First Inter-Agency Meeting for Regional Collaboration on Data Collection and Dissemination for MDG Monitoring

12-13 May 2005, Geneva

May 19, 2005

Summary Draft Report of the Meeting

Major conclusions and follow-up actions:

The group agreed to develop the following products:

- A regional MDG monitoring **network** to share MDG-related data collection information, facilitate cooperation and harmonization, and avoid duplications
- A joint MDG **questionnaire**.
- A proposal for a **joint UN Monee Info system for the Region**, adding relevant disaggregation and MDG indicators relevant to the region
- Ensure wide dissemination & use of the UN Monee Info system through **DevInfo**

1. Background

The first *'Inter-Agency Meeting for Regional Collaboration on Data Collection and Dissemination for MDG Monitoring'* was held in Geneva on 12-13 May, hosted by UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS and UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS. Ten different organizations attended the meeting (the list of participants attached as Annex 1). Among them eight were from UN agencies. Eurostat was also represented, and the World Bank participated via video conference.

2. Objectives of the meeting

- To map data gathering of socio-economic indicators by different agencies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia;
- To agree on a core set of relevant (human development) indicators to monitor MDGs and identify a harmonized and simplified data collection and dissemination mechanism which would respond to the mandate of each Agency involved in the initiative.

3. Agenda

The major sessions of the meeting were as follows:
- Introductory remarks by Shahnaz Kianian-Firouzgar, Deputy Regional Director, UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS and the Baltics and Jafar Javan Chilef, Policy Support & Programme Development, UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS.
- Presentations by different agencies on MDG data gathering.
- MDG data mapping exercise.
- Conclusion on the way-forward for future collaboration.

3.1 Introductory remarks

Ms. Kianian-Firouzgar welcomed participants and updated them on the results of excellent collaboration between UNICEF and UNDP in the region since 2002, referring particularly to the joint work carried out in support of the CCA/UNDAF processes in the region. In her remarks, she stressed the importance of inter-agency collaboration in monitoring MDGs, especially in the context of building a regional set of indicators and collecting disaggregated and good quality data. She mentioned that DevInfo is the UN Secretary General's recommended tool to monitor MDGs. Ms. Kianian-Firouzgar indicated her belief that that this meeting would provide momentum to build a regional network, which could lead to better progress in the achievement of the MDG.

Mr. Javan explained that the purpose of convening this inter-agency meeting was the outcome of discussions between UNICEF and UNDP, which resulted in a Concept Note jointly prepared by UNDP and UNICEF on collaboration in Data Mapping (Annex 3). The importance of disaggregated data in the region was reiterated. Mr. Javan also stressed that it is essential for all the agencies to gather and map out their current data-related activities in order to formulate a common framework for joint data collection, storage, analysis and dissemination.

3.2 Presentations by different agencies on MDG data gathering

UNECE/UNFPA, UNDP, WHO, FAO, ILO, UNICEF, Eurostat and the World Bank each presented the status of their own MDG data collection activities. Below are some issues raised during the presentations:
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- The UN should build capacity in National Statistics Offices (NSOs). It was suggested to develop a joint questionnaire to collect data from NSOs (UNECE).
- Only about 50% of global MDG indicators are applicable to this region. MDG indicators are useful only when they are adapted to the national context. UNDP Bratislava is compiling and posting country specific data on the Internet (UNDP Bratislava).
- FAO baseline year for transition countries is 1993-1995, due to a concern about the data quality in previous years (FAO).
- ILO does not provide countries with financial support for MDG data collection, but does provide them with technical support (ILO).
- UNICEF Representative presented TransMonee Database in which several MDG-related indicators are available and the MICS that will be carried out in 12 countries in the region. UNICEF TransMONEE Database was commended for having contributed to building an excellent network among NSOs in the region, which enabled many to gain access to difficult-to-gather data, in an efficient and effective way, and provided information for better understanding the situation of the region (Bulgaria NSO).
- WHO reported about its collecting of 17 MDG-related indicators and that they had set up a network (CARK Infonet) among health statisticians in collaboration with Eurostat (WHO Europe).
- The World Bank mentioned that it was updating the MDG Report for the region and advocating the use of MDG+ indicators to adequately reflect the

situation in the region, especially in the context of assessing marginalized communities (<u>The World Bank</u>).

- Eurostat presented its role within statistical cooperation and its challenges in relation to identifying indicators and collecting data (<u>Eurostat</u>).
- International organizations stressed that they should better collaborate and communicate in data collection and should contact NSOs only when there is no sufficient data available among them, in order to reduce the burden of NSOs (<u>UNDP consultant</u>).
- It was recommended that different agencies should consider uploading available datasets to DevInfo as a regional package. The web-enabled DevInfo user-module (piloted in Tanzania) is accessible at the following site: www.tsed.org (<u>UNDGO</u>).
- Participants appreciated TransMONEE's contribution to generation of MDG-relevant data and indicators by Statistical Offices and recognized that considerable capacity has been developed in these areas in most NSOs, particularly amongst the new EU members.TransMONEE has proved to add value in that it enabled a relatively short turnaround for the production of data and indicators with good reliability. It has also provided in-depth, region-wide information on special topics such as disabilities and institutionalization.

3. MDG data mapping exercise

In the exercise, different agencies' MDG data collection activities were reviewed. This allowed the group to test and formalize the format for an MDG Matrix, which will be sent out to participants by ECE. As a result, it was recommended that: additional information (such as frequency of data collection, source, quality and methods, and coverage of countries) should be collected; and that UNAIDS and UNESCO should be involved in this exercise in the future.

4. Conclusions and the way-forward for future collaboration

Participants discussed and agreed on the following action points:
- To refine the data collection matrix for the region (confirm source, whether survey or questionnaire; frequency; quality assessment scale; countries where data not available etc.) **(Action: ECE to distribute the Matrix)**
- To undertake a more in-depth assessment of data collection channels by different agencies by country and by disaggregation of data **(Action: relevant agencies)**
- To have regular meetings (bi-annually, with the first meeting in October 2005, to be hosted by UNDP Bratislava); and email dialogue **(Action: virtual network to be set up by UNDP)** among participants in this regional <u>network</u> to discuss MDG-related new data collection issues, including definitions of indicators/methodologies specific to ECA region **(action: all participants)**
- To regularly report on future statistical activities of each organization through <u>ECE Integrated Presentations</u>: UNDP and UNICEF to be included **(Action: ECE to share Integrated presentations)**
- To identify areas of common advocacy and support related to the monitoring of MDGs in region, such as WHO definition for Live Birth, fees for birth registration, etc. **(Action: relevant agencies)**

- All agencies to make their data/reports available to each other via Web Link **(Action: all agencies)**
- To exchange information about ongoing data collection, support programmes and activities (surveys, census etc.) **(Action: relevant agencies)**
- To identify data gaps and development needs at the national and the sub-national level **(Action: relevant agencies)**
- To strengthen national capacity of data collection, analysis, use and dissemination **(Action: relevant agencies)**
- To extract/compile ODA profile for the region based on OECD/DAC **(Action: UNDP)**
- To use experience of Paris 21 for this region **(Action: Eurostat)**
- To prepare a proposal for a regional UN Monee Info for a joint approach **(Action: Task force ECE/UNDP/UNICEF, ECE as convener -**Task-Force's proposed ToRs to be distributed by ECE).

5. Information sharing

5.1 Meetings from June to December 2005

The following major MDG-monitoring related events have been identified:
- ECE Annual Meeting of Heads of NSO, Geneva, 13-15 June 2005
- ECE/UNICEF Meeting with Heads of NSO for CEE/CIS, Geneva, 15 June
- UNDP/ECE Gender Statistics Sub-regional Meeting (Central Asia, Belarus, Moldova), Tashkent, 11-15 July
- EUROSTAT/ECE Meeting on Social Statistics, Brussels, 29-30 September 2005
- Global Inter-Agency Expert Group Meeting on MDG indicators, Rome, October 2005, hosted by FAO
- EUROSTAT Seminar for TACIS Countries on Social Statistics, Paris, Autumn 2005
- ECE/Eurostat meeting on Census, Geneva, December 2005

5.2 Forthcoming publications

The following major MDG-related forthcoming publications have been identified:
- Regional MDG report, September (UNDP)
- National MDG reports, (UNDP)
- Children with Disability in CEE-CIS report, July (UNICEF Monee)
- European Health Report, September (WHO)
- World Employment Report (ILO)
- ECE activities on MDG, June
- FAO activities in Europe
- MDG ECA Report (WB)
- Poverty Study (WB)
- TransMonee database (UNICEF)