



Regional Workshops on Measuring SDG Indicators through Population and Housing Censuses and Civil Registration Data, 2-3 April 2020, Bangkok, Thailand

Concept Note

Background

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set an ambitious agenda for countries to produce relevant, reliable and timely data. The quantity and breadth of data required to monitor and evaluate the SDGs is presenting a substantial challenge to the national statistical systems. National Statistical Offices (NSOs) have a major role to play in the process to make the best use of existing data sources generated for other purposes and explore non-traditional data sources. In some cases, SDG indicators can be directly generated from these existing sources. In other cases, they may contribute significantly to the approximation of indicators for which no other national source is available and particularly to the disaggregation of the indicators at the sub-national level and by other variables.

Population and housing censuses (PHC) have a vital role in the production of official statistics and provide fundamental information for measuring SDG indicators on a wide range of topics. Approximately 25 percent of SDG indicators related to population can be calculated from census data and then be disaggregated by characteristics such as age, sex, labour force status, migration status, disability and by small geographic areas. Although censuses are typically carried out only once every ten years, they are often the only reliable source of information for small areas and for rare or hard to measure events, such as migration and people living in slum areas.

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system (CRVS) can also generate reliable and accurate statistics for small areas. Registering all vital events (births, deaths, foetal deaths, marriages, divorces) in a universal manner and reporting it to the statistical system, provides for the production of regular, reliable, accurate small area vital statistics – a critical component for monitoring the implementation of policies relevant for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

To strengthen the national capacity for producing SDG indicators, a technical report on measuring SDG indicators through PHC and CRVS has been produced by the United Nations. One of the objectives of the technical report is to achieve better understanding of SDGs metadata information provided by the United Nations System and other international organizations at national level. It will also contribute to strengthening capacity for assessing data availability and utilisation of existing data sources for monitoring SDGs. The technical report discusses how to produce relevant SDG indicators based on their metadata information (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>) in the context of PHC and CRVS, using the following United Nations guidelines as reference documents: “Principles and Recommendations for

Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 3” and “Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3”. The technical report also provides extensive discussions on the application of methods of computing of these indicators using PHC and CRVS data and potential challenges in adoption of definitions of SDG indicators.

A series of Regional Workshops is conducted for introducing the technical report and to discuss benefits and challenges of utilising PHC and CRVS data in monitoring SDGs. The workshop for Asia and the Pacific, to be organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will be held on 2-3 April in Bangkok, Thailand.

Objectives

Using the technical report on Measuring SDG Indicators through Population and Housing Censuses and Civil Registration Data as a reference document, the workshop aims to discuss how to produce SDG indicators based on their metadata information. The workshops will also provide a platform to further elaborate on utilising PHC and CRVS statistics for monitoring the SDG framework at subnational level and the value of these sources for disaggregation of SDG indicators. Ultimately the workshop will help to achieve a common and improved understanding of definitions and method of computation of SDG indicators.

The following issues will be discussed during the workshop:

- SDG indicators that can be directly measured or estimated approximately using existing census or CRVS data based on the internationally recommended topics;
- Challenges related to the use of census and CRVS data for the measurement of indicators and analytical strategies to mitigate or overcome those challenges;
- Advantages of census and CRVS data for the disaggregation of the SDG indicators and, where applicable, some of the precautions needing to be addressed;
- Additional topics that might be added to these sources that, with a comparatively small investment, might expand their ability to capture information relevant to the monitoring of as many SDG indicators as possible.

Format of the meeting

The meeting will be hosted by ESCAP and UNSD at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok. Each substantive session of the workshop will start with a presentation by the United Nations to introduce the related part of the technical report which will be followed by country presentations or group discussions. In order to get inputs from participants on the technical report, substantial time will be allocated for interactive discussions in each session.

Participants

The main target group for this workshop is the staff of NSOs responsible for the analysis of census data, vital statistics, and/or production of SDG indicators. In addition, other national partners involved in monitoring the SDGs at national level can be invited.

Preparation

Participants will be asked to review the technical report on measuring SDG indicators through PHC and CRVS to familiarize themselves with the topic. The report will be sent to the participants in advance of the workshop.

Language

The working language of the workshop will be English.