

DMFAS Programme Advisory Group meeting

14th meeting

Conclusions of the 14th DMFAS Advisory Group Meeting

The DMFAS Advisory Group advises the Secretary-General of UNCTAD of the following conclusions of its 14th Meeting, held in Geneva on 20 and 21 March 2025.

The DMFAS Advisory Group:

Strategic Plan 2025-2028

1. Highlights the Programme's essential role in assisting countries to build sustainable capacity for effective debt management of public debt, in particular obtaining highly reliable debt data and statistics, to meet their commitments to promote debt transparency and debt sustainability, as defined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. Notes with satisfaction that the Programme makes a significant contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals including poverty reduction and good governance.
3. Strongly reiterates the critical importance and relevance of the Programme's products and services for better decision making in debt management.
4. Highlights the unique added value of UNCTAD's support which fosters trust, experience sharing among countries and regional synergies.
5. Reiterates the need for a standardized and reliable system that caters for reporting needs of governments towards the international financial community, auditors, credit rating agencies and other stakeholders' requirements.
6. Commends the positive results achieved by the Programme in the implementation of its 2020-2024 strategic plan and recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic affected its implementation.

7. Requests the Programme to organize in 2026 the mid-term independent external evaluation and encourages all stakeholders to participate fully in the evaluation.
8. Requests the Programme to finalize and release the strategic Plan for the period 2025 to 2028, responding to the latest developments in debt management and considering the feedback from stakeholders, including the present conclusions of the DMFAS Advisory Group.

Capacity development

9. Stresses the continued relevance of capacity building on data validation, debt statistics, debt portfolio analysis, procedures manuals and technical training, in light of staff turnover and management changes.
10. Requests the Programme to develop new capacity building modules in debt data quality assurance, annual borrowing plans, PPP and contingent liabilities, data export and IPSAS.
11. Requests the Programme to provide a certification programme for debt officers acting as DMFAS super users and internal trainers to ensure sustainability of knowledge in the institutions.
12. Encourages the Programme to establish regional offices allowing cost effective and timely delivery of services, including helpdesk responses, user training and regional workshops.
13. Acknowledges the usefulness of virtual learning in certain circumstances while stressing the critical importance of in-person training.
14. Requests the Programme to provide further services to reflect countries' training needs such as frequently asked questions, chatbots, additional tutorials and webinars.
15. Asks the Programme to facilitate sharing of information and experiences between countries, including study tours and other events (including UNCTAD's Debt Management Conference).

DMFAS 6

16. Appreciates the enhancements made to DMFAS 6 during the 2020-2024 strategic plan.
17. Requests UNCTAD to continue to provide support for DMFAS 6 to the extent possible during the transition period while countries migrate to DMFAS 7.

DMFAS 7

18. Welcomes the launch of DMFAS 7 and all its enhancements, responding to the latest developments in debt management and technology.
19. Appreciates that DMFAS 7 user interface is intuitive, user-friendly, compliant with debt management offices' needs and in line with the latest international standards.
20. Appreciates that DMFAS 7 enables expanded debt data coverage, including non-traditional debt instruments, such as overdrafts, special drawing rights, deposits, currencies, domestic arrears and trade credits.

21. Notes with satisfaction that the new version is designed to meet critical reporting and analytical needs, featuring fast generation of reports and advanced analytical functions such as sensitivity analysis, debt portfolio analysis and linkages to DSA and MTDS.
22. Appreciates that DMFAS 7 provides full support for cloud computing, easier integration with other systems, enhanced security and auditing features, facilitated maintenance and automated distribution of updates.
23. Requests the Programme to proceed with the development of the planned advanced features of DMFAS 7 release 2, namely: Debt-DQA, annual borrowing plan, contingent liabilities, PPP and IPSAS.
24. Stresses the importance to undertake needs assessment missions to tailor DMFAS 7 projects to specific countries' needs.
25. Recognizes that many developing countries will face challenges in securing the necessary funding to implement DMFAS 7 and requests the international community to provide assistance, in particular to low-income countries.
26. Recommends that the Programme organizes training for trainers to expand the number of trained consultants (both IT and functional) in regions, to implement DMFAS 7 quickly, widely and efficiently.

Support/Quality of Services

27. Stresses the critical importance of continuous support from the DMFAS Helpdesk and appreciates that the strategic plan 2025-2028 considers the improvement of the Helpdesk procedures in order to provide faster support.
28. Recommends the Programme to explore new technologies for better IT and functional support delivery, including AI tools and communication platforms.
29. Reiterates its recommendation that the Programme provides as much of its documentation and services as possible in the United Nations official languages of the DMFAS user community, and other languages as requested.
30. Reiterates the importance of providing support for interfacing, supporting countries on integrating DMFAS with other Public Finance Management Systems (Budget, Accounting, Treasury).

Communications/Website

31. Appreciates the importance of the DMFAS Website and in particular the Client Area for making documentation and self-learning material available to users.
32. Requests the Programme to continue disseminating relevant and updated information on its website and to promote awareness about the available material.

Cooperation and partnership

33. Encourages the Programme to strengthen collaboration with other stakeholders (e.g. IMF, World Bank, regional banks, regional technical cooperation agencies), to improve efficiency in the delivery of services to member countries.

Financing

34. Stresses the importance of the Programme having the funding necessary to respond effectively to the critical and evolving needs of developing countries.
35. Recognizes the need to adapt the cost-recovery mechanism to ensure the Programme's financial sustainability.
36. Reiterates its appreciation for the participation of beneficiary countries in the funding of the Programme through the cost-sharing arrangements and requests all countries to continue paying the maintenance contribution.
37. Restates its appreciation for the financial support from UNCTAD and the donors to the Programme; encourages them to continue their support and requests that the Programme increases efforts to expand its donor base.