CONCEPT NOTE

Being Counted in a Digital Society

Advancing statistical inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people

Side event of the tenth session of the Committee on Statistics

Statistics Division
3 December 2026 (11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. UTC+7)
United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok

Background

Inclusive and comprehensive statistics are critical for effective national planning, offering the evidence base needed to successfully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Official statistics provide the fundamental population data needed to measure progress on a broad range of SDGs—including data disaggregated by characteristics like age, sex, location, and disability status—which enable countries to monitor progress in reducing inequalities and ensure no one is left behind.

Across Asia and the Pacific, governments are strengthening national statistical systems while navigating a rapidly changing digital data environment. Yet refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless people can remain excluded, insufficiently represented or inadequately identified in censuses, household surveys and administrative data. When populations are missing from official statistics, their circumstances may also remain invisible in the policies, services and investments shaped by those data.

Statistical inclusion offers a practical response: integrating forcibly displaced and stateless populations into nationally owned data systems, applying internationally endorsed statistical recommendations and ensuring that resulting evidence can be used to strengthen public

decision-making. Digital transformation can accelerate this agenda through more connected data sources, innovative collection methods and improved access to evidence. However, it can also deepen exclusion if digital systems are not inclusive by design, overlook people without documentation, connectivity, or if data are not governed with appropriate safeguards.

The proposed side event will connect statistical inclusion to the Committee's focus on the future of national statistical offices in a digital society and the broader Asia-Pacific Statistics Week theme of building trust in official statistics. It will position inclusion, quality, privacy and responsible data use as mutually reinforcing foundations of trusted digital statistical systems.

Objectives

To convene a high-level, practice-oriented dialogue on how national statistical offices and partners can use digital transformation to advance the sustainable statistical inclusion of refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless people, while protecting trust, quality, privacy and national ownership.

- From invisibility to inclusion: why identifying displaced and stateless populations in national statistics matters for equitable policies, services, resource allocation and solutions.
- From standards to implementation: how international recommendations on refugee, IDP and statelessness statistics can help achieve universality in national censuses, such as Thailand NSO best practices.
- Digital opportunities: how linked administrative data, modernized civil registration systems, digital survey tools and responsible data innovation can support more timely and inclusive statistics.
- Trust and safeguards: how privacy, data protection, statistical confidentiality, transparency and meaningful engagement with affected communities can build trust whilst preventing digital exclusion and harm.
- From data to decisions: how nationally owned inclusive statistics can move beyond one-off exercises and inform development planning, SDG monitoring and pathways towards self-reliance and solutions.

Expected outcomes:

- A shared understanding of statistical inclusion as a core component of trusted and future-ready national statistical systems.
- Practical lessons from national and regional experience on using international standards to include forcibly displaced and stateless populations in official statistics.

- A concise set of priority actions for national statistical offices, UN entities and development partners to advance inclusive, safe and sustainable digital data systems.
- Stronger visibility for existing international standards, country commitments and opportunities for regional peer exchange and cooperation.

Participation

The event is open to all participants of the Asia-Pacific Statistics Week.

Registration

Participants are kindly requested to register on Indico at https://indico.un.org/event/1023597/ or via the QR code.

For information, please contact Alessandro Telo and Chao Huang, Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific/UNHCR, at **telo@unchr.org** **and** **huang@unhcr.org**

Agenda

Time	Segment	Purpose / content	Lead
11:00–11:07	Opening	Welcome, purpose and introduction. Set out the pathway from statistical visibility to national systems, CRVS, development use and responsible digitalization.	ESCAP
11:07–11:19	**Round 1: Core perspectives**	Four first-round questions. Each panelist has 3 minutes to answer.	Moderator + panelists
11:19–11:31	**Round 2: From insight to action**	Four second-round questions. Each panelist has 3 minutes to answer.	Moderator + panelists

Time	Segment	Purpose / content	Lead
11:31–11:36	Cross-panel synthesis	Moderator highlights connections and invites reactions.	Moderator
11:36–11:54	**Audience Q&A**	Questions from participants and open discussion.	Moderator + audience
11:54–12:00	Closing remarks	Three takeaways and forward-looking call to action.	UNHCR / ESCAP

Moderator and Speakers



Petra Nahmias is Chief of the Population and Social Statistics Section at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). She leads regional work on civil registration and vital statistics, census, migration statistics, citizen data, gender statistics, and data integration, with a focus on strengthening inclusive and effective statistical systems. Previously, she led the statistics team at UNHCR and worked at the UN Population Division, the UK Department for International Development and the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. She holds a PhD in Sociology and Demography from Princeton University.



Dr. Ekapong Rimcharone is a senior Thai government executive with expertise in statistics, digital policy, and cybersecurity. As Director of Thailand's National Statistical Office (NSO), he oversees the development of official statistics that enable evidence-based policymaking, national planning, and sustainable development. He also actively fosters regional and international statistical cooperation, particularly within the ASEAN and Asia-Pacific frameworks, to enhance statistical capacity and innovation throughout the region. Previously, Dr. Ekapong has held several prominent positions, including Inspector-General of the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Deputy Secretary-General of the National Digital Economy and Society Commission, Director of the National Space Affairs Division, and Director of the Digital Economy Driving Division. These roles have strengthened his expertise in driving digital transformation across economic, social, and governance sectors.



Mac Cordel is a Data Scientist at the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where he works in the Data Division of the Economic Research and Development Impact Department. His research at ADB focuses on leveraging innovative data sources, such as mobile location data and satellite data, for development studies—particularly in monitoring internal migration and tourism. He holds a PhD in Computer Science from De La Salle University, specializing in digital signal processing and neural networks.



Romain Santon is the Regional Deputy Director, Asia and Pacific, for the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Program at Vital Strategies. Since 2016, he has led the implementation of and technical assistance for CRVS activities under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative in several countries and at the regional level. He and his team support governments in streamlining birth and death notification as well as the links between the health sector and civil registries, in improving the quality of cause of death reporting, and in enabling countries to produce inclusive vital statistics. Prior to joining Vital Strategies, he was working in the fields of nutrition and HIV/AIDS in Asia, based out of Cambodia. He has over fifteen years of experience in the Non-Profit sector implementing public health, medical and social programs in Asia Pacific, including both field experience with direct contact with the affected populations and beneficiaries, as well as working with local authorities and international partners including UN agencies. He is a committed advocate for partnership, strong country champions and sustained awareness-raising to ensure no one is left uncounted.



Amit Sen works at UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) on the prevention and reduction of statelessness. He previously served as UNHCR's Senior Regional Protection Officer for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), where he coordinated protection from gender-based violence (GBV), child rights violations and statelessness in conflict-affected States such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya, among others. Prior to joining UNHCR, Amit served as a Senior Associate in the federal Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) in the U.S. Department of Justice. He has worked in judicial chambers at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the D.C. Court of Appeals, and has also provided pro bono legal representation to asylum-seekers and their families. Amit earned his law degree from Georgetown University, and has served as a law instructor at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy, and as a Practitioner in Residence at the Keenan Institute of Ethics at Duke University.