



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Unitar Online Catalogue

OECD/STATEC/UNITAR: Statistics, Knowledge and Policy: Understanding Societal Change

Type:	Course
Location:	Web-based
Date:	1 Mar 2010 to 2 Apr 2010
Duration:	5 Weeks
Programme Area:	Public Finance and Trade
Website:	http://www.unitar.org/pft/elearning/oecd
Price:	\$800.00
Event Focal Point Email:	progress@unitar.org
Partnership:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

BACKGROUND

We all know now that real progress of a society or nation goes beyond just the quantitative assessment of gross domestic product. Progress has different meanings across different societies and what is important in one society may vary across societies. In an intertwined and globalized world like ours, it is thus essential to undertake a holistic debate about these issues with a view to learning from each other and to improve the overall well-being of our societies in ways that we consider as important and relevant for us. This course has been developed jointly by the OECD-hosted Global Project on Measuring the Progress

of Societies and UNITAR. The underlying aim of the course is to foster the development of sets of key economic, social and environmental indicators to provide a comprehensive picture of how the well-being of a society is evolving. This course and its online discussion forum will also act as a catalyst to encourage each participant to consider, in an informed way, the crucial questions: Is life getting better? Is our obsession with gross domestic product to measure progress of a society unhealthy and misleading? This course also seeks to encourage the use of indicator sets to inform and promote evidence-based decision-making, within and across the public, private and citizen sectors. Last but not least, it is our hope that this course will create a greater awareness of the importance of statistics for democracy and democratic decision-making; provide measures of progress that go “beyond GDP”; bring forth tools to transform statistics into knowledge, evidence, civic engagement and policy making.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, the participants should be able to:

- Recognize the role of statistics in the democratic decision making process;
- Demonstrate that progress of societies can be measured beyond GDP;
- Compare the meaning of 'well being' across societies;
- Describe the different ways to think about progress and to measure progress; and
- Discuss how to turn statistics into knowledge.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The course consists of the following four modules:

- Module 1: General introduction to Measuring the Progress of Societies
- Module 2: What to measure: progress and its dimensions
- Module 3: How to measure progress
- Module 4: Ensuring that measures are used

METHODOLOGY

In order to ensure the best possible outreach, the course will be delivered through e-learning. Through a multiple-instructional setting, the goal is to achieve the learning objectives by means of learning technologies that match personal learning styles and by the inclusion of non-linear learning that aims at the development of just-in-time skills of adult learners. At the same time, in order to allow participants maximum flexibility of scheduling, the learning will be conducted in an asynchronous manner. Using a state-of-the-art training architecture, UNITAR will combine self-learning with assessments and online discussions. The pedagogy - adapted specifically to professionals in full-time work - will help train participants through various experiences: absorb (read); do (activity); interact (socialize); reflect (relate to one's own reality).

TARGETED AUDIENCE

This course is aimed at all those who have an interest in increasing the use of evidence in public debate and policy making, either in the developed or developing world. The target audience will include:

- Researchers (economists and statisticians) who want to learn methods to measure overall societal progress and its multiple dimensions;
- Practitioners (from national and local governments, NGOs, etc.) who want to know how to implement progress initiatives;
- Policy makers with an interest in developing, or using, sets of progress measures to improve decision making; and
- Media and others who want to communicate information to citizens.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A certificate of completion will be issued jointly by UNITAR, STATEC and OECD to all participants who complete the course-related assignments and assessments successfully.