

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (UNESCAP)

Workshop Report on

**Regional Workshop on Promoting Disability Data Collection through the 2010
Population and Housing Censuses
Bangkok, Thailand, April 8-10, 2008**

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) conducted a Regional Workshop on promoting disability data collection through the 2010 population and housing censuses in Bangkok, Thailand, on April 8-10, 2008 with full participation of 69 experts on disability data collection and statisticians from 28 countries in Asia and the Pacific region attending. The workshop was conducted at the United Nations Regional Headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand.

Mr. Ham Hak, DAC's Partnership and Communication Manager and Mr. Hor Darith, Director of Statistics Department, National Institute of Statistics (NIS) were on hand to represent the Kingdom of Cambodia in this meaningful gathering. Experience on data collection and national census 2008, the National Plan of Action for Victim Assistance and the disability legislation were shared with other countries in the region.

Obviously, the Regional Workshop on promoting disability data collection through the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses provided a critical opportunity for improving disability statistics in many countries.

The ESCAP Statistics Division, in collaboration with various partners, is implementing a United Nations Development Account project Improvement of disability measurement and statistics in support of the Biwako Millennium Framework and Regional Census Program which includes a census component.

Based on the momentum generated through the previous WHO/ESCAP joint project on disability statistics and following the establishment of the global recommendations of census questions on disability, this project aims to promote census data collection on disability among countries in the ESCAP region through a targeted regional workshop and other follow-up activities.

It was imperative to note that at the fourth session of ESCAP Committee on Poverty Reduction (12-14 December 2007), which currently includes the Statistics sub-program; many countries expressed strong appreciation and support for the disability project. They confirmed plans to include disability as a topic in the upcoming census and requested technical assistance. Several countries acknowledged the challenges in adopting the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) approach—the urgent need for a clear, common definition of disability, and a set of practical guidelines for implementing the recommendations contained in the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses. A

number of countries expressed strong interest in participating in the proposed disability project.

The proposed regional workshop on promoting disability data collection through the 2010 round of censuses was therefore strategic and timely. The objectives of the workshop are two-fold.

First, the workshop further advocated the ICF-based approach to disability data collection and provides practical training on census data collection and compilation based on the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses.

Second, the workshop served as an important opportunity to identify specific country needs for support in both the census and survey-based data collection. This information can then guide the design and implementation of other project activities, including the development and testing of survey-based extended question sets. The direct exchange of ideas with country participants was also help identify candidate countries for the pilot tests of proposed extended question sets and subsequent analyses.

Likewise, the Regional Workshop was dominated by the following interesting topics to be overwhelmingly discussed as indicated in the following:

1. Dialogue between data users and producers-understanding the mismatch

The session was specifically focused on the topics as follows:

- Biwako Millennium Framework and ESCAP work on disability
- Data producers-The Philippines National Statistical Office
- Data users-National Forum of Organizations working with the disabled—experience of Bangladesh

2. Shifting towards the ICF-based approach for disability data collection

- The ICF-based approach
- Promoting the ICF-based approach in Asia
- Country experiences-Thailand National Statistical Office

3. Applying the ICF-based approach to census data collection

- Development of the global census recommendations and the implementation guidelines
- Country experience on the implementation of the ICF-based approach

4. Parallel session on learning by doing: targeted training on census disability data collection methods

- Questionnaire design and translation into local languages
- Training of interviewers
- Pilot testing
- Data compilation and tabulation
- Best strategies for data dissemination

5. Parallel session on advocating for better data on disability

- Moderated group discussion on the implication of the ICF-based approach for disability data
- Moderated group discussion on best strategies to advocate for better data on disability
- Best strategies for data dissemination

6. How to convince decision-makers

- Why communicate and how to do it
- A practice session
- Getting the message across through interviews

7. From censuses to surveys: national needs for support

- ESCAP project 'improvement of disability measurement and statistics in support of the Biwako Millennium Framework for action and regional census programs
- Washington group work on survey questionnaires
- Identifying the main challenges and countries needs for support for survey data collection

In addition to the workshop and in line with the project Improvement of Disability Measurement and Statistics in Support of the Biwako Millennium Framework and Regional Census Program, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will continue promoting the ICF-based approach for disability data collection offering training to countries, developing knowledge management tools and encouraging country-to-country cooperation.