Data and Statistics for the Post 2015 Development Agenda: Implications for Regional Collaboration on Statistics in Asia and the Pacific

Session 7
Need for Greater Investment in Statistics Development

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Presentation Outline

• Data in Post 2015 SDG Agenda
• Situation in Asia and the Pacific
• Investments in Statistics for Post 2015 Monitoring – Roles of Different Actors
• ADB’s Statistics Capacity Building Efforts and Some Lessons
• Concluding Thoughts
Data in Post 2015 SDG Agenda

**Key Reports and Development Data**

- **High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons (May 2013)**
  - Proposed 12 goals and 54 targets
  - Called for a Data Revolution for sustainable development
  - Target 12f. Promote collaboration on and access to science, technology, innovation, and development data.

- **Open Working Group (July 2014)**
  - Proposed 17 Goals and 169 targets
  - Target 17.18: by 2020, enhance capacity building support to developing countries, availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, .......
  - Target 17.19: by 2030, build measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement GDP, and support statistical capacity building in developing countries

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Data in Post 2015 SDG Agenda (2)

**Key Reports and Development Data**

- **Sustainable Development Solutions Network (May 2014)**


- **UN Secretary General’s Synthesis Report: The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet (4 Dec 2014)**
Sustainable Development Goals
Themes

Data Demands

- More variables
- More timely (speed/frequency)
- Better quality
- Higher disaggregation

Challenges in Developing countries

- Gaps in coverage
- Time lags and infrequent/adhoc
- Various issues
- Statistical reliability
Situation in Asia and the Pacific

- Statistical development: Heterogeneous mix
- Censuses
  - Population and Housing
  - Agriculture
  - Enterprises
- Sample Surveys
  - Households
  - Enterprises
  - Farm Holdings
- Administrative Reporting Systems
  - Education
  - Health
  - Trade and Industry (e.g. business permits, letters of credits)
  - Civil Registration
Social Statistics

- Poverty:
  - Annual
  - Regular with 3 to 5 year interval
  - Irregular
  - No data

- Labor and Employment:
  - Annual
  - Irregular
  - No data

- Education:
  - Annual
  - Irregular
  - No data

- Health:
  - Annual
  - No data

Source: Staff estimates from data downloaded from ADB's Statistical Database System.

Frequency of Population and Agriculture Census in the DMCs, 2014

Sources: FAO and UN.
Situation in Asia and the Pacific

- Major surveys and censuses conducted in some countries only if donor funds are available
  - donor dependence 70-80% budget in some cases
- Coverage and quality of administrative reporting systems
  - both economic and social, increasing the dependence on surveys
- Donor funding getting more aligned to the National Statistics Development Strategies
- For disaggregated data, surveys alone may not be sufficient
  - administrative data such as from civil registration and administrative registries need strengthening for long term sustainability
Investments in Statistics for Post 2015 Monitoring

- Indications are that the data demands will be ENORMOUS for post 2015 monitoring
  - Clear goals with measurable and achievable targets and well defined indicators and sources of data needed
  - Countries most likely to be further burdened and face additional challenges
- Monitoring progress of post 2015 agenda will need large scaling up of investments from all stakeholders - national and international public sources, and the private sector

Role of National Actors

- Post 2015 agenda represents opportunity for countries:
  - Building statistical capacity and infrastructure for NSS
  - Greater role and integration of multiple ministries in the NSS
  - Strong coordination, partnerships of NSO and other actors
  - Adequate mandate and resources for the NSOs to coordinate with the national actors
- How NSOs can make case for more funding?
  - Align national statistical agenda with national policy and planning priorities and government commitment to SDGs
    - More effort needed to make the link between key policy questions and data needed to answer these?
  - Should current NSDS be revisited to align with national planning and monitoring priorities for post 2015 and global reporting needs?
    - Are there any tradeoffs in the two?
  - Make most of existing resources (e.g., free up resources from data series no longer in demand; prioritize filling statistical gaps)
Role of International Community

- “All developed countries should meet the **0.7% target** and agree to concrete **timetables** to meet ODA commitments, including the Istanbul commitments to LDCs of 0.15% of GNI by 2015” (UNSG Synthesis Report)
- Similar **appeal for investing specific % of ODA for development data** is needed to secure commitments (0.16% of ODA in 2013)
- Ensure that data and statistics is not forgotten in the SDG financing discussions at the 3rd **Financing for Development Conference** scheduled in Addis in July 2015
  - Commit targets for support to development data?
- MDBs and DFIs will have to look at various options and modalities to contribute to financing development data and strengthening national statistical capacities.

Role of UN Statistical Commission

- UN Statistical Commission (and regional Statistics Committees) should play a key role for an action plan on development data,
- Assessment of existing data, information gaps, governance and institutional infrastructure constraints, and costing data development needs,
- Learn from initiatives such as Post 2015 Data Test,
- Innovative financing methods to support national data capacities, securing national budgetary and international development partners’ commitments,
- Mobilize actions to make the POST 2015 data monitoring timely and sustainable,
- Promote and adopt innovative methods of data collection and role of big data in official statistics,
- Galvanize actions for support through the Financing for Development Conference in Addis in July 2015 and on occasions such 2nd World Statistics Day in October 2015 with theme on investments in statistics for Post 2015 agenda.
ADB's Statistics Capacity Building Efforts and Some Lessons

- First statistics capacity building project in 1971 (for Singapore on national accounts)

- Over about 93 technical assistance projects on various topics since then
  - Statistics management and strengthening of national statistical systems
  - Development of statistics master plan
  - Strengthening of selected areas in statistics (national accounts, financial statistics, social statistics, etc.)
  - Improving data collection strategies (household surveys, administrative reporting system, dissemination practices)

- Established partnerships with other development agencies in the region (e.g., CRVS with ESCAP, agriculture statistics with FAO)
ADB’s Statistics Capacity Building Efforts and Some Lessons

- Government’s ownership of statistics capacity building project is essential
- Nature of statistical processes: there is long gestation period for project implementation and capacity building is a slow process
- Holistic approach to national statistics capacity development needed for sustainable NSS
  - Establish sound institutional and legal environment
  - Clear mandate, powers and resources to NSOs to coordinate development data in the NSS
  - $ alone not sufficient: Need skilled and adequate staff
- Close coordination among donors is essential to optimize the limited resources allocated to statistics development.

ADB's Statistics Capacity Building Efforts and Some Lessons

- More methodological research needed to assist countries adopt better and appropriate statistical methods
  - Help countries design household surveys that the government can afford and which can address data gaps and extend the use for policy research
  - Use of non-traditional data collection methods (e.g. satellite data to estimate crop area, damage due to flooding)
  - Incorporate data validation mechanisms in administrative reporting systems to improve the reliability of its results
ADB’s Next Steps

- Review of the strategy for statistics and development data in view of post 2015 development agenda
- ADB is signatory to the MOU across MDBs and the UN to promote coordination for development data and statistics
  - Work with the MOU partners for consideration of greater support and commitment for development data by heads of institutions
- Work closely with bi-lateral development partners to mobilize funding for data
- Increased coordination with ESCAP and other regional and global partners
- But, a need to focus on niche areas
- And, will need to make more explicit links between data and policy issues

How do we get more investments into statistics?

- Perhaps highlighting the opportunity cost of failing to invest in statistics is a key part of the answer
- Two examples from India, where public access to micro data from HIES, LFS, and enterprise surveys (formal and informal) exits
Example 1: Quality education (OWG SDG #4)

- Enrollments are up
- But, concern on learning outcomes at virtually every level
- It is the combination of data – administrative, LFS, and specialized – that is catching policy attention.

Pritchett and Beatty, 2012 using APRESt data.

Example 2: Full and Productive Employment (OWG SDG #8)

Wages are much higher in formal manufacturing in India

But majority are employed in informal sector
What is the Data Telling Us?

- Is targeting the firms where most of the employment is generated the key to “good” jobs?
- Informal firms don’t seem to grow much or formalize
- Larger, younger factories seem to grow more quickly and create more jobs than smaller, older factories (Martin, Natraj, and Harrison, 2014).
- Focus on formal SMEs rather than micro-enterprises may be more effective from a good jobs perspective.
- SME policies may consider:
  - Targeting age (young firms) in addition to/instead of just size
  - Reconsidering regulations that are thought to effect mainly large firms

Key Questions to Consider

- Can NSSs in the region meet the demands for more statistics?
- To what extent are these new demands practical considering existing resources and capacity?
- What would be the real costs of developing capacity to monitor the post 2015 development agenda?
- How? from where? and how much? resources (human, financial) can be mobilized to meet these demands?
- Will the national governments, development partners and private sector rise to the call and scale up investments?
- While the agenda aims at more data – Will this lead to ‘More the Merrier’ or ‘More the Messier’?
- Successful monitoring of Post 2015 development agenda will depend on answers to above.
Thank You