Technical assistance to the Namibia Statistics Agency for the development of pilot Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts

21– 25 October 2024 | Windhoek, Namibia

Technical Assistance Report

Contents

Summary

1. Objective of the technical assistance mission

In response to an official request from the *Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)* for assistance in developing Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts (EW-MFA), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) organized a five-day technical assistance mission. This mission was held from 21 October to 25 October 2024, in Windhoek, Namibia.

The mission was part of the Statistics and Data project "Resilient and Agile National Statistical Systems to Meet Post-COVID-19 Data Needs to Recover Better". This project is supported by the 14th tranche of the United Nations Development Account (DA14 project) and aims to enhance the capacity of national statistical systems (NSS) in selected countries to provide high-quality, timely, and relevant data for post-COVID-19 recovery efforts. It also aims to enhance the resilience and agility of NSS in beneficiary countries to respond to emerging economic, social and environmental data needs in times of crises and disasters through the use of innovative data sources, advance data acquisition methods and modern technologies, while ensuring a path towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Specifically, the DA14 project is supporting several countries to strengthen the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) at the national level with a focus on Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts (EW-MFA) and the calculation of relevant indicators under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 and 12. These indicators are critical for assessing progress towards sustainable economic growth, resource efficiency, and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The main objective of the mission was to enhance the technical capacity of the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) in developing pilot Economy-Wide Material Flow Accounts (EW-MFA). This objective involved:
- A presentation by the NSA on the current status of data collection, data availability, and identification of data gaps.
- Engaging key stakeholders by collaborating with relevant institutions, including government ministries, agencies, and organizations involved in data collection and environmental accounting.
- Providing technical assistance through support and capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening Namibia's ability to understand and compile EW-MFA.
- Developing a pilot EW-MFA for a specific year, which could serve as a model for subsequent years.

2. Participants

A total of 9 participants, including 3 females and 6 males, participated in the meetings during the technical assistance. Of these, 7 participants were from NSA, while 2 participants represented government ministries and other agencies in Namibia.

The list of participants is available in Annex 1.

3. Outline of the workshop

The five-day face-to-face workshop commenced with an opening meeting between the NSA Sub-Division of Trade and Environment team Ezekiel N.Kambonde and Leonard Tukondjere, and the consultant from UNEP Mónica Luz Ureña. Mónica Luz provided a comprehensive overview of the mission's objectives, followed by a brief discussion on the mission's agenda.

Mónica Luz then introduced the EW-MFA framework to the NSA Trade and Environment Sub-Division team, explaining the methodological tools and resources available to support EW-MFA calculations. Following this, Ezekiel N. Kambonde, officer of the NSA Sub-Division of Trade and Environment, presented the current status of EW-MFA in Namibia, covering data sources, data availability and existing data gaps.

Two additional meetings were held with representatives from the NSA Agriculture and National Accounts Sub-Divisions. These meetings featured presentations on the EW-MFA framework and methodology, with a focus on data availability within each Sub-Division. The discussions highlighted significant data gaps and underscored the need to enhance collaboration between these NSA Sub-Divisions.

The mission also included meetings with key external stakeholders, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform and the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF). These meetings aimed to present the EW-MFA framework, assess available data, and explore potential additional data sources. Further follow-up meetings with the NSA Agriculture and National Accounts Sub-Divisions delved deeper into analyzing data quality and identifying critical data gaps.

Throughout the technical assistance, eight hands-on sessions were held with the NSA Trade and Environment Sub-Division team. The objectives were to apply the EW-MFA methodology to real national data, identify technical challenges, and build capacity to address these issues. Each session covered specific components of the EW-MFA framework, such as domestic extraction, physical imports and exports, domestic processed output and balancing items. The sessions provided in-dept explanations of key concepts, opportunities for discussing data-related issues, and practical exercises based on available data at national level.

The final session provided a wrap-up discussion and feedback, followed by preparation for the debriefing. Mónica Luz presented a draft work plan, which was reviewed and refined with input from the NSA Trade and Environment Sub-Division team. This session concluded with a presentation to the NSA management team, outlining the next steps and strategic recommendations.

The agenda for the technical assistance is available in Annex 2.

4. Main outcomes

The series of sessions conducted for participants from the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) and other relevant institutions successfully provided a comprehensive overview of the Economy-Wide Material Flow Analysis (EW-MFA) framework. These sessions not only introduced key methodological aspects but also fostered a collaborative environment for better coordination among stakeholders. Participants gained valuable insights into potential data providers, available data, and the identification of key stakeholders essential for the successful implementation of EW-MFA in Namibia.

The central focus of the sessions was on capacity building for the NSA's Trade and Environment Sub-Division. This helped strengthen their methodological understanding of EW-MFA, with particular emphasis on how to incorporate the framework into their internal processes, including data validation, especially for imports and exports data. This increased technical capacity is expected to significantly improve the NSA's ability to manage and validate economic and environmental data.

In addition to building technical capacity, the sessions facilitated increased collaboration among various stakeholders both within the NSA and among other participating institutions. This cooperation is essential for ensuring a coordinated and efficient approach to EW-MFA in Namibia. The discussions also led to

the identification of ways to share and disseminate the results, with the idea of a national publication being proposed as a key avenue for broader engagement and transparency.

The implementation of EW-MFA in Namibia has already led to the following significant outcomes:

1. Comprehensive understanding of Namibia's data landscape: Through the sessions, participants gained a thorough understanding of the current data availability related to EW-MFA, as well as the identification of gaps in the data. This new insight is instrumental for planning future data collection efforts and ensuring the accuracy and reliability of material flow analysis.

2. Strengthened capacity of the Namibia Statistical Agency (NSA): The NSA's Trade and Environment Sub-Division has significantly enhanced its capacity to develop and implement the EW-MFA framework. This includes a deeper technical understanding of the methodology and practical insights into how it can be integrated into their daily operations, particularly in relation to imports and exports data validation.

3. Enhanced collaboration and coordination among stakeholders: The sessions have fostered stronger collaboration among the various stakeholders involved in EW-MFA. This includes not only internal NSA teams but also other national institutions.

4. Roadmap for full implementation of EW-MFA: One of the major accomplishments of the sessions was the development of a clear and actionable roadmap for the full implementation of EW-MFA in Namibia.

These outcomes are a significant step toward achieving Namibia's long-term goals of more sustainable and data-driven economic and environmental planning. The increased capacity and collaboration established through these sessions will serve as a foundation for future successes in the full implementation of the EW-MFA framework.

The workshop materials can be accessed using the following link: https://sdgs.unep.org/national/activities

5. Next steps

The table below outlines the planned activities and identifies the stakeholders participating in each one.

Activity	Time	Stakeholders
Meetings between NSA and key stakeholders, identified as potential data providers	November 2024 – February 2025	NSA Relevant ministries and national agencies
Completion available data sets and populate EW-MFA tables	November 2024 – February 2025	NSA
Elaboration a national publication summarizing the progress made and pilot results	November 2024 – February 2025	NSA
Online expert support for completing EW-MFA tables, evaluating data quality and drafting publication	November 2024 – March 2025	Mónica Luz Ureña (UNEP Consultant)
National workshop to present the pilot EW-MFA results	March 2025 (in person, Namibia)	UNEP NSA Relevant ministries and national agencies

Annexes

Annex 1: List of participants

No	Name	Organization	Attendance
1.	Vistorina Nambundunga	Trade and Environment Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
2.	Ezequiel N. Kambonde	Trade and Environment Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
3.	Leonard Tukondjene	Trade and Environment Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
4.	Rosa Harris	Agriculture Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
5.	David Lisulo	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform.	In-person
6.	Ngaingonekwa Uamburu	National accounts Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
7.	Mika Munepara	National accounts Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
8.	Makaisapi Jiumbirua	National accounts Sub-Division, NSA	In-person
9.	Rakkel Johannes	Namibia Nature Foundation	In-person
10.	Mónica Luz Ureña	Consultant for UNEP	In-person

Annex 2: Agenda

Agenda
21 October – 25 October 2024
Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA), Windhoek, Namibia

Day 1	Monday, October 21, 2024
09:00 - 10:15	Introductory meeting with the NSA team and mission overview presented by Mónica Luz.
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 11:00	Presentation by the NSA team (Trade and Environment Sub-Division) on the current status of the EW-MFA, covering data availability and existing data gaps.
11:00 - 12:00	Engagement with NSA (National Accounts and Agriculture Sub-Divisions, NSA), covering data availability and existing data gaps.
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 15:00	Session 1: Collaborative data analysis with the NSA team.
15:00 - 16:00	Identification of methodological challenges and data gaps.
16:00 - 16:30	Wrap-up & review of the day's progress.
Day 2	Tuesday, October 22, 2024
09:00 - 10:15	Meeting with National Accounts Sub-Division and discussion about available data.
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 12:00	Session 2: Collaborative work with the NSA team using the available data.
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 16:00	Session 3: Collaborative work with the NSA team using the available data.
16:00 - 16:30	Wrap-up & review of the day's progress.
Day 3	Wednesday, October 23, 2024
09:00 - 10:15	Meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Land Reform. Presentation of the EW-MFA and discussion about data availability and additional data sources.
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 12:00	Discussion on data availability in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Land Reform and the benefits of formalizing institutional cooperation with the NSA.
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 16:00	Session 4: Collaborative work with the NSA team using the available data.
16:00 - 16:30	Wrap-up & review of the day's progress.
Day 4	Thursday, October 24, 2024
09:00 - 10:15	Session 5: Working with NSA team using the available data.
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 12:00	Session 6: Working with NSA team using the available data.
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 16:00	Session 7: Working with NSA team using the available data.
16:00 - 16:30	Wrap-up & review of the day's progress.
Day 5	Friday, October 25, 2024
09:00 - 10:15	Meeting with the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF). Presentation of the EW-MFA and discussion about available data at the NNF.
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 11:00	Meeting with the National Accounts Sub-Division, NSA about data quality and future collaborations.
11:00 - 12:00	Session 8: Collaborative work with NSA team using the available data.
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 15:00	Final discussion, feedback session and preparation for debriefing.
15:00 - 16:30	Debriefing - Presentation of mission findings, recommendations and work plan by Mónica Luz to NSA Management.