Eight meeting of Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific
30 September 2015 – Bangkok

REPORT

Chair: Mr Nick McTurk, Population and Development Specialist, UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Office on behalf of the Co-Chairs Christophe Lefranc (UNFPA) and Rana Hasan (ADB)

1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted and it was decided to swap agenda item 2 and 3.

2. Discussion on proposal from the co-chairs for the Partnership to make a compilation of experiences with capacity development for MDG monitoring

In consideration of the emerging needs to monitor progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Co-Chairs proposed that the partnership jointly develop a compilation of past experiences with statistical capacity building activities for the MDGs. The compilation would highlight good experiences from the MDGs and showcase the type of support partners have been able to provide in the past.

The Co-Chairs had developed a draft template (attached) for consideration of the partnership. The template would facilitate inputs to the compilation.

Ms. Rikke Munk Hansen, ESCAP, mentioned a compilation of experiences could serve to bring visibility to the work of the Partnership; she noted that this could go some way towards responding to recent comments by countries (i.e. statements by member States at the fourth session of the Committee on Statistics) that partners needed to step up their coordination efforts.

Mr. Claes Johansson, Senior Advisor, Data and Analytics Section, UNICEF, suggested that UNICEF could use the example of the MICS surveys as their input to such a compilation. He however noted that the target audience/users of the compilation needed further clarification.

Ms Mariko Tomiyama, Senior Policy and Liaison Officer, International Organization for Migration (IOM) mentioned how IOM could contribute with highlighting some good practices that could be helpful for SDG monitoring. She further mentioned that countries were requesting coordination amongst development partners for reporting of SDG data.

Mr Tite Habiyakare, Senior Statistician, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific seconded Ms. Mariko’s comment regarding coordination of data collection for the SDGs and mentioned that for the compilation of practices, ILO would prefer to
concentrate on regional strategies rather than country examples as most capacity building activities were regionally focused.

Ms. Joanne McFadden, DFID supported the idea of a compilation of best practices and saw this as a good opportunity to demonstrate in particular where coordination worked well at the country level, in particular donor coordination. She shared that DFID had recently gone through a process of learning from previous processes, and this could be included in the compilation.

Mr. D.K. Ojha, Director (IPMD), Programme Implementation Wing, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India had some clarifying questions including whether the compilation should only be focused on MDG experiences and whether contact people should be included in the compilation to guide countries to find more information.

Mr. Grant Cameron, Manager, World Bank Group (DECDG) highlighted a few questions to ensure the compilation would be as useful as possible, these included: how to ensure efforts are not being duplicated, relevance in a heterogeneous region, audience and identifying key messages. He further indicated that it would be important to clarify whether the document would be for advocacy purposes or give technical insights.

Mr. Claes Johansson, Senior Adviser, Data & Analytics Section, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) suggested a key message being along the lines of “Here is how we jointly supported country x. We placed the country in a better position to deliver data on topic y.”

Ms. Rikke Munk Hansen, ESCAP suggested that the purpose of the compilation should be to reflect on lessons learned at the country or regional level. The compilation should be a vehicle to strengthen country to country and partner support. She further added that the strengths of the different partners in this Partnership should come out in the compilation. Most partners would normally work only with one or two line ministries, but combined, the partnership can address all organisations involved in the NSS. She further agreed that clarity of message, purpose and audience was needed and offered for ESCAP to develop a concept note in collaboration with the co-chairs of the group. The concept note would be distributed together with the minutes of the meeting.

3. Information sharing:

Each partner was given the opportunity to provide brief introductions to new work in the region that would benefit from Partnership involvement by sending a short overview of these activities to the Secretariat in advance of the meeting (Annex 3 contain received inputs).

Mr. Nick McTurk, UNFPA asked participants whether they would prefer to share information on activities in advance of meetings in the future to limit the time spent
on this agenda item during meetings. Participants had the opportunity to discuss this proposal as well as the received information overviews and other upcoming activities.

Mr. Andreas Hake, IMF mentioned that IMF will be giving further assistance to countries in South Asia for improving national accounts through establishing an IMF regional technical assistance centre for South Asia. He further highlighted how IMF will be compiling standardized international report forms for financial statistics.

Ms Mariko Tomiyama, Senior Policy and Liaison Officer, International Organization for Migration (IOM) mentioned how IOM are members of the global migration group and this group has been working on a migration governance index looking at monitoring target10.7 at the global level together with the Economist Intelligence Unit. Various elements will be included in the index, but the details are still being worked out. Following this, the index will be piloted in specific countries. The index will not be a ranking of countries, but a tool for countries to identify gaps for comprehensive migration management.

Mr. Grant Cameron, Manager, World Bank Group mentioned that a new data council has been established in the World Bank and will vet everything related to SDGs and data. Priorities for the World Bank related to SDGs are still being established, but CRVS, price data, and innovation will be included. More information will be shared as soon as available.

Mr. Tite Habiyakare, Senior Statistician, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific mentioned that ILO has recently developed new standards which means that handbooks, manuals and questionnaires are currently being updated and piloted. From the Asia-Pacific region, Viet Nam and the Philippines will be involved in piloting instruments on unpaid work. He further mentioned that ILO is conducting technical work and capacity building on labour migration. The statistical training center in China is doing training on the 19th ICLS resolution.

Ms. Joanne McFadden, DFID described how DFID is currently in a planning phase, drafting strategy and budgets. DFID will continue supporting NSDS capacity at the country level, expanding into more work on the data revolution (innovation, big data etc), as well as further engagement in the Global SDG partnership.

4. Next meeting and other matters

The 9th meeting of the Partnership will be organized in conjunction with the 47th session of the Statistical Commission to be held in New York 8-11 March 2016.
Annex 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MEMBER STATES

INDIA

Mr D.K. Ojha, Director (IPMD), Programme Implementation Wing, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, New Delhi

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Mr Stefan Schweinfest, Director, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), New York

OFFICE OF HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR)

Mr Nicolas Fasel, Research and Right to Development Division, Development and Economic and Social Branch, Geneva

UNITED NATIONS BODIES

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN’S FUND (UNICEF)

Mr Claes Johansson, Senior Adviser, Data & Analytics Section, UNICEF, New York

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)

Mr Nicholas McTurk, Population and Development Specialist, UNFPA, Bangkok

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

Mr Pietro Gennari, Director, Statistics Division, Economic and Social Development Department, Rome

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

Mr Tite HabiKayakare, Senior Statistician, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF)

Mr Andreas Hake, Chief, Statistical Information Management Division, Statistics Department, Washington D.C.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

Ms Mariko Tomiyama, Senior Policy and Liaison Officer, IOM, Bangkok
Ms Eszter Somogyi, IOM, Bangkok

WORLD BANK

Mr Grant Cameron, Manager, Development Data Group, Washington D.C.
Mr Olivier Dupriez, Senior Economist, Development Data Group, Washington D.C.

OTHER ENTITY

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DFID)

Ms Joanne McFadden, Statistics Adviser, Data for Development Team, Research & Evidence Division, Glasgow
Mr Anthony Higney, Glasgow

SECRETARIAT

Ms Rikke Munk Hansen, Chief, Economic and Environment Statistics Section (EES), Statistics Division (SD)
Mr Chris Ryan, Regional Adviser on Statistics, SD
Ms Tanja Sejersen, Statistician, Population and Social Statistics Section (PSS), SD
Mr Cristobal Mingo, Intern, PSS, SD
Annex 2: Concept for compilation of MDG experiences by the Partnership for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific

Background
The Partners for Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific are working on a compilation of experiences with capacity building in statistics for the MDGs.

The examples included should focus on specific MDGs and not on general institutional capacity building. Examples include capacity development on dissemination, collection, technical methods, assistance with specific surveys or use of administrative data, training of statistical staff on specific issues or similar activities.

The compilation should provide important lessons learned from the MDGs capacity building experience that could be transcended into country assistance for the SDGs. The compilation will serve as an advocacy tool to highlight collaboration in the context of the Partnership for Statistics Development and will include a short description of the partnership. In addition, the compilation will serve as a knowledge sharing tool to highlight experiences that will also inform what worked and what did not work in the context of the capacity building initiative and sustainability of these efforts.

Objective
The objective of the compilation is to showcase the kind of assistance the international development partners have given to countries in the past to improve data availability for monitoring the SDGs.

Audience
The key audience for the compilation will be officials working within National Statistical Systems as well as international development partner staff wanting to get an idea of types of capacity developing activities in support of monitoring development issues and learning from capacity building initiatives on what works and what does not work?

Content
Each input to the compilation would be expected to be no more than 5 pages.

The various inputs to the compilation would follow a standard template, supplied by the Partnership. Ideally, all inputs should include the following:

I. Who were involved (partners, ministries, other stakeholders etc.)?
II. Background and relevance to MDG monitoring - Why was this important and what were the key issues? (2-4 paragraphs).
III. Key considerations and challenges experienced
IV. Lessons learned for monitoring the SDGs - What can be learned from this experience? (3-6 paragraphs)
V. Links to further information and information on key resources (any publications or other outputs and their web access if available) and possibly contact details for individuals involved.

Publication of the compilation
The compilation will be made into an electronic report available on the partnership website http://communities.unescap.org/partners-statistics-development-asia-pacific and the ESCAP website.
Annex 3: Information sharing inputs received before the meeting

OVERVIEW OF IMF ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD BENEFIT FROM PARTNERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

PRESENTED BY ANDREAS HAKE
IMF STATISTICS DEPARTMENT
SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

I. ENHANCED GDDS (E-GDDS)

A primary objective of the e GDDS is the dissemination of data that countries provide to the Fund for surveillance purposes, to the benefit of markets and the general public. Disciplined dissemination—in accord with an advance release calendar—also should make the data more easily accessible in a more predictable manner. Thus, the e GDDS is considerably more ambitious than the original system, which narrowly emphasized the preparation of metadata and plans for statistical improvement.

The e-GDDS has been designed to:

- Bring a stronger focus on the need to support capacity development in statistics, and impart impetus to efforts to improve data quality, particularly disciplined publication.
- Facilitate access to international capital markets, particularly ahead of normalization of global monetary conditions.
- Enhance collaboration within the Fund, and with donors, international institutions, and country authorities.

It has four main elements:

- Focus on surveillance: the 15 data categories are aligned with those provided to IMF desks.
- Incentives: staff will monitor progress and report to the IMF Executive Board on a regular basis.
- A standardized platform for dissemination following open data principles.
- Capacity development to address data gaps.

II. SOUTH-ASIAN REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (SARTAC)

High and wide-ranging needs for capacity development in macroeconomic statistics for SARTAC countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka)
have been identified. The creation of the SARTAC offers a unique opportunity to meet identified capacity development gaps in macroeconomic statistics in a systematic and sustainable way building on progress already achieved.

The SARTAC is expected to be established by summer 2016.

**Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific, 8th meeting, Bangkok, 30 September 2015**

**ADB Statistics Capacity Building Activities**

In the area of statistics capacity building, the focus will be to work with national statistics offices (NSOs), and add value in the context of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals agenda. The following TA projects are ongoing in the area of statistics capacity building in the region:

- **Capacity Development of the National Statistical System of Myanmar** (supported under R-CDTA 8377). This project aims to strengthen the national statistical system of Myanmar to adequately respond to the data needs of development planning, policymaking, and monitoring. The support is focused on technical assistance for a new statistics law for Myanmar, improving the national accounts statistics and support for in-country and external training including in Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. A follow up TA will be initiated in 2016.

- **Updating and Constructing the Supply and Use Tables for Selected Developing Member Economies** (supported under R-CDTA 8838). This project aims to improve capacity of national statistics offices in measuring levels of economic output and upstream and downstream analysis through supply and use tables. About 20 countries are participating in the TA project.

- **Statistical Capacity Development for Social Inclusion and Gender Equality** (supported under R-CDTA 8243). In collaboration with UN Statistics Division and UN Women led Evidence and Data for gender Equality (EDGE), this project aims to develop standard methods for measurement of ownership of assets and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective and strengthen statistical capacity of selected DMCs in using standard methods and conducting pilot household surveys (Component 1), and in collaboration with UNESCAP and other regional development partners strengthen civil registration and vital statistics systems in selected DMCs (Component 2). Georgia, Mongolia and the Philippines are participating in Component 1 and Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste are supported under component 2.

- **Innovative Data Collection Methods for Agricultural and Rural Statistics** (supported under R-CDTA 8369). This project will assess and, where warranted, implement alternative data collection methods using space-based technology for estimating rice area and production. This is being implemented in Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam.
• Statistical Business Registers for Improved Information on Small, Medium, and Large Enterprises (supported under R-CDTA 8594). The project aims to develop the necessary capacity within the national statistics offices to establish and maintain statistical business registers on a sustainable basis. Bhutan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka are participating.

• Statistical Capacity Building in Support for SDGs. With the post-2015 sustainable development goals a TA project to develop country capacity in use of tablets for survey data collection is being proposed to the management for 2016. (Tentative – under discussion).

8th meeting of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific (30 September 2015)
Overview of regional activities
ESCAP Statistics

- ESCAP is continuing its close collaboration with a large spectrum of partners in a range of regional initiatives (Regional Programme on Economic Statistics, Regional Strategy for Agricultural and Rural Statistics, Regional Strategy for Population and Social Statistics, Regional Initiative on CRVS to ‘Get Every One in the Picture’, Disaster-related Statistics and Environment Statistics)

- Collaboration and activities on SDG-implementation will be key to ESCAP’s work over the coming years. ESCAP has received requests from countries for a more coordinated partnership on SDG related data issues. ESCAP envisages being at the fore-front of SDG implementation through being the go-to-place for countries and ensuring country ownership and leadership in SDG implementation. Getting partners together through the AP Partnership, the Committee on Statistics and Commission sessions may need to be supplemented by other mechanisms.

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Overview of regional activities
UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (APRO)

- UNFPA was engaged with several partners (UN Population Division, WHO, USAID, US Census Bureau) in the organization of a regional workshop on estimating maternal mortality from census data, which took place in Bangkok in April. Sources of information on maternal mortality were reviewed and the potential use of the population census was assessed in regards to other available sources. Countries in the region that collected information on
maternal mortality from their population census presented their results and the challenges they faced. The workshop is planned to be followed by a publication of country case studies documenting national experiences in producing maternal mortality estimates from population census data.

- APRO is supporting the ASEAN Secretariat in the harmonization of data on maternal, newborn and child health. A meeting took place in Manila in May and benefitted from the participation of UNICEF and WHO. A core list of indicators to be harmonized in ASEAN Member States was developed, with the objective of producing baseline data by the end of 2016. Further support will be needed on the mapping of available data and the production of metadata to help the harmonization process.

- As part of the support provided by UNFPA to population census undertakings in the region, a regional training will take place in December on census data dissemination. It will target countries of the region that collected their census data in 2014 and 2015 and will benefit from the expertise of US Census Bureau trainers.