

## **Sub-Regional Advocacy Workshop on the Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda in Central Asia**

Almaty, Kazakhstan

9-11 September 2014

### **Key Messages and Recommendations**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized the Sub-Regional Advocacy Workshop on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and post-2015 Development Agenda for Central Asia in Almaty, from 9 to 11 September 2014. The Workshop was attended by 46 government officials, members of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Academia from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Turkmenistan, together with representatives of regional and sub-regional intergovernmental and United Nations funds, programmes, and specialized agencies from UNDG, UNIC, UNHCR, UNISDR, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNODC, EDB and IOM.

2. The main objectives of the Sub-regional Advocacy Workshop were: (a) to disseminate key findings and messages of the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Regional MDGs Report 2012/2013 entitled "Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda" with a particular focus on the progress achieved by the countries in Central Asia; and (b) to discuss how regional and global cooperation could support the implementation of a post-2015 Development Agenda in Central Asia. Implementation issues addressed in the Workshop included technology access, strengthening the evidence base for development effectiveness including strengthening a monitoring and accountability framework, and financing the post-2015 Development Agenda.

#### **II. Recommendations**

3. The following key messages and recommendations emerged from the discussions:

##### **Technology access**

- a) There is a need to facilitate the access to technologies to address the social, economic, environmental dimensions of the SDGs.

- b) There is a need to support the production of basic science in developing countries, to contribute in addressing the development challenges specific to the region.
- c) It was emphasized that the private sector is a main driver of technological change in an economy, including through economic diversification, industrialization and value-addition, and, therefore, Governments should play a supportive role in creating a conducive environment for private sector investment in new, advanced and green technologies.
- d) Countries are encouraged to strengthen international and regional cooperation in supporting technology transfer and investments in science, technology, and innovation as well as in infrastructure development, including connectivity.
- e) Development partners are encouraged to support countries in localizing technologies, knowledge, and information produced at international and regional levels in support of each country's special need with regard to the implementation of internationally agreed goals.
- f) Factors of production in countries should be optimized by Governments in cooperation with development partners using the technologies as a driver force for sustainable development.

#### **Strengthening the evidence base for development effectiveness**

- g) Countries should integrate statistical programmes with national economic and social development planning and implementation. There should be a clear mandate for National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to take up national monitoring of international development goals to ensure appropriate budgetary allocations.
- h) Governments and development partners are encouraged to increase investments in national statistical systems to ensure that staffs of central and local offices of statistical systems have necessary modern information and communication technologies (ICT) tools for data collection and dissemination and that they have the necessary working conditions.
- i) Strengthen user-oriented dissemination of statistics, with special focus on young people, media and decision-makers, and CSOs using new technological tools and social media, with materials in national and local languages and including metadata for transparency. Dissemination of statistics should be combined with measures to improve the statistical literacy of users.
- j) Strengthen coordination among various producers of data, with NSO providing leadership, is required to ensure coherence and harmonization of data from different sources. In this regard, there should be accountability for the production and dissemination of statistics under the responsibility of relevant government ministries and departments.

- k) National statistical systems should be actively engaged in the formulation of national and international development goals. Regional forums, such as ESCAP Committee on Statistics, should facilitate and ensure the participation in international, including intergovernmental, discussions.
- l) International standards, methodologies and classifications on SDGs should be developed. UN Agencies and development partners should ensure capacity-building activities at the regional level on regular basis in order to ensure implementation at the national level.
- m) Regional cooperation should, among others, identify and publicize good practices and national innovative solutions to challenges.
- n) Regional statistical capacity building should take into consideration country and sub-regional conditions and needs for it to be relevant.
- o) Countries are encouraged to explore possibilities for the establishment of a regional database of statistics to facilitate public access to basic national data.

### **Financing for a post-2015 Development Agenda**

- p) Financing is a key element on the implementation of the SDGs, and all sources of finance should be explored, including international and domestic, public and market-based. However, suboptimal choice of financial mechanisms could have an adverse effect and undermines development progress. There is, therefore, a need to careful consideration of the appropriateness of financial mechanisms for supporting the implementation of a post-2015 development agenda.
- q) Countries that heavily rely on remittances are encouraged to create financial mechanisms to harness remittances to be used for SDGs.
- r) To encourage engagement of the private sector in the development agenda, Governments should consider leveraging its capabilities in the provision of public goods through public-private partnerships.
- s) There is a need for innovative financing mechanisms to expand financial inclusion and access to finance for small and medium enterprises. National Governments should support legal and political infrastructures to strengthen financial inclusion.
- t) Domestic resource mobilization could be improved throughout the region.
- u) There is a need for interaction with financial institutions to support the future development agenda. Coordination among different stakeholders at the country level is important.

### **Role of Governments and development partners**

- v) Development partners must coordinate among themselves so that their activities are coherent and aligned with national priorities with sustained impact.
- w) UN, ADB and other development partners together with the Governments are encouraged to support the implementation of regional cooperation initiatives, where relevant.

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