter of the *Handbook on Governance Statistics*, produced by the Praia Group, provided a valuable overview of different data sources and their possible contribution to measuring various aspect of access to justice.

<sup>15</sup> The methodology makes use of administrative records on trafficking victims kept by national authorities and non-governmental organizations; through a capture-recapture statistical technique it can produce national estimates on total numbers of victims of trafficking (detected and undetected). See [https://www.unodc.org/documents/research/UNODC-DNR\\_research\\_brief.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/research/UNODC-DNR_research_brief.pdf).

undertaken by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNODC; and the development of a manual on administrative statistics on trafficking in persons to be jointly finalized by IOM and UNODC.

#### 4. Operational manuals to strengthen illicit financial flows measurement

36. The conceptual framework for the measurement of illicit financial flows has laid the foundation for the production of standardized illicit financial flows estimates, but more operational guide is needed for countries to implement it. Based on pilot studies conducted in countries of Latin America,<sup>16</sup> in accordance with the 2019 road map, UNODC is developing methodological guidelines on the production of estimates of illicit financial flows related to selected illegal markets (i.e., drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants).<sup>17</sup> Further country-level activities are being led by UNCTAD and UNODC, jointly with ECA and ESCAP – in Africa and Asia respectively – to conduct further testing of methodologies to produce estimates of illicit financial flows also in relation to additional illegal markets, such as wildlife trafficking and smuggling of counterfeit products.

#### 5. Guidelines to support the implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes

37. Member States have made significant efforts to adopt ICCS or align their national crime classifications thereto.<sup>18</sup> However, they face various challenges at the methodological, operational and organizational level. Resource constraints also play a role in the adaptation of their data collection systems. In order to address the technical and operational challenges, UNODC is planning to develop additional tools to foster ICCS implementation at the country level and to raise awareness about the added value of ICCS among relevant stakeholders in countries:

(a) Manual to implement ICCS. The manual will provide technical guidance to countries on the process of adapting crime and criminal justice statistics and enhance their capacity to produce data to monitor and understand crime. The manual will provide suggestions on different pathways to ICCS implementation, to accommodate countries with different data production systems, and detailed guidance on operationalizing definitions of criminal offences and disaggregating variables. A series of case studies showcasing countries' experiences in ICCS implementation will also be included;

(b) Guide on information technology requirements for implementing ICCS. The possibility of improving or standardizing administrative statistics on crime and criminal justice relies heavily on the adaptability and interoperability of information technology infrastructures and procedures in place, and the heterogeneity of data produced by the different institutions involved in the criminal justice system must also be taken into account. While the Guide will not be prescriptive on the information technology technological solutions for recording, processing and sharing information, it will provide broad guidance on the minimal information technology requirements needed to produce ICCS-compliant data by the various institutions in the criminal justice system;

<sup>16</sup> See presentation of results at [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/meeting-25-march-latin-america.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/meeting-25-march-latin-america.html).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> In Latin America and the Caribbean, the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence has actively supported more than 20 countries in their ICCS implementation process. Since its establishment, the UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence has also supported ICCS implementation in countries in Asia.

(c) ICCS mobile and web-based application. Implementation of ICCS needs to be a dynamic process as statistical procedures need to adapt to fast-changing contexts, regulations and processes. As a repository of ICCS implementation practices, the application will provide a dynamic and intuitive platform for practitioners to easily consult ICCS definitions and facilitate the allocation of national data into the ICCS categories. The application will serve as an easy-to-access alternative to the print or downloadable version of the classification.

## IV. Conclusions and way forward

38. Great progress has been made in improving crime and criminal justice statistics in areas identified in the road map first approved by the Statistical Commission in 2013, and later updated in 2019. Important gains are visible, for example, in terms of the increased number of countries conducting national victimization surveys and implementing ICCS. The role of the national statistical office has in many countries become more prominent in the coordination of crime statistics systems, and more data are available today at the national, regional and global level on crime and criminal justice than in 2013. A stronger political will on the part of countries and national statistical offices to prioritize crime statistics, in particular in the Americas, has contributed to these achievements, together with the important role of the two Centres of Excellence and the improved focus on technical assistance on crime and criminal justice statistics of UNODC, together with UNDP, OHCHR, UN-Women, IOM, ILO and regional commissions. However, gaps remain in terms of geographical regions (such as Africa, where crime statistics are chronically underdeveloped and inadequate to inform policies), granularity of data (as national statistics often cannot provide the details on victims, perpetrators and forms of crime to support prevention policies) and thematic areas where some forms of crime and criminal justice processes still lack standards and operational guidelines.

39. There are still major challenges remaining in crime and criminal justice statistics in terms of developing standards, strengthening and modernizing national systems and ensuring prioritization and adequate allocation of resources for improving these statistics. Crime is in constant evolution, criminal groups are very opportunistic and agile in changing *modi operandi*, illicit markets and crime typologies. For crime and criminal justice statistics to remain at the heart of decision-making, they need to be very timely in order to monitor changes while they happen. They also need to be able to describe the complexity of the crime and criminal justice landscape and offer the granularity needed to understand for example, criminal and socioeconomic context, geography and criminal dynamics.

40. The sudden change in criminal activities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need to have real-time and more refined data on crime and has shown the urgent need to modernize national crime and criminal justice statistical systems. The lessons learned from the disruption experienced in the statistical production line due to COVID-19 can also help in the design of systems that are more resilient to shocks and are better fitted to monitor fast changes. The following is a list of overarching actions to be considered by the Statistical Commission to guide the work at the international level on crime and criminal justice statistics for the next three years, clustered around the three areas of the road map. A workplan for the implementation of these activities is included in the Annex.

### *Development of methodological tools*

(a) Finalize the ongoing work in developing international standards on corruption measurement, ICCS implementation, trafficking in persons and on the

operationalization of the illicit financial flows statistical framework. It is important to continue to scan the evolving nature of crime and criminal justice to ensure that new policy needs are met with new statistical standards and evolving capacity of countries to respond to these needs. There is still growing demand for information on crimes such as cybercrime, financial crime and environmental crime, for which there is little statistical development;

#### *Capacity-building*

(b) Continue to support countries in implementing the backbone of national crime and criminal justice statistical systems: ICCS and nationally designed victimization surveys while also introducing countries to the newly developed statistical frameworks on illicit financial flows and gender-related killings of women and girls. Training programmes on all crime and criminal justice statistical areas, in particular on rule of law and access to justice, conventional crime, organized crime, corruption, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and other forms of trafficking and illegal activities, remain an important component of technical assistance. The successful inter-agency cooperation in the delivery of training on monitoring Sustainable Development Goal 16 shows the benefit of continuing the establishment of strong partnerships among international organizations in supporting countries, in particular in relation to Goal indicators, also supporting national statistical offices in fulfilling their coordination role. Innovative ways of delivering technical assistance, beyond the current hybrid meeting formats, are to be explored to increase audience engagement in learning and improve the operational results of traditional training;

(c) Support countries in modernizing crime and criminal justice statistical system by improving information technology systems; identifying solutions that can improve the timeliness of data and provide real-time information and increase the granularity of data; tapping on big data solutions to maximize the knowledge that can be extracted from available data; improving visualization and communication of statistics to make them more accessible and ultimately more used by policymakers. The modernization of national crime and criminal justice statistics requires further investments in adequate infrastructure, as well as solid coordination and governance arrangements to collect, collate, analyse, share and disseminate data, ensuring a continuous flow in which users can find valid, easy-to-use and updated information;

(d) Continue to build on the successful role of the two Centres of Excellence in Latin America and Asia to provide direct technical assistance to countries in these regions and establish a centre of excellence on crime and criminal justice statistics in Africa to support countries in the region to strengthen their capacity to collect, process and disseminate crime and criminal justice statistics. Africa remains the region where data gaps are most acute despite the high demand due to crime and criminal justice issues having a strong impact on development and security there. The successful model of the two existing Centres of Excellence suggests that such a centre could make a great difference in upgrading the level and quality of crime statistics in the region;

(e) Promote the integration of crime statistical and geospatial information systems, in particular at the subnational and urban level, where the geographical and criminological granularity of information is most needed, to identify hot spots for criminal groups and illicit markets and to understand local criminal dynamics that affect subpopulation groups such as women, children and minority groups. In this context, there is also value in integrating citizen-driven data collection. Local safety audits have shown the great power of triangulating statistical, geospatial and citizen-driven data;

(f) Undertake an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on crime and criminal justice statistics worldwide to identify the challenges faced by countries and learn how to best support them to overcome these challenges, looking also at opportunities to rebuild systems better.

(g) Continue the regular biennial Conference on Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics and, if the COVID-19 pandemic allows, have the two Centres of Excellence and UNODC organize the sixth conference in late 2022;

*International data collection and analysis*

(h) Innovate tools and methods for data exchange at the regional and international level through user-friendly data exchange platforms that can facilitate national coordination and data exchange to reduce countries' reporting burden and strengthen quality assurance;

(i) Continue the production of analytical reports such as the *Global Study on Homicide* and of data-driven briefs that can quickly respond to emerging demands for data on specific crime and criminal justice policy areas;

(j) Improve the accessibility of global and regional crime and criminal justice statistics by applying open data standards and improving data visualization and communication;

(k) Continue the use of big data to complement traditional statistics with real-time information that can alert the international community to quickly emerging criminal threats;

(l) Strengthen the network of focal points for the United Nations surveys of crime trends and operations of criminal justice systems and the Technical Advisory Group on International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes to ensure that national experts are regularly consulted and can benefit from peer exchange and that ICCS implementation is monitored and supported by regular consultations.

## V. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission

### 41. The Commission may wish to:

(a) Review and approve the proposed set of activities and workplan to continue the implementation of the road map as approved by the Commission in 2013 and updated in 2019;

(b) Review and approve the statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (also referred to as "femicide/feminicide") and invite national statistical systems to start the implementation thereof and produce relevant data;

(c) Review and approve the conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows and invite national statistical systems to start activities for the measurement of illicit financial flows, including through pilot studies in selected areas;

(d) Welcome and invite countries to use the Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey developed by UNDP, UNODC and OHCHR as an instrument to measure progress on Goal 16 indicators related to access to justice, corruption, discrimination, governance, human trafficking and violence; and encourage Member States and donors to support the financing and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 16 survey by national statistical offices to

significantly improve the availability and quality of survey-based Goal 16 indicators;

(e) Review the key activities to modernize and strengthen crime and criminal justice statistics from 2022 to 2025 set out in the present document and encourage their implementation in line with the road map approved by the Commission in 2013 and updated in 2019;

(f) Acknowledge the successful model of the Centres of Excellence as effective partnerships between national statistical offices and United Nations agencies to support countries in the area of crime and criminal justice statistics, and invite UNODC to define a new partnership for the establishment of a centre of excellence to support countries in Africa;

(g) Invite national statistical offices to lead the implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes at the country level;

(h) Invite UNODC to consider reviewing the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends to strengthen its capacity to provide timely data, strengthen the data used to monitor Sustainable Development Goals, monitor emerging crimes at the international level and increase data collection efficiency through an online data platform;

(i) Encourage Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary funds to enhance the ability of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to implement capacity-building activities;

(j) Invite the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and both Centres of Excellence to organize the sixth International Conference on Governance, Crime and Justice Statistics in 2022;

(k) Request the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in consultation with all relevant international and regional organizations, to report back to the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on the progress achieved in implementing the road map in 2025.

**Annex**

**Key activities to modernize and strengthen crime and criminal justice statistics from 2022 to 2025 in line with the road map to improve the quality and availability of crime and criminal justice statistics at the national and international levels**

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Actors</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Implemented with existing resources</i>	<i>Implemented if additional resources are available</i>
<b>Development of international standards and tools</b>				
Statistical framework for the measurement of corruption	UNODC	2022–2023		✓
Standards on recording and maintenance of criminal justice data	UNODC	2022–2023		✓
Standards to improve measurement of trafficking in persons	UNODC, ILO, IOM	2022	✓	
Operational manuals to strengthen measurement of illicit financial flows	UNCTAD, UNODC	2022–2024		✓
Guidelines to support the implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes	UNODC, UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence	2022–2025	✓	✓
Statistical standards for emerging crimes such as cybercrime and environmental crime	UNODC	2022–2025		✓
<b>Capacity-building</b>				
Continue to build on the successful role of the two Centres of Excellence in Latin America and Asia to provide direct technical assistance	UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence	2022–2025	✓	✓
Centre of excellence in Africa	UNODC and African regional statistical bodies	2022–2025		✓
Capacity-building, thematic initiatives and initiatives aimed at modernizing national statistical systems, including by integrating statistical and geospatial information systems	UNODC, UNDP, OHCHR, UNESCO	2022–2025		✓
Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on crime and criminal justice statistics	UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence, UNODC	2022		✓

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Actors</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Implemented with existing resources</i>	<i>Implemented if additional resources are available</i>
Strengthening of Crime Trends Survey focal points and of the Technical Advisory Group on International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes	UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence, UNODC	2022–2025		✓
<b>International data collection and analysis</b>				
Strengthen international data collections	UNODC	2022–2025	✓	✓
Continue to explore alternative data sources, real-time data and transnational dimensions of crime	UNODC	2022–2025		✓
Analytical products: <i>Global Study on Homicide, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, World Wildlife Crime Report, Global Study on Environmental Crime</i> and various editions of <i>Data Matters</i>	UNODC	2022–2023	✓	✓
Continue the biennial Conference on Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics	UNODC, UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence	2022–2025		✓
Improve accessibility, visualization and communication of global crime and criminal justice statistics	UNODC	2022–2025	✓	
<b>Strengthen international partnerships</b>				
Strengthen data focal points networks	UNODC, UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence	2022–2025	✓	✓
Organize international and regional conferences and workshops	UNODC, UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence in partnership with ECLAC and UNODC-KOSTAT Centre of Excellence in partnership with ESCAP	2022, 2024		✓

Note: ✓ partially achieved or ongoing activity.