United Nations
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
Statistics Division

Project name

| Strengthening statistical and inter-institutional capacities for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals through interregional cooperation and knowledge-sharing |

Duration: 2010-2013

Objectives:

To have more up-to-date and comparable MDG data at the national, regional and global levels, improving statistical capacities and institutional coordination to invigorate the production of Millennium Development Goal indicators, decreasing statistical discrepancies between national, regional and global sources on the Millennium Development Goal indicators, and strengthening regional MDG networks.

It is expected that the networking and integration of different national, regional and international actors will multiply the direct results of the project, strengthening national and regional capacities in the long-term and providing support to the implementation of sustainable development strategies in the participating regions.

Stakeholder analysis
Project beneficiaries will include regional commission’s member countries, the regional commissions ECLAC, ESCAP, ECA, ECE and ESCWA, and regional and international agencies responsible for MDG data production and reporting who will benefit, due the availability of better quality MDG statistics at country level.

At the national level, targeted beneficiaries will include the national office or institution responsible for the MDG data calculation and compilation, and the responsible for the production of the national MDG report. It will comprise high level public sector decision-makers, senior advisors in national statistical offices (NSOs) and other data production institutions.

National Statistical Offices
In charge of official data production, compilation of national data from other data production institutions and national counterpart for international data producers and compilers.

- Improve national MDG statistical system - produce more and better information, promote their use among decision-makers and establish better relationships between the international agreed goals and the national development strategy.
- Produce harmonized statistical data in line with international official MDG indicators metadata.
- Increase their statistical leadership in the dissemination of national data and in particular in the production of national MDG reports.
- Coordinate and better manage data transferring between country data producers and international agencies.

Other national data-production institutions (sectoral Ministries)

- Produce harmonized statistical data in line with international best practices (Official MDG indicators metadata).
- Improve existing data transfer mechanisms among country data producers.
National MDG report producer
Responsible for the design and implementation of national policies and responsible for the coordination and elaboration of country MDG progress reports
- Improve coordination with NSO and other national MDG data producers.
- Disseminate metadata and be rigorous with statistical data.

At the regional level UN regional commissions are in charge of compiling and publishing MDG data at country and regional level including analysis of regional progress towards the goals. They will benefit from having more and better country MDG data harmonized with international benchmarks.

At the international level many international agencies are involved in the production of MDG statistics in order to undertake global monitoring. For example ILO produces and compiles employment indicators and has produced a guide on the Goals employment indicators covering definitions, data sources, calculation and analysis of the new indicators; UNESCO maintains an education indicators database and has conducted several regional workshops with national statisticians to address education MDG indicators; UNICEF compiles and estimates child and mother mortality indicators and supports the generation of data through Multiple indicator Cluster Surveys. Higher quality national statistics will assure better international comparison and will increase the robustness of the statistics needed to produce international comparable data.

Problem analysis
Problem Tree (cause-effect)

Persistent data gaps in data availability to monitor MDG indicators at national level

Persistent statistical discrepancies between indicators reported by different sources (national organizations, regional agencies and international agencies)

Inconveniences of countries to produce harmonized high quality data for monitoring and reporting on MDGs

Low involvement of National Statistical Offices in the monitoring and reporting of MDGs

Lack of inter-institutional co-ordination among national, regional and international organizations

Lack of international and regional agreed definitions and concepts in emerging fields

Conceptual differences in indicators definitions and range of information sources when calculating the same indicator

Insufficient production and publication of metadata

Heterogeneous statistics capacity among UN member countries

Not enough knowledge of methods of computation used by regional and international agencies to calculate MDG indicators

Not enough opportunities to interchange experiences, best practices and methodologies
Analysis of the objectives

Objective Tree (expected accomplishments)

- Increased production and publication of metadata
- High statistics capacity among UN member countries
- Good knowledge of methods of computation used by regional and international agencies to calculate MDG indicators
- Permanent MDG Network for interchanging experiences, best practices and methodologies

Improved capacity of countries to produce harmonized high quality data for monitoring and reporting on MDGs

- High involvement of National Statistical Offices in the monitoring and reporting of MDGs
- Better inter-institutional co-ordination among national, regional and international organizations
- International and regional agreed definitions and concepts in emerging fields
- Harmonized indicators definitions and benchmarks on more adequate information sources to calculate MDG indicator

Reduce statistical discrepancies between indicators reported by different sources (national organizations, regional agencies and international agencies)
Main activities
Main Inter-Regional Activities

(A.1) Organizing an interregional Millennium Development Goal indicators meeting to share and discuss best practices, instruments, benchmarks and other national and regional advancements and shortcomings. The meeting can be held in ECLAC or in Geneva consecutively with the Millennium Development Goal Inter-Agency Expert Group Meeting taking advantage of the attendance of International Agencies in charge of the global MDG monitoring and of DESA, who coordinates the Group. Regional Commissions who work directly with the countries should identify key national representatives from each region and stimulate the exchange of experiences and good practices;

(A.2) Developing an interregional web-based discussion and holding video conferencing and teleconferencing among the regional commissions and selected regional partners, to ensure substantive follow-up and project effectiveness, and to coordinate interaction with the global Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs;

(A.3) Constructing interregional Millennium Development Goals data reports, assessing Millennium Development Goal strengthening of statistical inter-institutional capacities and assessing data gaps and discrepancies in each of the five regions with a view to developing interregional conclusions and recommendations;

Main Regional Activities

(A.4) In each of the five regional commissions (except for ESCAP) producing and updating comparative data (national, regional — United Nations millennium database) for selected countries of each region and identifying the causes of discrepancies in the five regional commissions;

(A.5) Providing technical assistance missions to selected national statistical offices, agencies and sectoral Ministries in order to assist them in achieving statistical conciliation at the national, regional and global levels: Provide 15 technical assistance missions to selected countries (NSOs, MDG National Report’s responsible agency and sectoral Ministries) to build and strengthen statistical and institutional capacities, in order to assist them in achieving statistical conciliation at the national, regional and global level (three in each region); Incorporate one horizontal cooperation technical assistance mission in each of the five regions among member countries. The criteria for country selection will be determined by each regional commission according to national statistical capacities and countries challenges and demands.

(A.6) Conducting one regional Millennium Development Goal capacity-building workshop per region, for national statistical offices and other key partners as well as for regional or international agencies, with a view to improving the inter-institutional coordination procedures for the production, description and adjustment of data. The workshops will thereby strengthen countries capacities in:

i. producing statistics and indicators of relevance to MDGs;
ii. understanding the adjustment and calculation methods used by international agencies;
iii. improving the MDG data exchange between national and international agencies;

These workshops will not necessarily be held in the regional commissions headquarters, as it is being considered carrying them out in some specific countries. For example in Latin America and the Caribbean some countries play a key role within the MDG working group of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, and could host these training activities.

(A.7) Producing and disseminating documents and publications on a regional basis in support of training workshops and technical assistance, including methodologies, best practices and regional benchmarks;

(A.8) Producing and disseminating best practices regional reports related to statistical production and the use of information; In each of the 5 regions, produce and disseminate best practices reports related to statistical production and use of information, to highlight good examples of inter-institutional arrangements for national MDG reports elaboration.

(A.9) Organizing two regional Millennium Development Goal expert meetings in the ECLAC region in order to extend and strengthen the regional Latin American and Caribbean Millennium Development Goal network, including national networks and international agencies operating in the region; These events will give continuity to the annual MDG meetings held by ECLAC in the region over the past years, gathering not only technical personnel but also relevant national statistical authorities. These meetings serve as relevant advocacy activities.
Implementing and regularly updating Millennium Development Goal indicators regional databases along with the corresponding metadata, with a view to making data comparability transparent and encouraging its use at the national, regional and international levels.

GENDER CONCERNS
In view of the dual aspect of women’s empowerment — as an end in itself and as a necessary pre-condition for the fulfillment of the other Goals — special emphasis should be put in building national capacities to produce disaggregated indicators by sex.

There should be also a strong emphasis on proposing gender complementary or additional indicators for each region, which can help to better illustrate gender inequalities and forms of discrimination prevailing in many countries involved in the project.

Simplified Logical Framework

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<th>Intervention logic</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Source of verification</th>
<th>Risks/Assumptions</th>
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<td><strong>Objective:</strong> To increase the availability of up-to-date and comparable MDG data at the national, regional and global level.</td>
<td>(a) Increased number of countries and national agencies producing Millennium Development Goals indicators in a regionally coordinated manner, using common statistical definitions, methodologies and metadata format.</td>
<td>▪ Number of countries producing MDG indicators which data series are conciliated between the official MDG indicators database and the national MDG reports. ▪ Sources of information: At the country level: National MDG reports and databases, National Statistical Offices and national organism in charge of producing national progress reports. At the regional level: regional MDG reports and databases. At the international level: international MDG reports and databases.</td>
<td>▪ Low commitment in the countries with the Millennium Development Goals can entail low production of reliable and relevant MDG information. ▪ Lack of political support to statistical activities at the country level can lead to poor data recording, storage and dissemination, making it difficult to produce harmonized statistics.</td>
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<td><strong>EA1</strong></td>
<td>Improved and increased national and regional Millennium Development Goals statistical production and use, according with both international standards and regional benchmarks, through regional collaborative practices.</td>
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1.1. (A.1) 1 Inter-Regional MDG Indicators Meeting.
Organizing an interregional Millennium Development Goal indicators meeting to share and discuss best practices, instruments, benchmarks and other national and regional advancements and shortcomings. The meeting can be held in ECLAC or in Geneva consecutively with the Millennium Development Goal Inter-Agency Expert Group Meeting taking advantage of the attendance of International Agencies in charge of the global MDG monitoring and of DESA, who coordinates the Group.

1.2. (A.6) 1 regional MDG capacity building workshop in each of the 5 regions.
Conducting one regional Millennium Development Goal capacity-building workshop per region, for national statistical offices and other key partners as well as for regional or international agencies, with a view to improving the inter-institutional coordination procedures for the production, description and adjustment of data. The workshops will thereby strengthen countries capacities in:

i. producing statistics and indicators of relevance to MDGs;
ii. understanding the adjustment and calculation methods used by international agencies;
iii. improving the MDG data exchange between national and international agencies;
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<td>1.3 (A.10) MDG indicators regional databases</td>
<td>Implementing and regularly updating Millennium Development Goal indicators regional databases along with the corresponding metadata, with a view to making data comparability transparent and encouraging its use at the national, regional and international levels.</td>
<td>▪ Number of national, regional and international MDG reports and databases which incorporate methodological appendices, were indicators are defined and described in accordance to international best practices and recommendations.</td>
<td>▪ Low commitment in the countries with the Millennium Development Goals can entail low production of reliable and relevant MDG information. ▪ Lack of political support to statistical activities at the country level can lead to poor data recording, storage and dissemination, making it difficult to produce harmonized statistics.</td>
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<td>EA2</td>
<td>Decreased statistical discrepancies in Millennium Development Goals indicators among national, regional and international sources, improving Millennium Development Goals monitoring capacities and strengthening inter-institutional coordination, within the countries, and between countries and international agencies, both facilitated by the regional statistical bodies</td>
<td>▪ The sources of information are the national MDG reports, NSO publications and websites, National producer of the MDG report website and International Agencies’ publications and websites, expert meeting, seminars and workshops reports and participants lists.</td>
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<td>(b) Increased and harmonized Millennium Development Goals data and metadata availability in national, regional and international databases through development of regional benchmarks according to international best practices and recommendations.</td>
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<td>2.1. (A.3) Inter-regional MDG’s reports</td>
<td>Constructing interregional Millennium Development Goals data reports, assessing Millennium Development Goal strengthening of statistical inter-institutional capacities and assessing data gaps and discrepancies in each of the five regions with a view to developing interregional conclusions and recommendations;</td>
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<td>2.2. (A.4) Comparison of data series to identify causes of discrepancies</td>
<td>In each of the five regional commissions (except for ESCAP), producing and updating comparative data (national, regional — United Nations millennium database) for selected countries and identifying the causes of discrepancies in the five regional commissions;</td>
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<td>2.3. (A.5) Technical assistance for statistical conciliation</td>
<td>Providing technical assistance missions to selected national statistical offices, agencies and sectoral Ministries in order to assist them in achieving statistical conciliation at the national, regional and global levels: Provide 15 technical assistance missions to selected countries (NSOs, MDG National Report’s responsible agency and sectoral Ministries) to build and strengthen statistical and institutional capacities, in order to assist them in achieving statistical conciliation at the national, regional and global level (three in each region); Incorporate one horizontal cooperation technical assistance mission in each of the five regions among member countries.)</td>
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<td>2.4. (A.8) Best practices reports</td>
<td>Producing and disseminating best practices regional reports related to statistical production and the use of information; In each of the 5 regions, produce and disseminate best practices reports related to statistical production and use of information, to highlight good examples of inter-institutional arrangement for national MDG reports elaboration.</td>
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<td><strong>EA3</strong> Strengthened network of Millennium Development Goals statistical and reporting experts and practitioners at the national and regional levels, through increased interchange of experiences, best practices and methodologies.</td>
<td>(c) Increased number of Millennium Development Goals indicators users; increased number of institutions participating in the national and regional Millennium Development Goals networks and activities. (d) For Latin America and the Caribbean, increased number of national agencies participating in and collaborating with the Millennium Development Goal network and with the Regional Conciliation Strategy.</td>
<td>▪ Number of users of MDG networks, sites and resources; Number of local experts trained in workshops and participating in MDG meetings. The sources of information are the national MDG reports, NSO websites, Regional Commissions MDG websites and databases, and International Agencies MDG websites. Administrative information of the project will also be used for keeping record of the institutions participating and staff trained. ▪ For Latin America and the Caribbean: Number of national agencies participating in the regional expert group meetings and capacity building workshops. ▪ The source of information is the administrative information of the project, which will keep record of the institutions participating and staff trained.</td>
<td>▪ Low commitment in the countries with the Millennium Development Goals can entail low production of reliable and relevant MDG information. ▪ Lack of political support to statistical activities at the country level can lead to poor data recording, storage and dissemination, making it difficult to produce harmonized statistics.</td>
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3.1. (A.2) Interregional web-based discussion

Developing an interregional web-based discussion and holding video conferencing and teleconferencing among the regional commissions and selected regional partners, to ensure substantive follow-up and project effectiveness, and to coordinate interaction with the global Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs;

3.2. (A.7) Methodological documents and regional benchmarks

Producing and disseminating documents and publications on a regional basis in support of training workshops and technical assistance, including methodologies, best practices and regional benchmarks;

3.3. (A.9) 2 Regional MDG expert meetings

Organizing two regional Millennium Development Goal expert meetings in the ECLAC region in order to extend and strengthen the regional Latin American and Caribbean Millennium Development Goal network, including national networks and international agencies operating in the region;