APPROVED: IPSAS Adoption Steering Committee Meeting

Video Conference, Friday, 25 January 2008

9:00 am – 10:30 am (New York)

1  Introduction, Agenda and Minutes

1. Mr. Jayantilal Karia welcomed the Steering Committee Members. The meeting’s agenda was confirmed.

2. Minutes from previous meeting: some errors in the attendance list were corrected; the minutes will be posted on the website as soon as possible.

**Action point(s):**

- Revise minutes from previous meeting and post on website.

2  Review of Action Points List and Priority Deliverables Report

3. In the absence of Ms. Jensen, Ms. Stewart reviewed the action points list. Noting that most of the items were completed, she focused on the three items still in progress.

4. Item 3: A planned meeting with ICAO to deal with issues surrounding technical cooperation projects that had been raised in the context of the consolidation project was deferred on request of ICAO. It may be rescheduled on Ms. Jensen’s return if still required.

5. Item 8: This item will be discussed at the Task Force meeting. A briefing note has been drafted and is currently being reviewed and discussed further. It will be posted to the website, possibly as early as the week following the Steering Committee meeting.

6. Item 9: Requests have been received from IMO and UNESCO to share the draft FRRs of the UN and its funds and programmes. Mr. Karia is aware that the information should be shared as soon as possible but the Chair of that Task Force feels it is premature to do so. Items affected by IPSAS have been flagged to ensure they are taken into consideration. The current draft is with the legal department whose review is expected to take a couple of months. WHO has recently shared its draft FRRs with the UN working group.

7. Progress Report: Accounting Guidance: The paper on Transitional Provisions was posted January 24 and the paper on Foreign Exchange is expected to be posted on January 25 after comments are provided by an external reviewer. The work on Intangibles has been broken into three separate papers, two of which are being finalized for this Task Force meeting and should be posted by the January 29 deadline. It was noted that while progress on guidance papers is slower than anticipated this is due to the fact that they address follow-on issues and the team is consulting more widely to ensure the issues raised are fully covered.

8. Support for Early Adopters: The survey is at a very early stage and is not currently a high priority item.

9. Training: Good progress has been made since the last Steering Committee meeting. Procurement Division completed the financial evaluation of bids, expedited approval was requested and the case was presented to HCC on January 17. HCC approved the recommendation of award. The minutes of the HCC meeting are expected to be sent to the Controller’s Office by the end of January; until signed by the Controller, the contract
is not official and details of the winning bidder cannot be revealed. We expect to be able to provide these details by the next Steering Committee meeting.

10. Other deliverables: A reminder regarding the deadline (first week of February) for the IPSAS progress report checklists will be sent to the Task Force. The IPSAS System Wide Team had been working on allocating responsibilities regarding each organization.

11. Mr. Karia emphasized that focus groups should be meeting to discuss papers already posted. With the change in procedures, focus groups will provide only one set of comments. It will be helpful in the lead-up to the Task Force meeting to get these comments back to the system-wide team as soon as possible.

12. Consolidation sub-project: Mr. Warren described recent communications with Deloitte which indicate that a new draft report and four analyses are expected to be delivered before the end of January. Both UNDP and the UN raised concerns about the lack of consultation and communication with Deloitte. UNDP is coordinating a teleconference with Deloitte to include the UN and the funds and programmes that is tentatively scheduled for Feb. 8. Mr. Karia encouraged UNDP to do whatever was necessary to meet earlier to avoid the possibility that delivery of the Deloitte report would be further delayed. It was also suggested that the issues be documented and provided to Deloitte prior to the teleconference.

13. Once a satisfactory product is received, the next steps will be testing of the guidance on IMO and presentation to the Task Force for validation.

**Action point(s):**

- None

3 Auditors:

14. Recent communications with the Chair of the Technical Group of the Panel of External Auditors and a letter from the Chair of the Panel to the UN Secretary-General were discussed. The reluctance of the auditors to express a collective view and the suggestion that a harmonized approach to accounting policies may not be desirable were highlighted as issues. Mr. Whiting wondered whether this might be an indication that auditors may have different interpretations of IPSAS. There may also be a danger that governing bodies or donors could influence the way accounting policies are developed if they do not agree.

15. In his letter to the incoming Chair of the Technical Group, Mr. Karia noted that the three issues that had already been referred appeared to meet the criteria for collective Technical Group review. He also emphasized that the approach taken by the Task Force on Accounting Standards was seen as a very positive move in the context of Delivering as One.

16. It was noted that the letter from the Panel mentions annual audit and Mr. Karia shared that he had received a question on this matter following his presentation to the Panel in December. The Task Force has agreed to recommend annual audits and it is now up to organizations to take this recommendation to their governing bodies¹.

17. It was reminded that the NAO booklet on IPSAS Preparing for Audit was on the CEB website.

**Action point(s):**
- None

4 **Draft Task Force meeting agenda**

18. It was noted that the meeting will be taking place on February 26 and 27 and not February 27-28. The start time has been set for 8.30 am (14:30 in Europe).

19. Clarification was requested on why Items 8 and 9 on the Accounting Guidance Workplan (publications and in-kind donations) were not included in the agenda. These papers are still at a relatively early draft stage and will not be ready for posting by the deadline to enable focus group review. Since slots for the Task Force meeting have already been filled, these papers will be covered at the next Task Force meeting.

20. Consolidation was excluded from the agenda since it is unsure that an acceptable paper will be received in time. If the paper is issued and is ready to be discussed, with the earlier start time there is scope to find a slot during one of the two days for at least an hour discussion. Mr. Karia will note this possibility in his message to the Task Force.

**Action point(s):**
- Send out the Task Force meeting agenda early the week following the Steering Committee.

5 **Other Business**

21. It was decided to have monthly Steering Committee meetings, at least until July 2008. The meeting dates are: February 22, March 19, April 16, May 14, June 11 and July 16.

22. Dates for the proposed face-to-face Task Force meeting will have to be firmed up shortly for planning purposes. June 30 – July 2 had been suggested earlier after alternate dates in June were found to conflict with various governing body and other meetings.

23. Mr. Whiting suggested that the face-to-face meeting would present a good opportunity to pause for a review of where the project is at to make sure there is impetus going forward. This could include a look at the TORs of the project, an assessment of progress, harmonization issues, and progress on discussions with the external auditors. Mr. Karia agreed, adding that governance issues and Chairmanship of the Task Force would need to be addressed as agenda items.

**Action point(s):**
- Set up dates and location for a face-to-face Task Force meeting.
- Include as an agenda item for the face-to-face meeting a mid-project review.
United Nations
IPSAS Adoption Project Steering Committee

Video-conference, Friday 25 January 2008
9.00 am to 10.15 am (New York time)

Draft Agenda

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
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| 9.00 – 9.15 | 1) a) Introduction, draft agenda  
            b) Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting |
|             | 1) a) Draft Steering Committee agenda (provided)  
            1) b) Draft minutes (provided) |
| 9.15 – 9.25 | 2) Review of actions list and priority deliverables report including:  
            - Procurement of IPSAS training  
            - Consolidation sub-project with Deloitte |
|             | 2) a) Action list (provided)  
            2) b) Priority deliverables report (provided)  
            2) c) Status report on training procurement (provided) |
| 9.25 - 9.40 | 3) Auditors: letters from Technical Group to Task Force Chair and to UN Secretary-General |
|             | 3) a) Letter from Technical Group to Task Force Chair  
            3) b) Letter from Panel to UN Secretary-General  
            3) c) Welcome letter to new Chair of Technical Group |
| 9.40 – 10.00| 4) Draft Task Force Agenda |
|             | 4) a) Draft Task Force Agenda |
| 10.00 - 10.15| 5) Other Business (Dates for 2008 Meetings) |
|             | 5) a) List of possible dates |
IPSAS Project Steering Committee

Chairman

Mr. Jayantilal Karia (UN)

New York:

Ms. Clair Jones (UNICEF), Member

Ms. Diane Kepler (UNDP), Alternate (Apologies)

Geneva:

Mr. Mark Warren (WHO), Acting Member

Ms. Aurora Mendoza-Goudstikker (UNHCR)

Mr. Nicholas Jeffreys (WHO), Alternate (Apologies)

Rome:

Mr. Eric Whiting (WFP), Member

Mr. David Bowen (FAO), Alternate (Apologies)

Vienna:

Mr. Gary Eidet (IAEA), Member

Ms. Amita Misra (UNIDO), Alternate (Apologies)

External (London):

Mr. Mike Hathorn (MooreStephens UK and IPSASB) (Apologies)

In attendance:

New York

Ms. Gwenda Jensen (Project leader, CEB) (Apologies)

Mr. Alan Vandermolen (CEB Project Team)

Ms. Sandra Stewart (CEB Project Team)

Ms. Sarah Belmir (UN/CEB Project Team)

Mr. Advit Nath (UNDP)

Ms. Donna Favorito (UNICEF)

Ms. Unis (Valencia) Williams-Baker (UN)

Vienna

Ms. Mija Jeon (IAEA)

M. Andrew Saberton (UNIDO)

Ms. Kashfia Mansur, (UNIDO)

Ms. Hua Bian, (UNIDO)

Geneva

Mr. Remo Lalli (FB Network, CEB)

Ms. Marie Jose Bofill (UNHCR) (Apologies)

Mr. Moeen Arbid (WHO)

Rome

Mr. Daniel Bato (WFP)