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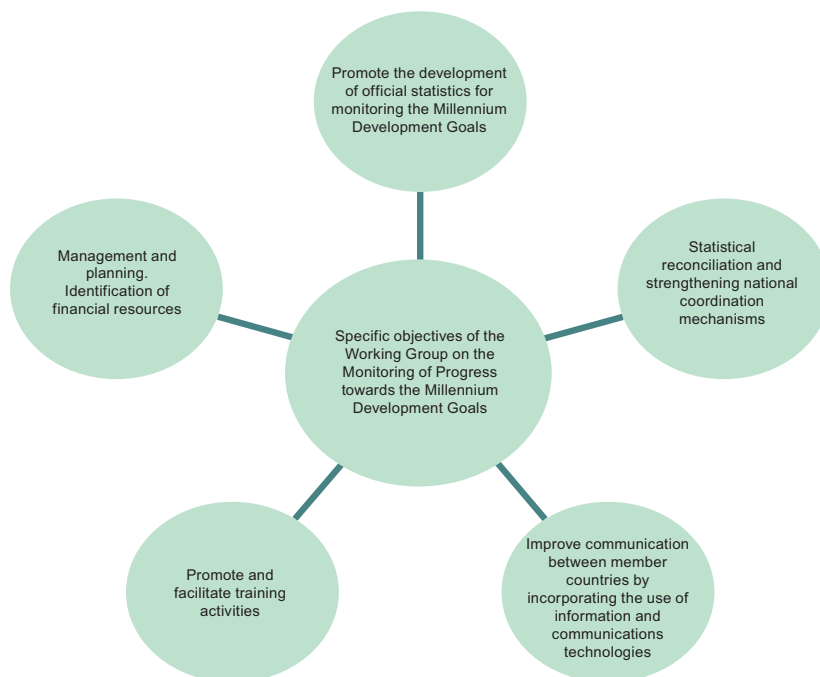
Quito, 2-4 July 2012

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE MONITORING OF PROGRESS
TOWARDS THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

1. **Coordinating country:** Argentina.
2. **Member countries:** Bahamas, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
3. **Technical secretariat:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
4. **Participating bodies**
 - Department of Statistics of the Bahamas
 - National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina
 - National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia
 - National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) of Costa Rica
 - National Statistical Office (ONE) of Cuba
 - National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico
 - Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) of Panama
 - National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) of Peru
 - National Statistical Office (ONE) of the Dominican Republic
 - National Statistical Institute (INE) of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
5. **Programme of work 2012-2013**
 - a) **General and specific objectives:**

Since it was created, the general objectives of the Working Group on the monitoring of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals have been to understand and reduce the discrepancies between the data produced by countries and those used by international bodies in monitoring the Millennium Development Goals, by broadening and improving the quality of statistical data in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and promoting inter-agency coordination both within countries and between countries and international agencies.

At its sixth meeting, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC approved the following specific objectives for the working group for the period 2012-2013:



(b) Description of the specific objectives for the period 2012-2013

I. Promote the development of official statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals	Continue promoting the development of official statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals at the regional, national and subnational levels.
II. Statistical reconciliation and strengthening national coordination mechanisms	Continue developing actions relating to statistical reconciliation by identifying and analysing discrepancies between national data and the data available at the international level, as well as by strengthening national coordination mechanisms for the production of statistics for the Millennium Development Goals and for proper reporting on the Goals in national reports.
III. Improve communication between member countries by incorporating the use of information and communications technologies	Improve communication between the member countries of the working group by incorporating the use of information and communications technologies into its operations, recognizing that holding online meetings and workshops will help the group to meet its objectives.
IV. Promote and facilitate training activities	Promote and facilitate training activities on the production and use of statistics relating to the Millennium Development Goals among producers and users of statistics in the different countries of the region, making use of the Knowledge Transfer Network.
V. Management and planning. Identification of financial resources	Evaluate the activities carried out during the current biennium, adjust the activities and timeline for pending tasks and propose the initial guidelines for the work to be carried out during the 2014-2015 biennium. Identify and channel financial resources to contribute to the further building and improvement of countries' statistical capacities to produce indicators showing progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and to promote their use in the corresponding reports and by other users.

ECLAC reaffirms its commitment to support national statistical production and statistical reconciliation, as well as its resolve to continue contributing to analytical studies on the status of each of the Millennium Development Goals indicators in the region, with a view to fostering more effective regional cooperation. It will fulfil that commitment by implementing an interregional project entitled “Strengthening statistical and inter-institutional capacities for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals through interregional cooperation and knowledge-sharing”, funded by the United Nations Development Account.

(c) Activities and action lines for the period 2012-2013

I. Promote the development of official statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals	
Manage and coordinate participation in thematic meetings organized by other regional agencies	Address the specific details of MDG indicators with the national experts and international agencies responsible for producing indicators in some of the fields covered by the Millennium Development Goals. Create synergies between the institutional entities in the region in order to make efficient use of available resources.
Organize a regional workshop on strengthening statistical capacities	Continue to carry out meetings like those held during the previous biennium. Address technical issues from specific fields covered by the MDGs.
Conduct technical assistance missions	Ensure full transparency in the adjustments and calculation methods used by international agencies to produce indicators for monitoring progress towards achieving the MDGs at the international level. Strengthen the capacities of the national technical teams responsible for producing and monitoring MDG indicators. Organize horizontal cooperation missions in response to specific requests from countries in the region to enable them to benefit from other countries’ strengths and high standards of statistical development.
Broaden the range of complementary MDG indicators	Propose relevant complementary indicators in specific spheres to monitor the regional situation in selected areas, such as hunger, employment and health.
Promote the production of indicators at the subnational level	Prepare a data sheet for each country listing the statistical operations in use in order to catalogue all the sources available in each country for the production of MDG indicators at the subnational level.
II. Statistical reconciliation and strengthening national coordination mechanisms	
Hold a regional seminar on the MDGs (organized by ECLAC with the support of the coordinator of the working group) during the biennium	Exchange ideas among the producers and users of statistics for monitoring progress towards the MDGs. Create forums for discussion on the production and regional harmonization of MDG indicators. Define strategies to continue with the regional statistical reconciliation processes. Promote the active and ongoing participation of national statistical offices in monitoring and reporting on the MDGs. Promote the use of complementary indicators to analyse the situation of the countries within the regional context.
Make progress in addressing statistical discrepancies at conferences, meetings and workshops	Discuss statistical reconciliation measures with national authorities and international or regional agencies specialized in poverty, health, environment, education, gender or other issues in order to move towards the harmonization of statistics on MDGs at the national, regional and international levels. Request international and regional agencies to report on the measures that they have adopted to improve the transparency of information on MDG indicators and the imputing methods used. Foster the strengthening of inter-agency coordination mechanisms through the active participation of all actors involved in the statistical processes related to MDG indicators and national reports on MDGs.
Systematize the information flows among the different national and international agencies	Better understand the origin of the statistics used at the international level by means of a data sheet for each country, which would then be sent to the working group coordinator for analysis and to be used as the basis for a report.

III. Improve communication between member countries by incorporating the use of information and communications technologies	
Set up a collaborative website to facilitate communication among the members of the working group	Remote meetings to coordinate the activities defined for the next biennium. Organization of technical debates to improve collaboration and joint efforts among national statistical offices with the aim of enhancing their participation in preparing national reports on the MDGs.
IV. Promote and facilitate training activities	
Coordinate closely with the Knowledge Transfer Network	Carry out training activities on statistical themes relating to the MDGs, both general and specific, with a view to strengthening the technical capacities of national statistical offices and the respective national sectoral bodies in relation to preparing the national report.
V. Management and planning Identification of financial resources	
Management and planning	Prepare a work plan among members of the group (led by the coordinating country in conjunction with the technical secretariat). Face-to-face meeting to evaluate the activities carried out during the current biennium and adjust the activities and timeline proposed for outstanding tasks as well as propose initial action lines for work to be carried out during the 2014-2015 biennium.
Identify and channel financial resources	Administer and maintain the content on the collaborative website with a view to maintaining fluid communication between the different members of the group, and organize online meetings and technical debates. Consult with countries, through the forum, to formulate fund-raising strategies. Identify possible sources of resources and donors. Manage projects with donors.
	Programme objective
	Programme area
	Action line

(d) Outputs to be submitted to the Statistical Conference of the Americas

The following outputs are to be submitted to the seventh Statistical Conference of the Americas in 2013:

I. Promote the development of official statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals	
List of statistical operations in use in order to catalogue all the sources available in each country for the production of MDG indicators at the subnational level	Coordinating country, countries, ECLAC
International metadata available on the ECLAC MDG website	ECLAC
II. Statistical reconciliation and strengthening national coordination mechanisms	
Report on types of discrepancies and statistical reconciliation measures according to selected objectives, goals and indicators	ECLAC
Systematize the information flows among the different national and international agencies regarding MDG indicators. Analysis of the data sheets and preparation of the report by the working group coordinator with the support of other member countries of the group and the technical secretariat	Coordinating country, countries, ECLAC
III. Improve communication between member countries by incorporating the use of information and communications technologies	
Collaborative website (established and operational in January 2012)	Coordinating country
Subsite within the ECLAC website on MDGs devoted to the working group's main activities	ECLAC

V. Management and planning Identification of financial resources	
Work plan for the working group. Completed in November 2011	Coordinating country, countries, ECLAC
Working group progress report for the eleventh meeting of the Statistical Conference	Coordinating country, countries, ECLAC
Working group progress report for the twelfth meeting of the Statistical Conference	Coordinating country, countries, ECLAC
Report on the conclusions of the working group meeting held to evaluate the activities carried out during the current biennium and propose action lines for the 2014-2015 biennium	Coordinating country, countries, ECLAC

Programme objective
Output
Agency responsible

6. Progress to date

The working group has made progress in setting up a virtual interaction online forum to increase countries' involvement and harmonize their participation, while at the same time making their participation more efficient. The forum was set up in the first quarter of this year in accordance with objective 3 for this biennium to promote and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences regarding the production and use of statistics on MDGs among the countries of the region, based on the inter-agency network of producers and users of MDG indicators in the region. In addition, the establishment of this forum implements the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas to improve the operation of the working groups by gradually incorporating the use of information and communications technologies in their work.

With the support of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico and the participation of the working group's coordinating country, ECLAC organized the annual regional seminar on indicators for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Mexico City on 1-2 December 2011. The seminar forms part of the activities designed to strengthen national coordination mechanisms for the production of statistics on MDGs. Country representatives (from both national statistical offices and agencies responsible for producing national reports on MDGs) participated in the seminar by presenting the experiences of their institutions in monitoring and reporting on MDGs. In addition, the event was attended by representatives of the United Nations Statistics Division and several international agencies responsible for monitoring MDG indicators at the global level, which provided information on the institutional framework for global monitoring, as well as actions implemented to promote statistical reconciliation with regard to MDG indicators.

ECLAC also organized an interregional seminar on sharing good practices with regard to MDG monitoring, which was held in Santiago on 15-16 May 2012.

The seminar forms part of the project entitled "Strengthening statistical and inter-institutional capacities for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals through interregional cooperation and knowledge-sharing", which is being implemented by the five regional commissions of the United Nations for the purpose of encouraging the production of up-to-date, comparable statistics at the national, regional and global levels, promoting collaboration between regions and countries and multiplying the long-term results of the project. The seminar is one of the activities designed to contribute to the strengthening of national coordination mechanisms by facilitating the exchange of ideas among organizations which

generate and use statistics for monitoring MDGs, providing a forum for discussion on the regional harmonization and production of MDG indicators, devising strategies to continue regional statistical reconciliation processes and promoting the active, ongoing participation of national statistics offices in MDG monitoring and reporting.

The aim of the seminar was to promote the exchange of good practices in the production, monitoring and reporting of MDG indicators among countries in different regions of the world and tackle various statistical issues relating to MDG indicators. Three countries from each region were invited to present their experiences, especially those in which MDG monitoring had improved the quality of statistical production and increased the dissemination of statistics, strengthened inter-agency coordination within the context of the national statistical system and promoted the effective use of statistics in national policies devised to fulfil international commitments.

7. Plan of activities

I. Promote the development of official statistics for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals	
List of statistical operations in use in order to catalogue all the sources available in each country for the production of MDG indicators at the subnational level International metadata available on the ECLAC MDG website	July 2012 – June 2013
II. Statistical reconciliation and strengthening national coordination mechanisms	
Report on types of discrepancies and statistical reconciliation measures according to selected objectives, goals and indicators Systematize the information flows among the different national and international agencies regarding MDG indicators Analysis of the data sheets and preparation of the report by the working group coordinator with the support of other member countries of the group and the technical secretariat	July 2012 – June 2013
III. Improve communication between member countries by incorporating the use of information and communications technologies	
Collaborative website	Established and operational (January 2012).
Subsite within the ECLAC website on MDGs devoted to the working group's main activities	Established (January 2012)
IV. Promote and facilitate training activities	
Training activities on MDG statistics to strengthen the technical capacities of national statistical offices and national sectoral bodies in relation to preparing the national report. Coordination and dissemination by means of the Knowledge Transfer Network	Second half of 2012
V. Management and planning Identification of financial resources	
Work plan for the working group	Completed (November 2011)
Working group progress report for the eleventh meeting of the Statistical Conference	May 2012. Completed
Working group progress report for the twelfth meeting of the Statistical Conference	April to June 2013
Report on the conclusions of the working group meeting held to evaluate the activities carried out during the current biennium and propose action lines for the 2014-2015 biennium	Second half of 2013

Programme objective
Output
Timetable