

International Comparison Program (ICP) Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Forthcoming Research Topics



**March 7-8, 2025
New York, USA
Ease Hospitality 1345**

Background

- A Research Agenda document was produced following the recommendations of the “Friends of the Chair” (FOC) established by the UN Statistical Commission at the conclusion of the 2011 round of ICP.
- At the conclusion of the 2011 ICP, the UNSC established the Friends of the Chair (FOC) group at its 45th Session held in 2014, to carry out an evaluation of the 2011 ICP. The FOC group presented its preliminary report to the UNSC at the 46th Session held in 2015, and its final report at the 47th Session held in 2016.
- Particular aspect of FOC report — refers to extensive commentary that followed the release of results from these two cycles. **“A certain challenge arose from the cumulative effect of the two ICP rounds (2005 and 2011) which took the ICP from a one-time “snapshot” created by each solitary benchmark into a kind of time series-like environment with the requirement of time consistency.” (Paragraph 12, E/CN.3/2016/9, UN, 2015)”**
- Consequently, FOC recommended that *no major methodological innovations are introduced for the 2017 ICP cycle to ensure comparability of results over time.*
-
- TAG followed this recommendation and ensure that no major methodological changes were introduced during the 2017, 2021 and the current 2024 cycle.

Background

The FOC identified a list of research topics that are essentially limited to fine-tuning methods and procedures:

- ☐ Implementing a rolling survey approach and building PPP time series;
- ☐ Integrating ICP and CPI activities;
- ☐ Streamlining the process of establishing product lists and the use of importance indicators;
- ☐ Improving the availability and quality of input data for rents, government services, and construction;
- ☐ Streamline the use of productivity adjustments for government services;
- ☐ Fine tuning global linking procedures; and
- ☐ Quality assurance of resulting PPPs and measures of reliability.

The 47th session of the UNSC noted the findings of the FOC group and strongly endorsed its recommendations.

Background

In response to these recommendations, a document entitled: **INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM RESEARCH AGENDA FOR the 2017 cycle AND BEYOND** was prepared, discussed and endorsed at the April 2017 TAG meeting held at Princeton.

The Research Agenda document concluded with”

“However, given that the ICP is becoming a permanent statistical exercise, it is essential to separate the “statistical production” function from the “methodological development” function, as stressed at the ICP Next Steps meeting held after the 47th Session of the UNSC. Moreover, there is a need to ensure that with each methodological development adopted, the impact of this change on the results is measured and documented, to facilitate the use of the results.”

The following research agenda items for immediate, medium and longer terms were identified.

Background

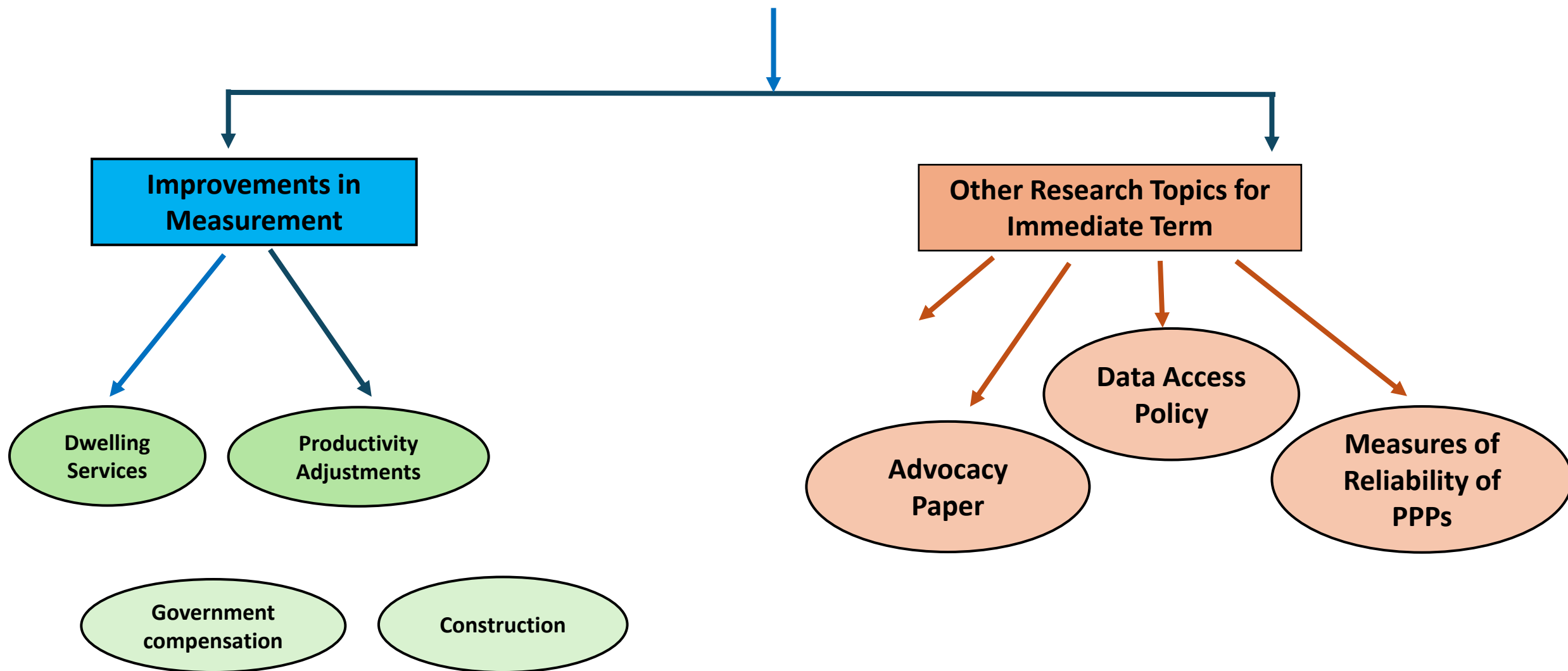
In response to these recommendations, a document entitled: **INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM RESEARCH AGENDA FOR the 2017 cycle AND BEYOND** was prepared, discussed and endorsed at the April 2017 TAG meeting held at Princeton.

The Research Agenda document concluded with”

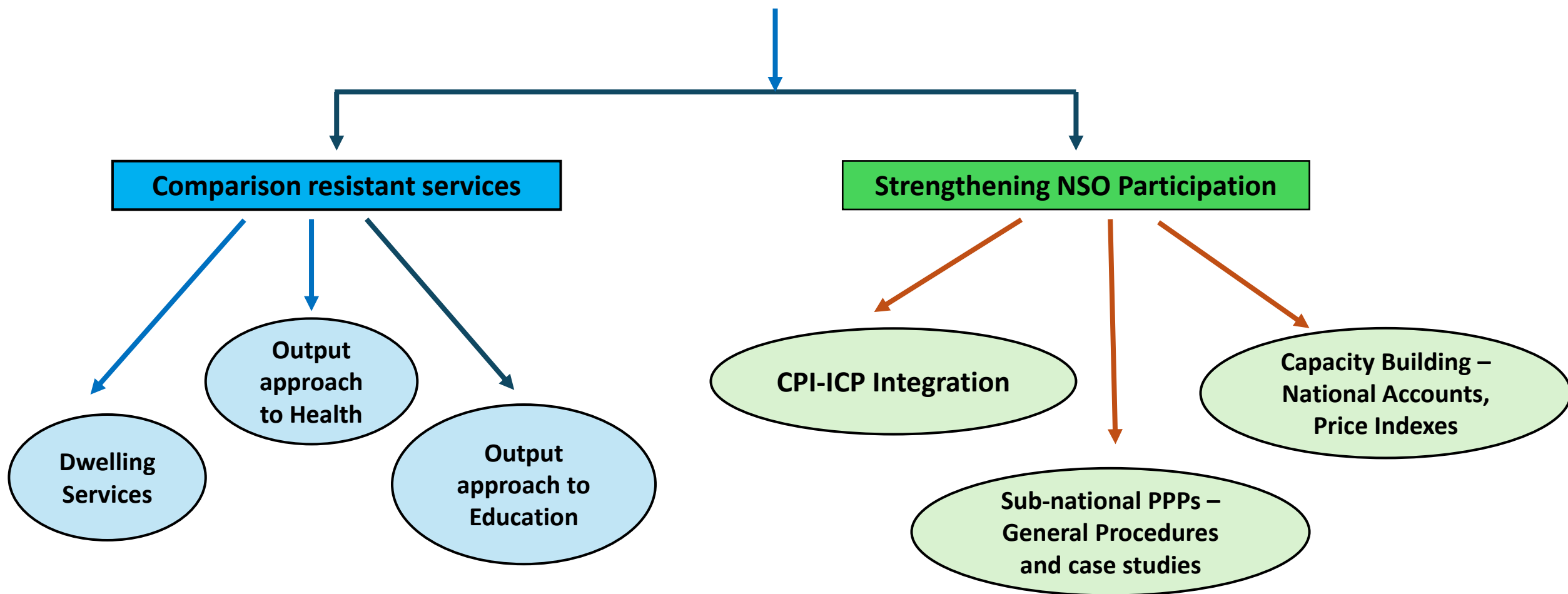
“However, given that the ICP is becoming a permanent statistical exercise, it is essential to separate the “statistical production” function from the “methodological development” function, as stressed at the ICP Next Steps meeting held after the 47th Session of the UNSC. Moreover, there is a need to ensure that with each methodological development adopted, the impact of this change on the results is measured and documented, to facilitate the use of the results.”

The following research agenda items for immediate, medium and longer terms were identified.

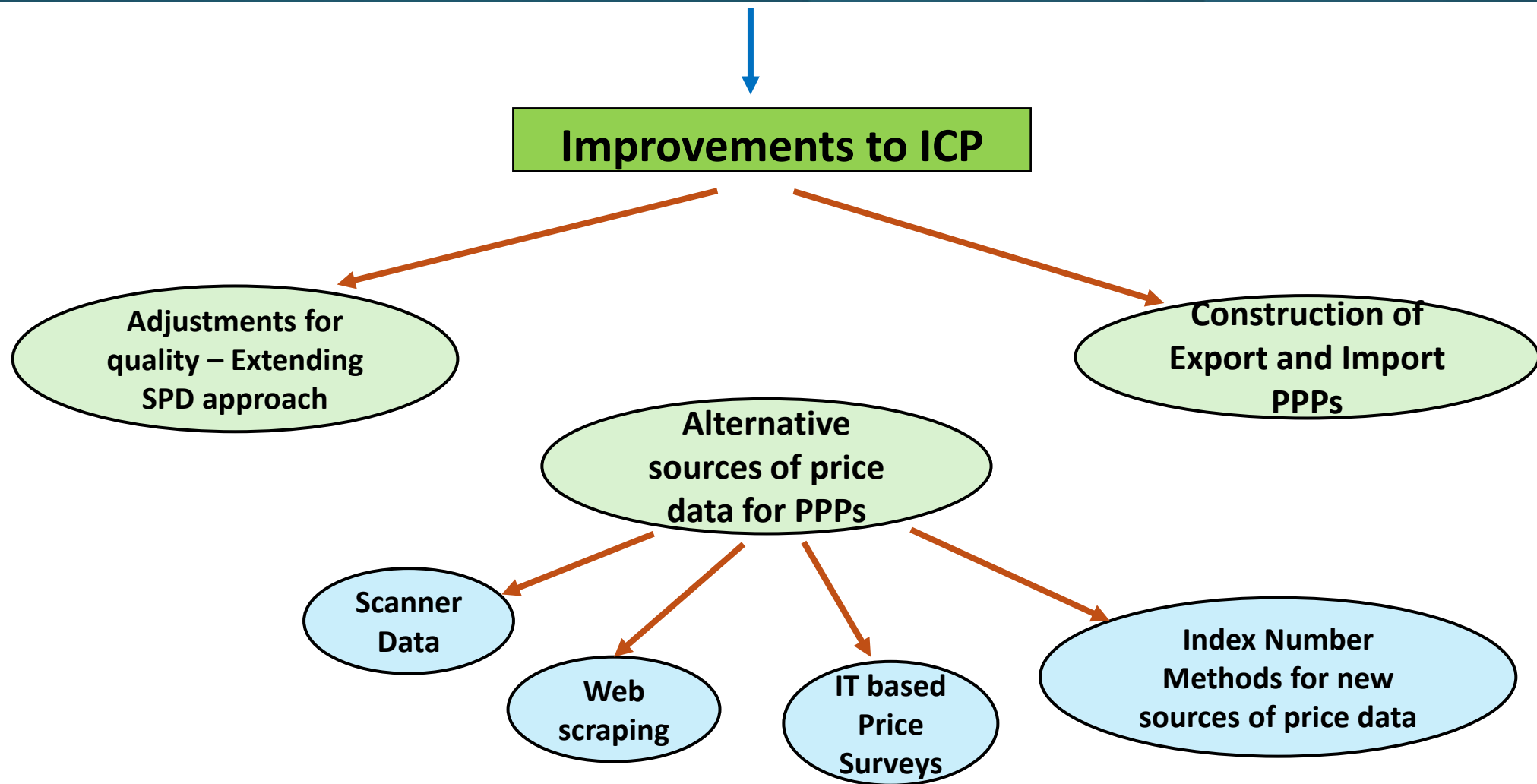
Research Items for Immediate Term – 2017 ICP



Research Agenda – Medium Term



Ongoing Research



Ongoing Research: Items for discussion (indicative only)

1. Use of scanner and web-scraped data for ICP
2. Improving quality of data for compilation of PPPs at the basic heading level
3. Health and Education – shift to production approach??
4. Construction – any revisions or alternatives to the approach?
5. Export and Imports – use of exchange rates versus import and export price-based PPPs
6. Global linking procedures
 - Basic heading level
 - Above basic heading level
7. Revisiting regional groupings and reference countries
 - Participation of Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand in Asia-Pacific regional comparisons
 - Sub-regionalization of Africa
 - Revisiting selection of reference countries in different regions
8. Any other topics?

Further Steps

- **Establish a timeframe for introducing new methodology**
- **Establish Taskforces for different topics**
- **Evaluation of the impact of new methodology on ICP results**

Thank you!

