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**Statistical Capacity Building
in Countries with Weak Statistical Capacity**

**Reflections from ADB's experience
in the Asia and Pacific Region**

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Statistical Capacity

- **Statistical capacity** reflects the ability of statistical producers to serve the needs of users with quantity and quality of statistics that meet the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the ability of national users to use them.

Source: OPM 2009. Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration: Thematic Study – Support to Statistical Capacity Building, Synthesis Report. DFID: London/Glasgow

- **Statistical capacity building** can be viewed as a total process that enhances the abilities of the producers and users of statistics.

General capacity building - Three components

- **I. Institutional framework**
 - Statistics Law – defining of stakeholders in NSS and their mandates
 - Strategic Planning for Statistics (NSDS, SMP)
 - Dissemination and use in national planning and management of results
- **II. Organizational framework**
 - Organizational structures (NSO and ministries/other agencies)
 - Coordination mechanisms (coordination committees, statistical councils, etc)
 - Management and Leadership (the Chief Statistician)
 - Workplans of organizations within NSDS framework
- **III. Individual capacity within an organization**
 - Financial Resources to collect, compile, disseminate timely and relevant statistics
 - Sufficient, Qualified and Trained human resources
 - Innovation and technological upgradation

The Asia Pacific region – A mixed statistical development

- Statistical development - Heterogeneous mix
 - **Rudimentary.** Pacific countries.
 - **Early transition** NSO's. Beginning to develop basic skills. e.g., Afghanistan, Timor Leste.
 - **Late transition** NSO's. Completing acquisition of basic skills. e.g., Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Tajikistan, Sri Lanka.
 - **Advanced transition** NSOS's. e.g., Vietnam, Kazakhstan.
 - **Mature** NSOs. e.g. India, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia.

Institutional Framework Capacity Development in Developing countries

- Better institutional frameworks now
- More countries have enacted Statistics Act
- More countries with strategic planning documents - NSDS/SMP
- Mixed picture on improving organization of coordination structures
- Management and Leadership ?

Country Cases – Statistics Act

Country	Stat. Act	Comments
CAMBODIA	Yes	PM Sub-decree 1997. Stat. Act <u>2005</u> NSC and NSCC
LAO PDR	Yes	Decree 140/PM, 2002. New Statistics Law approved in June <u>2010</u> .
MALDIVES	No. Under consideration	Stat. Regulation 1999. Draft Law under consideration. Needs a fresh look.
MONGOLIA	Yes	Stat. Act <u>1994</u> . Several amendments. Strong Act. FPOS, Strong NSO. Provides mechanisms for coordination.
NEPAL	Yes. Under discussion for amendments	Stat. Act, <u>1958</u> . Provides for a centralized set up but <i>defacto</i> decentralized system. Proposed revisions for coordination, designation under discussion.

Organization and Coordination Mechanisms essential for harmonized development

Country	Mechanism	Comments
CAMBODIA	NIS. NSC, NSCC in Stat. Act	Slowly catching up with Stat. Act, NSC and NSCC, designated statistics, NIS taking leadership
LAO PDR	DOS (LBS). No formal forum	Weak, DOS coordinates, adhoc project based. New Law/Strategic Plan - Statistical Advisory Committee proposed
MALDIVES	SD. NSCC (no regulation/informal)	NSCC – too big. Weak commitment in the absence of a structured mandate
MONGOLIA	NSO. Council of NSO in Stat. Act	Non-official members make recommendations to NSO
NEPAL	CBS. NSC	Headed by Vice Chairman NPC. Inactive, rarely meets

Strategic Planning (SMP/NSDS)

Country	NSDS/SMP	Comments
CAMBODIA	SMP(2007) adopted	Began with Forward Work Prog. 2002-06. Donor advocacy and assistance. Plan for entire NSS (2008-15). Priority activities.
LAO PDR	Approved in May 2010	SDNSS 2010-20. Advocacy by multiple external partners. An ambitious plan for NSS.
MALDIVES	Approved Oct. 2010	NSDS formulated for 2010-19 (ADB). Long stakeholder consultation. Approved by National Planning Council.
MONGOLIA	NSDS 2008-12 adopted	NSDS 2008-12 (WB TFSCB). adopted Mid-term program (for NSO)
NEPAL	CNSP(2001) – Not implemented	ADB assisted CNSP – under discussion for long –political will and commitment needed. Enabling political environment lacking.

Management and Leadership essential to steer the NSS

Country	NSO	Parent	Head	Reporting
CAMBODIA	NIS	MPI	DG (V. Min.)	Minister
LAO PDR	DOS (now LBS)	MPI	DG (V. Min.)	Minister
MALDIVES	SD	DNP/MOF	Dy. E.O.	Perm. Secy. DNP
MONGOLIA	NSO (NSC)	Nat'l Par'tment	Ch.man	Parliament (Standing Comm.)
NEPAL	CBS	NPC Sectt/ NPC	DG	Secy. NPC Sectt.

But institutional frameworks and organizational structures not sufficient for sustainable capacity

- Staff strength (numbers) and skills not sufficient
- NSDS and funding requirements
 - Maldives around \$11 million for 2010-19
 - Cambodia, around \$40 million priority statistical projects 2008-2015
 - Lao PDR estimated at \$15 million for 2010-2020.
 - Mongolia around \$13 million for 2008-2015
- Major share of the estimated costs (70%-80%) is for surveys and censuses.

And the reality is...

- Low budgetary allocations – largely office and salaries (e.g. 15%-20% in Lao and Cambodia)
- Major surveys and censuses - only when donors funds are available
- Highly risky resource base
- Line ministries - better systems associated with donor support

Recommendations and Lessons

- SCB in least developed countries is a painstaking and slow process
- Needs long and sustained efforts
 - Government ownership, commitment and leadership is essential
 - Donors advocacy, harmonized efforts and long term support with exit strategy
- Organize overall capacity development – 3 levels
- Incorporate results-based planning
 - Results based goals and targets
 - Recognized role of statistics agencies

Recommendations and lessons(2)

- Country to set its own agenda - Statistical priorities– aligned to national development priorities and user needs (jointly agreed by stakeholders)
- Avoid donor driven programs and priorities
- Provide adequate resources – financial and skilled staff
- NSOs and universities/research institutions
- Promote Regional Cooperation - South-South

Thank you

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