

JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER FOR CIVIL SOCIETY STUDIES

# UN TSE Sector Handbook project

**THE UN TSE SECTOR HANDBOOK PROJECT** seeks to make the “third or social economy (TSE) sector”—including **nonprofit, social economy, and civil society institutions, as well as volunteer work**—more visible in official economic statistics around the world in a systematic and reliable fashion. The ultimate goal is to enhance both the understanding and credibility of this important set of institutions and activities and to provide a more solid, empirical foundation for enhancing the contributions it can make to improving the quality of life and solving the pressing social and environmental problems facing people around the world today.

The need for this project arises from the fact that the System of National Accounts (SNA), the official guidance system for the compilation of national economic statistics, does not separately report on third sector institutions and does not even cover much of volunteer work. Rather, most data on third sector institutions are merged with data on other sectors, making the third sector and volunteer work virtually invisible in national economic statistics. The new **UN Satellite Account on Nonprofit and Related Institutions and Volunteer Work** (*UN TSE Sector Handbook*) developed by the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies in cooperation with the United Nations Statistical Division and an international team of statistical experts, seeks to remedy this. To do so, it calls on national statistical offices to prepare regular “satellite accounts” on this set of institutions and activities and provides a standard set of guidelines for doing so as part of existing official economic data-gathering and reporting.

**TSE SECTOR “SATELLITE ACCOUNTS.”** “Satellite accounts” reconfigure data already available in various statistical systems to highlight issues or activities not broken out in standard statistical compilations. The new *UN TSE Sector Handbook*, which updates and replaces an earlier *UN Nonprofit Institutions Handbook*, recommends the development of Third/Social Economy, or **TSE sector**, satellite accounts that will cover nonprofit institutions (NPIs), co-operatives, mutual associations, and social enterprises along with both direct and organization-based volunteer work. As outlined more fully in the *Handbook* (available [here](#)), the institutions considered in-scope of these TSE sector satellite accounts must be self-governing, not controlled by government, not compulsory, and subject to some significant limitation on their distribution of profits. Building on a companion ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*, the volunteer activity considered in-scope must be unpaid, of benefit to persons other than the volunteer or that person’s household or family, undertaken without compulsion, and be of meaningful duration (i.e., at least one hour) in a 4-week reference period.

Implementation of this *Handbook* will produce **a quantum leap forward in the basic**

**information available** on TSE institutions and activities. Among the features that will finally become visible are:

- ▶ The **number of TSE sector institutions**, by type of institution and major field of activity.
- ▶ The **number of TSE sector workers**, both paid and volunteer.
- ▶ The **“value added”** by TSE sector organizations.
- ▶ The **value of volunteer work**, both direct and organization-based, by field.
- ▶ TSE sector **operating expenditures**.
- ▶ **Sources of TSE sector revenue**, including philanthropy, fees, and government support.
- ▶ The size and distribution of **foundation grants**.

Covered by these data are NPIs and volunteering in such fields as community development, economic development, education, health care, social services, environmental protection, human rights, advocacy, sports, grant-making, business and professional representation, arts and culture, labor, and many more. Also included will be cooperatives, mutual associations, and social enterprises in such fields as finance, trade, manufacturing, and human services.

**THE REMAINING CHALLENGE.** Because use of this *Handbook* is optional, and because its greatest value can be derived through implementation in the largest possible number of countries, the UNSD authorized the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies to launch **a global dissemination, technical assistance, and implementation campaign** to ensure effective implementation and to capture the results in comparative reports.

To date, **33 countries** have committed to implementing the original *UN NPI Handbook* and 27 countries have either completed at least one satellite account or have such work under way. Included are countries as disparate as *Belgium and Brazil, Cameroon and Canada, Italy and India, Mexico and Mongolia, and Peru and Portugal*. In addition, support has been provided by Eurostat, the OECD Statistics Directorate, the European Commission’s Directorate for Enterprise, United Nations Volunteers, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Ford Foundation, the Skoll Foundation, and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. **A report on the results of the first 16 countries to implement the NPI Handbook is available [here](#).**

**NEXT STEPS.** Organizations interested in participating in this initiative or learning more about it can visit [ccss.jhu.edu](http://ccss.jhu.edu) or contact the Center for Civil Society Studies at [ccss@jhu.edu](mailto:ccss@jhu.edu).



The Center for Civil Society Studies of the Johns Hopkins University seeks to encourage the development and effective operation of not-for-profit, philanthropic, or “civil society” organizations. The Center is directed by Lester M. Salamon and carries out its work through a combination of research, training, and information-sharing both in the United States and throughout the world. Visit us at [ccss.jhu.edu](http://ccss.jhu.edu).