

Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND

ESCAP Resolution 69/12 called for strengthening evidence-based policymaking for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and invited member States to improve the quality and availability of data related to disasters. Subsequently, the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction at its third session requested that the secretariat work towards monitoring more effectively the resilience of member States to disasters, including through the development of a core set of disaster-related statistics in close coordination with the Committee on Statistics. The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction called on the secretariat to align this work, to the greatest extent possible, with the disaster risk reduction framework beyond 2015.

The ESCAP Commission at its 70th session subsequently passed the resolution 70/2 entitled *Disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific* to take the mandate forward by establishing an expert group comprising statisticians and disaster management experts to work towards developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics, to be approved by the Commission.

2. KEY FUNCTIONS

The Expert Group shall:

- a) Develop, in consultation with the secretariat, a strategy with short-term and long-term priorities and milestones for the establishment of a basic range of disaster-related statistics;
- b) Analyze the scope and cycle of disaster risk management and on that basis identify areas where disaster statistics is needed;
- c) Develop a framework comprising classification, definitions and standards for a basic range of disaster-related statistics;
- d) Develop guidelines on the production and dissemination of the basic range of disaster-related statistics;
- e) Develop a recommended list of disaster-related development indicators;
- f) Ensure coordination with other relevant initiatives for coherence and harmonization in particular with the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the progress monitoring indicators for the Hyogo Framework for Action 2;
- g) Report on the progress made in developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics to the Committee on Statistics in 2014 and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Expert Group will consist of Government-nominated technical advisors as well as regional and international experts from the fields of statistics and disaster management. The secretariat shall coordinate the nomination of members for the approval of the leadership of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (i.e. the Chair) and the Committee on Statistics (i.e. the Bureau).

The size and composition of the Expert Group shall be decided by the leadership of the two Committees, and may be changed, as needed, to perform its functions effectively and efficiently.

To ensure relevance and applicability of the Expert Group recommendations at the national level, the membership shall reflect the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region in terms of sub-regions, disaster proneness, level of statistical development. The membership in its entirety shall reflect, to the greatest extent possible, gender balance.

For specific tasks, the Expert Group may invite the participation of other experts.

Observers can be invited from academic institutions, regional and international organizations, and NGOs by the secretariat to ensure alignment and collaboration with related regional and international initiatives.

4. METHODS OF WORK

The Expert Group, upon formation, shall agree on a detailed work programme with tasks, deadlines and outputs, with responsibilities outlined. The Expert Group shall review most issues through electronic discussion and exchange of emails and shall aim to meet at least once a year in person.

In order to ensure effective functioning of the Expert Group, upon its formation, the Group shall elect a Chair and one or more Vice-Chairs from among its members, and may form a Coordination Committee to facilitate the work of the Expert Group.

5. CHAIR

The Expert Group shall elect a Chair and one or more Vice Chairs from among its members. The Chair shall serve for a period of 2 years after which he/she will be eligible for re-appointment.

6. REPORTING

The Expert Group shall report on the progress, in the form of a written report and, if requested, oral report on developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics to the Committee on Statistics in 2014 and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015. The written report shall be prepared by the secretariat in close collaboration with the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Group, and be reviewed by other members of the Expert Group prior to submission.

7. SECRETARIAT

The Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division and the Statistics Division will serve as the secretariat of the Expert Group. The secretariat will support the Expert Group in carrying out its functions.

8. REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Expert Group may review the present Terms of Reference as needed to ensure its reflection of the required mandate to perform its functions in an effective and efficient manner.

9. SUNSET CLAUSE

At the time of the 72nd Session of ESCAP Commission, the continuous functioning of the Expert Group shall be reviewed by the Commission.