



Regional Technical Assistance Report

Project Number: 39359
December 2007

Supporting the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the Asia and Pacific Region, Phase III

Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
DMC	–	developing member country
HIV/AIDS	–	human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
LDC	–	least developed country
MDG	–	Millennium Development Goal
RSDD	–	Regional and Sustainable Development Department
TA	–	technical assistance
UN	–	United Nations
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	–	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CLASSIFICATION

Targeting Classification	–	Targeted Intervention
Sectors	–	Multisector (law, economic management and public policy; health, nutrition, and social protection; education)
Subsectors	–	Economic management, other social services and social development, basic education
Themes	–	Inclusive social development, capacity development
Subthemes	–	Human development; client relations, network, and partnership development

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In September 2000, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration defining Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which marked the international community's commitment at the beginning of the millennium to reduce poverty in all its dimensions by 2015. In 2004, the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Enhanced Poverty Reduction Strategy strongly emphasized MDG achievement, making this objective ADB's long-term goal in the region, and the basis on which its overall development effectiveness is measured. Also in 2004, ADB entered into a regional partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support MDG achievement and approved the first phase of a \$1 million three-phase regional technical assistance (RETA) to support this partnership. The RETA involves preparation of joint regional reports on MDGs, technical papers, capacity-building support to enhance the MDG database, and advocacy and active information dissemination to stakeholders through regional MDG forums. The RETA's first phase of \$350,000 was approved on 4 November 2004, and the second phase of \$325,000 on 30 November 2005.

2. The commitment and support of developing member countries (DMCs) in the region (including ADB's DMCs) to achieve MDGs was stressed during an August 2005 ministerial-level meeting in Jakarta, which adopted a declaration by countries and stakeholders for accelerating progress on MDGs.¹ In March 2007, a regional road map—jointly prepared by ADB, UNESCAP, and UNDP as a response to the request of governments, donors, and other stakeholders at this meeting—was adopted at the 63rd session of UNESCAP in Almaty. This road map provides a platform for regional-level action in support of MDGs, involving various actions by developing countries, donors, and other stakeholders.

3. So far, several important outputs have resulted from the partnership. A regional MDG report, *A Future Within Reach: Reshaping Institutions in a Region of Disparity to Meet the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific*, was launched jointly by the three partner institutions at ADB headquarters and UN headquarters during the sidelines of the September 2005 UN General Assembly Session. The President of ADB also addressed the General Assembly on challenges facing MDG achievement in Asia and the Pacific. The partnership among the institutions has resulted in (i) publication of several technical papers apart from the regional report, on topics related to MDGs,² and the launch of two annual MDG progress reports in October 2006 and October 2007;³ (ii) three high-level MDG consultations; (iii) advocacy and dissemination forums for South Asia, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia;⁴ and (iv) capacity-building work on building up MDG data, including a workshop in Bangkok, 31 July–2 August 2006, and an international conference on MDG statistics, 1–3 October 2007.

4. The RETA's third phase⁵ will build on the outputs of the first and second phases, further advancing regional efforts for MDG achievement. The technical assistance (TA) framework in Appendix 1 summarizes the third phase's main aspects.

¹ See the Jakarta Declaration at http://www.undp.or.id/archives/pressrelease/MDG_RMM_Jakarta_Declaration.pdf.

² Including (i) ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP, WHO. 2005. *Asia Water Watch 2015: Are Countries in Asia on Track to Meet Target 10 of the Millennium Development Goals?* Manila; and (ii) ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP. 2006. *Pursuing Gender Equality through the MDG in Asia and the Pacific*. Manila.

³ ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP. 2006. *The Millennium Development Goals: Progress in Asia and the Pacific 2006*. Bangkok; and ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP. 2007. *The Millennium Development Goals: Progress in Asia and the Pacific 2007*. Bangkok.

⁴ Held on 11–12 October 2006 in Kathmandu, 1–2 March 2007 in Hanoi, and 17–18 July 2007 in Bishkek.

⁵ The TA first appeared in *ADB Business Opportunities* on 20 November 2007.

II. ISSUES

5. 2007 marks the midpoint between 2000, when the MDGs were adopted, and 2015, the target date of achievement—however, many issues must still be addressed to ensure that DMCs reach their MDGs. Capacity and institutional constraints, as well as least developed countries' (LDCs) financial gaps, must be urgently tackled. Data gaps have been also identified as a major limitation in assessing progress accurately, prohibiting the provision of policy direction and intervention to fast-track MDG achievement in Asia and the Pacific.

6. The most recent MDG progress report in Asia and the Pacific, from October 2007, highlights progress in halving the number of people living on \$1 a day as well as in some non-income poverty indicators. The region is progressing well on many additional MDGs, including (i) reducing extreme poverty by half, (ii) attaining universal primary education, (iii) achieving gender parity in education, and (iv) reversing the incidence of tuberculosis. However, progress is slow in some non-income poverty targets, including (i) reducing child malnutrition by half; (ii) decreasing child mortality by two thirds; (iii) reducing the share of rural population without access to drinking water by half; (iv) lowering the share of urban and rural population without access to basic sanitation by half; (v) halting or reversing HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases; (vi) reducing the loss of environmental resources; and (vii) lessening gender disparities in areas other than education, e.g., health, employment, income, ownership rights, and decision-making power in society.

7. The data in this progress report indicates that for ADB DMCs, as many as 29 countries may not reach 25% or more of the 19 non-income MDG indicators studied. Of these 29 countries, as many as 18 are Asian Development Fund-receiving countries—indicating that particular attention is needed towards the region's weaker countries.

8. The region still accounts for more than one-half of the world's poor, child and maternal deaths, malnourished population, and numbers of people without access to improved sanitation and water supplies. The progress report estimates that if the currently off-track countries were to alter their course to a new trajectory that would enable them to meet the MDG targets by 2015, it would mean that (i) 196 million more people would be lifted out of poverty, (ii) 23 million less children would go hungry, (iii) about 1 million children would survive beyond their fifth birthday, (iv) 4 million more children would receive basic education, (v) 240 million more people would have access to improved sanitation, and (vi) 80 million more urban dwellers would have access to improved water supplies.

9. In addition, the report found that there is uneven progress among countries, as well as rising disparities between income groups and urban and rural areas—with lowest-income groups and rural areas generally having substantially lower MDG achievement. There is also an urgent need to prioritize LDCs, as they are generally off-track on MDGs pertaining to poverty, hunger, child mortality, and access to water and sanitation, and they have the highest rates of child and maternal mortality.

10. Continued work on these areas of concern is necessary. These issues must be studied, solutions offered, and good practices that have worked elsewhere highlighted. The technical paper series that was begun with the second report will therefore need to be continued.

11. Another significant issue is the weakness of MDG data, a constraint in making reliable projections on many indicators for countries and on policy prescriptions for governments. While efforts were made prior to preparing the regional MDG report, as well as the progress reports of

2006 and 2007, many indicators are still unavailable, including those on maternal health and HIV and other communicable diseases. Coverage of data in Pacific countries and several Central Asian countries is particularly weak.

12. So far, outputs from the RETA's first and second phases have focused attention on issues facing MDG attainment as well as on galvanizing national and regional efforts to this objective. However, considerable effort will be needed to sustain this momentum beyond 2007, so that all stakeholders continue to strive towards achieving them until 2015. This will require continuing dissemination activities on the findings of the next regional MDG report and technical papers on the areas of concern identified from earlier reports and feedback received at regional forums. Active involvement of civil society and the private sector are necessary to achieve the MDGs and ways of involving and partnering with them better will have to be promoted.

13. Regional cooperation has remained a vital tool for reaching the MDG targets by 2015. To this end, efforts to support regional cooperative efforts in Asia and the Pacific would also be a priority in the RETA's third phase. The regional road map⁶ described in para. 2 aims to optimize the region-wide efforts of ADB and the partner UN institutions, other multilateral development banks, bilateral development agencies, intergovernmental bodies, and member countries in support of MDGs. Focusing on off-track countries and those falling below the Asian average, the road map presents five products and services that could be offered at the regional level: (i) knowledge and capacity development, (ii) expertise, (iii) resources, (iv) advocacy for MDGs, and (v) regional cooperation in delivering regional public goods. The RETA's third phase, this TA, will support this road map's implementation.

14. ADB has been making considerable contributions towards supporting MDGs through its operations in its DMCs. As indicated in para. 1, ADB's Enhanced Poverty Reduction Strategy strongly emphasizes MDGs, as it supports income poverty reduction through infrastructure investments for growth and contributes to the environmental goal, particularly in clean energy and water and sanitation. ADB has also adapted a significant role in basic education and a modest but critical one in HIV/AIDS control through regional efforts. It is also mainstreaming gender equality in operations. In addition, ADB's future project pipeline has significant support for MDG-related sectors.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Impact and Outcome

15. In support of the milestones achieved and activities implemented under the RETA's first and second phases, the main goal of this TA is to establish a better basis for tracking MDG progress by stakeholders and to make operationally relevant analysis available to them, particularly in the sectors of concern and countries of Asia and the Pacific that are currently at risk of not achieving MDGs. It is envisaged that regional MDG reports, and background and supporting technical papers, will be properly disseminated to raise awareness, lead to improved policies and institutions, and generate increased resources and capacities for MDG attainment.

16. The main outputs of this TA are (i) the joint regional MDG report III; (ii) background and supporting technical papers; (iii) dissemination of these reports and papers to appropriate audiences in DMCs so that greater awareness is created and necessary action is initiated by

⁶ ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP. 2007. *Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the Asia-Pacific Region: Regional Road Map to 2015*. Bangkok. This regional road map was supported by the 55 member countries of UNESCAP that includes ADB's DMCs.

governments and all stakeholders for MDG achievement; and (iv) activities to further improve data on MDGs, particularly improved data coverage that highlights countries at risk and identifies financing gaps.

B. Methodology and Key Activities

17. ADB, UNDP, and UNESCAP will closely monitor the TA's outputs and outcomes. It is envisaged that it will tentatively cover the following areas:

- (i) **Knowledge products on MDGs.** The TA's major emphasis will be on the preparation of the MDG III report, expected to be finalized within the first quarter of 2008; technical background papers; and annual progress reports. The technical background papers are tentatively proposed to focus on the following areas, which will be confirmed based on needs assessed during TA implementation: (a) country needs assessments and identification of MDG resource/financing gaps in LDCs;⁷ (b) new directions in reducing poverty and hunger; (c) transboundary issues on the environment and MDGs; (d) new options/innovative approaches in addressing women and child health issues; (e) improving synergies between social and physical infrastructure for achieving the MDGs; and (f) expanding cooperation between LDCs and high- and middle-income countries of Asia for MDGs.
- (ii) **Improving data coverage and quality.** This TA will continue the efforts begun under the RETA's second phase and will focus primarily on capacity building to improve data on MDGs with the aim of covering existing data gaps within a few years. Large data gaps exist in most international data series, especially in extreme poverty, child hunger, maternal health, educational attainment, and youth unemployment. This would require close coordination of activities between the three partner institutions, the ADB Institute, and other national and regional agencies that will be involved in capacity-building activities focused on addressing the lack of national statistical capacity. Appendix 4 contains details of the capacity-building concept note from which a more detailed action plan will be developed during TA implementation.
- (iii) **Dissemination.** So that issues highlighted in the MDG regional reports and the technical paper series will continue to be deliberated by policy makers, aid sources, and other stakeholders, a dissemination program involving subregional launches of the MDG report III and technical papers, national advocacy and communication events, workshops, and web-based information and networking will be implemented. This will require preparation of dissemination material for various types of media, and involve the help of ADB resident missions and UNDP country offices. The establishment of a network of research and academic institutions to exchange MDG research, results, and information will be explored. When possible, reports will be translated into various languages to reach a wider audience and for greater utilization.

C. Cost and Financing

18. The TA has a total cost of \$1,300,000, of which \$325,000 will be financed on a grant basis by ADB's TA funding program and the balance by the two partners UNESCAP and UNDP.

⁷ UNDP has begun conducting gap assessment exercises in several countries.

Of this amount, \$200,000 will be transferred to UNESCAP for its portion of the TA implementation that is broadly defined in para. 15; while \$125,000 will be retained by ADB for ADB-led activities. The detailed cost estimates and financing plan are in Appendix 2.

D. Implementation Arrangements

19. The three-phase RETA is an important collaboration between ADB, UNDP, and UNESCAP, which have all given financial and staff resource commitments to ensure quality outputs. A formal memorandum of understanding was signed with UNESCAP and UNDP for the first phase, defining the roles and responsibilities of the partner institutions to ensure the project's smooth implementation. This arrangement was continued for the second phase and will be employed for this TA.⁸ ADB will be the Executing Agency, to be implemented by the Poverty Unit of the Regional and Sustainable Development Department, which will coordinate an interdepartmental effort for the purpose. The TA will be implemented for a period of 30 months from December 2007 to June 2010.

20. A high-level steering committee comprising the ADB vice president for knowledge management and sustainable development, UNESCAP executive secretary, and UNDP assistant administrator for East Asia and the Pacific was established to provide overall project guidance. A working group consisting of representatives from the three organizations will coordinate the preparation and ensure the quality and timely delivery of outputs, as before.

21. This third phase will engage 9 person-months of consulting services (4 person-months international, and 5 person-months national) for the TA activities directly undertaken by ADB. The consultants to be hired by ADB will be development specialists with experience in the area of MDGs (Appendix 3). The consultants will be selected and engaged individually in accordance with ADB's *Guidelines on the Use of Consultants* (2007, as amended from time to time).

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

22. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the provision of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$325,000 on a grant basis for supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the Asia and Pacific Region, Phase III, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

⁸ The memoranda of understanding necessary include brief documents highlighting only the third phase's specific aspects and confirming the main agreements of the previous phases.

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Design Summary	Performance Targets/Indicators	Data Sources/Reporting Mechanisms	Assumptions and Risks
<p>Impact</p> <p>Greater awareness of MDGs in DMCs that can lead to improved policies and increased resources for MDG attainment</p>	<p>Increased support for MDGs in national plans and strategies by 2010</p>	<p>Individual MDG country reports</p> <p>National poverty reduction strategy documents</p> <p>Regional MDG reports and updates</p>	<p>Assumption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries strongly support MDG philosophy as reflected in their development documents, policies, and budgets. <p>Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic shocks prevent sufficient prioritization for MDGs.
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Improved basis for tracking progress of MDGs by stakeholders established</p> <p>Operationally relevant analysis made available</p> <p>Better quality data on MDGs produced by DMCs</p>	<p>Periodic availability of MDG progress monitoring reports, e.g., at least once a year</p> <p>Increase in operationally relevant analytical studies that are produced and disseminated</p> <p>Improvement in MDG indicators in database figures for countries in Asia and the Pacific by 2010, particularly in countries identified as at risk in the 2007 MDG progress report</p>	<p>MDG indicators based on UN data</p>	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued commitment of governments and other stakeholders in achieving MDGs • Successful partnerships with national and regional statistical agencies are established.
<p>Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Third joint MDG regional report with more complete reporting on MDGs 2. Technical background papers and 2009 progress report 3. Reports, agreements, and action plans as outputs from dissemination conferences and workshops 	<p>Target for launch in second quarter of 2008</p> <p>All outputs completed based on the schedule agreed on by ADB, UNDP, and UNESCAP, and of acceptable quality</p> <p>All outputs completed based on schedule agreed on by ADB, UNDP, and UNESCAP, and of acceptable quality</p>	<p>International data series, technical background papers, and the 3 partner institutions ensuring that report is of high quality</p> <p>Timeliness of publications assessed according to agreed-on timetable, and quality assessment made by ADB staff</p> <p>Quality of workshops and conferences obtained through participant feedback</p>	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate staff resources are allocated by all 3 partner agencies for the outputs planned. • No delay occurs in memorandum of understanding finalization between the 3 partner agencies. <p>Risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is insufficient support from DMC governments for data improvements and participation in workshops and conferences at appropriate levels.

Activities with Milestones	Inputs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct steering committee meetings (in first quarter 2008 and second quarter 2009) 2. Conduct working group reviews and meetings (as needed) 3. Consultation, coordination, review, and related preparatory activity for the third joint MDG report, 2009 update, and technical papers (final schedule of preparation and reviews to be agreed on by ADB, UNDP, and UNESCAP at beginning of TA implementation) 4. Dissemination activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Workshops and seminars at the subregional level (at least 3 including MDG III report launch in second quarter of 2008; other workshop/seminar schedule will be determined during implementation) 4.2 National advocacy and communication events 4.3 Web-based dissemination activity (schedule for 4.2 and 4.3 to be agreed on by ADB, UNDP, and UNESCAP) 5. Capacity-building activities (detailed action plan will be created based on issues presented in the concept note in Appendix 4 during TA implementation) 	<p>ADB: Financial (\$325,000) and staff resources for technical paper preparation, review, and dissemination</p> <p>UNDP: Financial (\$487,500) and staff resources for report and paper review and dissemination</p> <p>UNESCAP: Financial and staff resources in cash and in-kind (totaling \$487,500) for report and paper preparation, review, publication, and dissemination</p>

ADB = Asian Development Bank, DMC = developing member country, MDG = Millennium Development Goal, TA = technical assistance, UNDP = United Nations Development Programme, UNESCAP = United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

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4 December 2007

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN
(\$'000)

Item	I	II	Total Cost
A. ADB Financing^a			
1. Consultants			
a. Remuneration and Per Diem			
i. International Consultants	72.00	70.00	142.00
ii. National Consultants	15.00	45.00	60.00
b. International and Local Travel	5.00	10.00	15.00
c. Reports and Communications	5.00	35.00	40.00
2. Training, Seminars, and Conferences	20.00	25.00	45.00
3. Miscellaneous Administration and Support Costs	3.00	10.00	13.00
4. Contingencies	5.00	5.00	10.00
Subtotal (A)	125.00	200.00	325.00
B. UNDP/UNESCAP Financing			
1. Office Accommodation and Transport			100.00
2. Remuneration and Per Diem of Counterpart Staff			800.00
3. Others			75.00
Subtotal (B)			975.00
Total			1,300.00

ADB = Asian Development Bank, UNDP = United Nations Development Programme, UNESCAP = United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

^a Financed by ADB's technical assistance funding program. The budget under column I will be administered by ADB, and the budget under column II will be transferred to and administered by UNESCAP for simultaneous implementation of activities.

^b Equally financed by UNESCAP and UNDP

Source: ADB estimates.

OUTLINE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

1. The technical assistance (TA) will engage 9 person-months of consulting services (4 person-months, international, and 5 person-months, national) for the TA activities directly undertaken by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

A. International Consultant

1. **Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Specialist** (international, 4 person-months)

2. The MDG specialist will be an expert on development, particularly poverty reduction and MDGs; possess considerable field experience in MDG-related areas and issues; and have contributed to international journals on these areas and issues. The consultant will support the preparation of technical papers on issues crucial to attaining MDGs, particularly those confronting poorly performing countries and sectors. The consultant will also contribute to and support the information dissemination activities of ADB's Poverty Unit undertaken jointly by ADB, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Specifically this work will involve, but not be limited to, the following activities:

- (i) in close coordination with UNESCAP, UNDP, and ADB staff, prepare technical papers of about 20 pages long (with additional pages for appendixes) that analyze specific issues concerning MDG achievement, and provide associated expert opinions and advice for governments' use;
- (ii) review concept notes and technical papers prepared by other agencies, and provide comprehensive comments to improve the quality of the final documents; and
- (iii) participate in workshops and seminars undertaken as part of the dissemination activities for the MDG report III, annual progress reports, and other technical papers, and act as resource person if necessary.

B. National Consultant

1. **MDG Expert** (national, 5 person-months)

3. The MDG expert will have professional experience in development, including field experience in poverty reduction and MDGs; possess considerable experience in working on MDG-related issues; and have contributed to international journals on these areas. The activities of this position include but are not limited to:

- (i) supporting the work of the international consultant in all assigned tasks, particularly with respect to data gathering and analysis;
- (ii) assisting the international consultant in the preparation of technical papers that analyze specific issues concerning MDG achievement, and provide expert opinions and advice for governments' use;
- (iii) supporting the international consultant in reviewing concept notes and technical papers prepared by other agencies and providing comments to improve the quality of the final documents;

- (iv) organizing workshops and seminars undertaken as part of the dissemination activities for the MDG report III, annual progress reports, and other technical papers, and preparing dissemination material; and
- (v) supporting web-based dissemination on the ADB poverty web site.

IMPROVING DATA FOR MONITORING MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

1. Despite recent progress, the need for complete and consistent data for monitoring Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remains urgent. The newly released MDG progress update, *The Millennium Development Goals: Progress in Asia and the Pacific 2007*, reveals large data gaps in most international data series, particularly in extreme poverty, child hunger, maternal health, educational attainment, and youth unemployment.

2. These data gaps reflect the lack of country capacity to produce basic human development statistics on a sustainable basis, as well as to use existing, alternative data sources to produce indirect estimates for some key MDG indicators. In addition, poor coordination among statistical agencies within countries and between national and international agencies often leads to inconsistent national and international data series, which undermines the credibility of national or regional progress assessments and affects policy dialogues.

3. To improve the reliability and availability of data for monitoring MDGs in Asia and the Pacific, the partnership between the Asian Development Bank, United Nations Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and United Nations Development Programme proposes to conduct an assessment of countries' statistical capacity to produce timely data for core MDG indicators with large existing data gaps. This assessment, coordinated by UNESCAP, will be conducted through an information survey among countries with topics including: (i) the current data source, e.g., census, survey, or administrative system; (ii) responsible national data agencies; (iii) sustainability of data production, e.g., periodicity of surveys; (iv) data quality issues, e.g., coverage and other limitations of administrative data; and (v) possible alternative data sources and the needs for developing estimation/imputation methodologies. The assessment's results will provide a basis for developing targeted capacity-building activities, including training and technical support. When creating the assessment, countries' differing needs will be taken into account. The focus will be on the weaker, but several middle-income countries also have data gaps and require special measures to address them. An inventory of existing data sources, including survey data, will also be a part of the assessment.

4. The above partnership also proposes to promote coordination among national statistical agencies to strengthen the role of national statistic offices as central coordinators, and between national and international data agencies to improve international data availability and the consistency between national and international data series. The significant role of regional agencies in strengthening capacities will also be taken into account by expanding the tripartite partnership to include United Nations Statistics Division and the regional arms of other key international data agencies. The information survey on country capacity and the subsequent development of technical support activities to countries will be carried out under this expanded partnership and will enhance country coordination. With the support of the United Nations Statistics Division and UNESCAP, the United Nations country team—which in many countries is headed by UNDP given its critical role in country MDG reporting and in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and National Human Development Report (NHDR) processes—should be promoted as an in-country mechanism that supports better coordination of more consistent MDG data for both national and international assessments. The specific coordination measures to be developed under this project will support existing data collection and dissemination mechanisms established by international data agencies.

5. This proposed project is a response to country needs expressed at the 2006 Workshop on Statistics for Monitoring the Achievement of the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific, which

occurred in Bangkok, 31 July–2 August 2007, and the 2007 International Conference on the MDGs, which took place in Manila, 1–3 October 2007. It will inevitably be linked to other ongoing statistical capacity building activities of the key agencies, e.g., the Asian Development Bank's project on improving administrative data sources¹ and Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific's training program. The results of the information survey will also provide a basis for developing future complementary statistical capacity-building activities in the region.

6. Based on this concept note, a more detailed action plan will be developed over the first 3 months of technical assistance implementation. The proposed activities will be implemented, based on funds allocated for the technical assistance, and made available by other partners.

¹ ADB. 2006. *Technical Assistance for Improving Administrative Data Sources for the Monitoring of the Millennium Development Goal Indicators*. Manila.