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Eleventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the
Statistical Conference of the Americas of the
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Quito, 2-4 July 2012

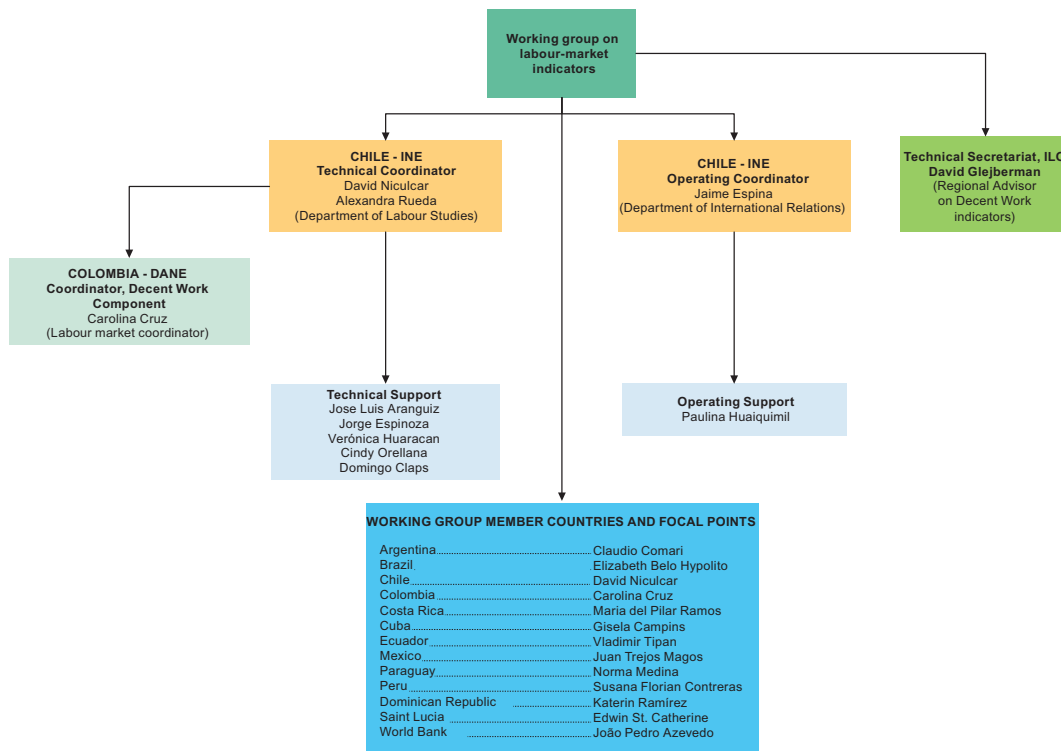
REPORT BY THE WORKING GROUP ON LABOUR-MARKET INDICATORS

A. COORDINATION

The working group is coordinated by the statistical offices of Chile and Colombia. Chile’s National Statistics Institute (INE) has tasked two of its departments with providing ongoing support for the group’s activities. The Department of Labour Studies will be responsible for technical coordination of the group; the Office of International Relations will coordinate international cooperation and organize on-site meetings, courses and seminars.

As for the specific component referring to decent work indicators, coordination will be handled by Colombia through its National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE). The structure and modality of work are set out in table 1.

Table 1
WORK STRUCTURE AND MODALITY



B. MEMBERS

The group’s 12 member countries are listed below.

- Argentina
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia

- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Mexico
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Saint Lucia

There is also a representative from the World Bank.

C. TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is serving as technical secretariat.

D. PROGRAMME OF WORK 2012–2013

1. Objectives

(a) Main objective of the working group

Further the international comparability of labour market indicators taking into consideration the particularities of the countries of the region, and contribute to the harmonization of methodologies and the development of new indicators via the exchange of national experiences so as to enhance labour statistics in the countries.

(b) Specific objectives:

- Review the official tools used by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to measure employment, unemployment, underemployment and decent work in order to conduct a region-wide assessment of the dimensions to be discussed at the working group's first on-site meeting and provide an up-to-date inventory of related practices followed by the countries of the region.
- Establish a regional position as to the current definitions of employment, unemployment and underemployment that will be revised during the nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), to be held in Geneva on 2-11 October 2013.
- Promote a strategic plan for developing a set of basic indicators for monitoring and assessing progress towards decent work.
- Work towards incorporating decent work indicators into the national statistical systems of the Latin American and Caribbean countries.

- Reach a consensus as to the questions on labour force surveys to ensure that they yield enough information to meet the requirements for harmonization and comparability of traditional labour market indicators as well as the new indicators proposed by the working group to measure labour force underutilization, underemployment, decent work and informality.

2. Main activities proposed for 2012-2013

The goals for this work period are:

1. Prepare an assessment of how the countries of the region measure employment, unemployment, underemployment and decent work (inventory of practices).
2. Prepare a regional technical consensus document on the definitions of employment, unemployment and underemployment currently under discussion.
3. Prepare a proposal for new labour market indicators (underemployment, labour force underutilization, decent work and informality indicators)
4. Participate in regional workshops and seminars related to labour market statistics, in order to disseminate experiences and developments in this sphere (discussions, consensuses and proposals).

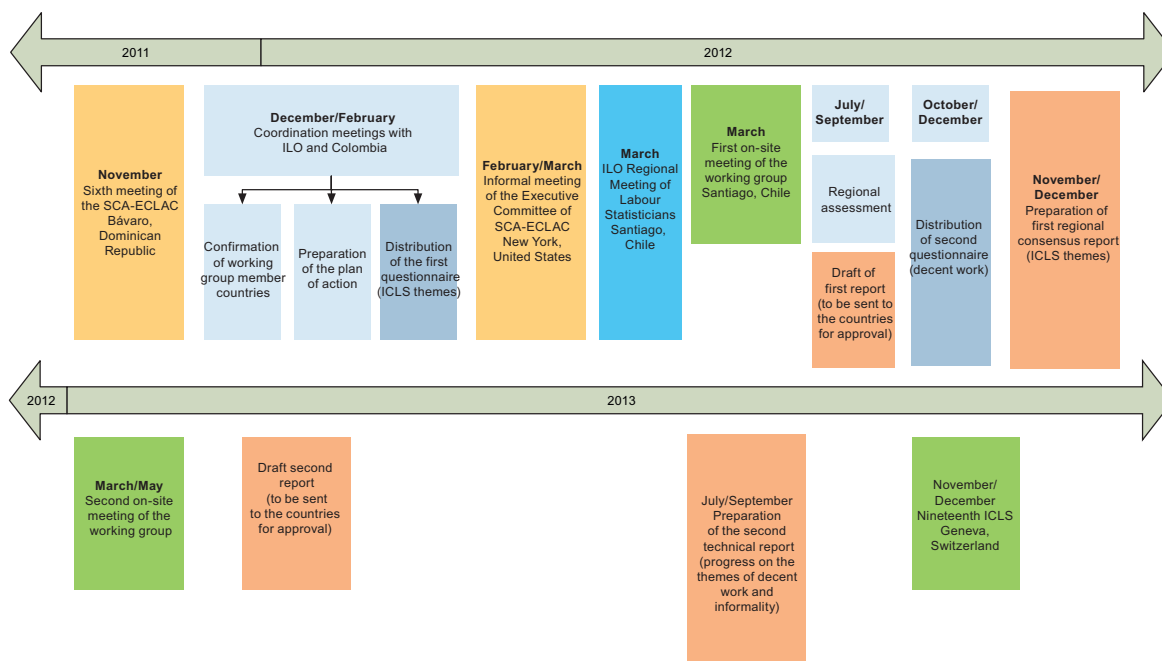
The activities for achieving these objectives are:

- Distribute questionnaires to the countries of the region.
It is proposed that two questionnaires be distributed. The first has to do with the themes that are being reviewed and updated for the next ICLS (distributed in February/March 2012). The second will concern measuring decent work (it will be distributed in the last quarter of 2012).
- Foster spaces for technical discussion by means of on-site meetings, e-mail, videoconferences and Internet forums.
The plans are to hold at least one on-site meeting per year to discuss items on the work programme, agree on positions and review progress on the plan. The first meeting took place in March 2012 in Santiago, Chile.
- Prepare a regional assessment of ICLS themes.
The input will be the data gathered with the first questionnaire distributed to the countries of the region, along with the background information emerging from the first on-site meeting (the report is expected to be ready in July/August 2012).
- Prepare technical documents.
At least two technical documents are planned. The first will concern the regional position on the definitions of employment, unemployment and underemployment (November/December 2012). The second will focus on agreeing on proposed decent work indicators (a draft should be ready during the second quarter of 2013).
- Participate in the ILO Regional Meeting of Labour Statisticians (preparatory for the nineteenth ICLS), held in March 2012 in Santiago, Chile.

- Conduct regional seminars in order to present progress and proposals by the working group on labour market indicators.

The general timeline of activities is provided in table 2.

Table 2
TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES 2012-2013



3. Expected outcomes for the seventh meeting of the SCA-ECLAC (November 2013)

The expected outcomes centre on the goals described above. Their achievement indicators are:

- Hold two on-site meetings.
- Prepare a regional assessment of the dimensions related to measuring employment, unemployment and underemployment.
- Prepare a regional consensus document on current proposals for reviewing and updating international standards for statistics on the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment with a view to the nineteenth ICLS, to be held in 2013.
- Prepare a technical document proposing a set of basic indicators for monitoring progress on decent work in the countries of the region.

E. PROGRESS TO DATE

1. Confirmation of the working group member countries.
2. Preparation of the plan of action (agreed by consensus among the working group member countries). This report was submitted at the informal meeting of the Executive Committee of the SCA, held in New York in March 2012.
3. Distribution and receipt of the first questionnaire consulting the member countries of the group. During this initial phase, the consultation focused on measuring the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment. Nevertheless, a few questions were added on indicators that are complementary to the unemployment rate.

The questionnaire is currently being reviewed and updated by the member countries in order to yield a final version that will provide input for preparing the regional assessment report.

4. First on-site meeting of the working group, during the last week of March in Santiago, Chile. A majority of the member countries attended (with the sole absence of the representative of Cuba). The issues discussed during the meeting were:
 - (a) Regional assessment: Looking at regional comparability by examining official measurement criteria and tools used by the member countries of the group.
 - (b) Regional position on reviewing and updating international standards for statistics on the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment with a view to the nineteenth ICLS, to be held in 2013.
 - (c) ILO position on measuring decent work and informality.
 - (d) Review of national experiences in the measurement of decent work and informality indicators.
 - (e) Work agenda for progress on designing and monitoring decent work indicators in the region (feasibility).
 - (f) Global agenda for the working group for 2012-2013.

All of the presentations are available and have been e-mailed to all of the members of the group.

5. Preparation of the regional consensus document (currently in the drafting stage).