

Regional Capacity-building Workshop on Sustainable Development Goals Modelling for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific

30 June 2016

Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

CONCEPT NOTE

I: Background

The 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a set of Sustainable Development Goals, at the seventieth session of the General Assembly in September 2015. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) has initiated a process to support the efforts of its member States to develop integrated approaches, models and tools aimed at enhancing regional cooperation with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals. This process places special emphasis on the needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (E/ESCAP/RES/72/6).⁽¹⁾

The objectives of the workshop and related training programmes are to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development and to identify the linkages and impacts of national policies and strategies through modelling frameworks. However, the availability and quality of statistics and data presents a great challenge for carrying out a meaningful modelling exercise that integrates different aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals. Given the ambitious scope of the Goals, data scarcity would significantly constrain countries' ability to develop and maintain Sustainable Development Goals-based models. Therefore, further regional cooperation and stronger capacity support from development partners is necessary and urgent, especially in the context of countries with special needs.⁽²⁾

The Asia-Pacific region is not only facing external economic and financial shocks that require careful policy intervention, but it is also experiencing social challenges stemming from increasing inequality. In particular, the regional linkages with other regions, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, have further heightened policy uncertainty. This requires, among other things, a more calibrated approach towards obtaining a better understanding of policies. The application of integrated approaches could enable policymakers to appropriately assess medium-to-long term development perspectives and their policy implications. This would help guide national development policy management and responses, which can further support the use of integrated modelling approaches towards achieving sustainable development.

The workshop will give policymakers from countries with special needs, the opportunity to learn about the current state of the art progress in making national level monitoring and policy simulation. It will be, among others, part of the initial ESCAP regional implementation plans for these countries for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the regional and national levels.



II: Objectives

The objectives of this workshop are:

- To provide a peer learning platform for policymakers from the Asia-Pacific countries to exchange knowledge and share experiences related to building Sustainable Development Goals consistent models and policy simulation analysis with a selected number of methodological tools;
- To enhance the understanding of the participants of data management of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, including training on the development of data analyzing modules;
- To support a selected number of member States in setting up Sustainable Development Goals consistent models in areas related to the following:
 - a) Macroeconomic models;
 - b) Global VAR model;
 - c) Climate change models;
 - d) Dynamic CGE models;
 - e) Network-optimization approach.

III. Organization and participation

The participants will comprise government officials, including representatives of ministries of planning, economy and finance and central banks, and/or representatives of government think-tanks that are directly responsible for undertaking the preparation of modelling and policy simulation related to the Sustainable Development Goals for their respective governments. The event will include presentations given by experts in several areas. Participants from 12 Asia-Pacific least developed countries have been requested to give a presentation on their national Sustainable Development Goals modelling frameworks and related plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The presenters will be kindly requested to limit their interventions to 10 minutes.

IV: Documentation

ESCAP will disseminate technical background notes for the event. Please visit the ESCAP website for further information about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to see other documents related to the workshop:

www.unescap.org/events/regional-capacity-building-workshop-sustainable-development-goals-modelling-least-developed

Notes:

(1) Please see www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/E72_RES6E.pdf.

(2) ESCAP organized the first regional workshop on macroeconomic modelling in Asia and the Pacific in December 2016. Please see www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/E72_INF5E.pdf for further details.