Regional: Statistical Business Registers for Improved Information on Small, Medium-Sized, and Large Enterprises

Project Name
Statistical Business Registers for Improved Information on Small, Medium-Sized, and Large Enterprises

Project Number
47108-001

Country / Economy
- Regional

Project Status
Closed

Project Type / Modality of Assistance
- Technical Assistance

Source of Funding / Amount
TA 8594-REG: Statistical Business Registers for Improved Information on Small, Medium and Large Enterprises

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<th>Source</th>
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Strategic Agendas
- Inclusive economic growth

Drivers of Change
- Governance and capacity development

Sector / Subsector
- Public sector management / Economic affairs management

Gender
Description

Statistical business register (SBR) is a register of enterprises or establishments involved in a business activity that is maintained by the National Statistical Office (NSO) or other parts of National Statistical System (NSS). SBR is closely linked to business registry/ies. Business registries facilitate registration of businesses as per regulatory requirements of the country and may be residing in different geographical locations, ministries or regulatory authorities. SBR on the other hand is usually centralized in the NSO and draws on the information from these registers, assembled into a directory of businesses which is then used to draw sample and population data
for conducting surveys and censuses to produce official statistics. SBR hence is of fundamental importance to the NSO for the compilation of official statistics in accordance with international standards and frameworks such as the System of National Accounts 2008. Aside from being used for the conduct of surveys, SBR is also used in reconciling and/or incorporating survey results with data from administrative sources such as that obtained from tax authorities and thus providing an improved basis for production of official statistics, which are vital inputs in policy/strategy formulation such as the of country partnership strategies and for monitoring MDGs.

Many Developing Member Countries (DMCs) in Asia and the Pacific, with ADB support, are currently in the process of modernizing, strengthening and improving their business registries to improve the overall business environment and facilitate private sector development. Given the close link between the business registries and the SBRs, and the strong demand in the region for assistance in this area, there is an opportunity and a need to support DMCs in establishing and improving their SBRs. This technical assistance (TA) will build on and complement the ongoing initiatives by ADB’s regional departments by strengthening the link between SBRs and business registers, ensuring that the information collected via business registries is optimized by the NSSs, and contributes towards improved coordination among relevant national agencies in the collection and compilation of data on small, medium (SME) and large enterprises. These efforts would aid in improving and expanding the statistical information on SMEs and large enterprises and reducing both costs and response burden. The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy

The benefits of having well established and functioning SBR go well beyond improving the quality of economic and business statistics as it also has the potential to significantly enrich the depth of knowledge about establishments. Having good SBR can meaningfully improve the basic information on SMEs and large enterprises. It provides valuable information not only about the number of enterprises, their births and survival rates, but also their key characteristics such as principal activity, number of employees, size of turnover, etc. Such structural business statistics are lacking in the DMCs which are useful input into strategy formulation and evaluating the impact of development projects, including national SMEs development policies and related government support measures. Given that a clear majority of workers in many DMCs are employed in SMEs, and the role SMEs play in lifting people out of poverty, SBRs can contribute to meeting the data needs for timely intervention to further enhance the role of SMEs in national strategies for growth, job creation and social cohesion. Further as SMEs are crucial to more sustainable and inclusive growth, they can only fulfill this potential if they can obtain the finance necessary to start and grow their businesses. Herein SBRs can assist in narrowing the supply-demand information gap in SME finance and contribute to broadening new financing modalities that SMEs can access.

In many DMCs there is increasing pressure to reduce the burden on enterprises to supply information for statistical surveys while data users and policy makers are constantly presenting new requirements. Well established SBR can assist in reconciling these conflicting needs by allowing surveys to be distributed more effectively and economically between various enterprises and in so doing reduce response burden and improve efficiency of the overall data collection process. For instance using the same information for different purposes, the total amount of
information requested each time can be reduced. Response burden is particularly high among enterprises in DMCs as statistical surveys are often uncoordinated among the NSSs and various government agencies resulting in a high percentage of non-responses to statistical surveys. Further internationalization and formation of multinational enterprise groups spanning geographical boundaries has been increasing in the recent past and they have become an important part of the industrialization landscape in many DMCs. However correctly accounting for their contribution in countries' macro-economic statistics (GDP/GNI, balance of payments, foreign direct investment, etc) can be challenging. By profiling these complex enterprises and clearly mapping their structure and activities, SBR can not only meet the needs of policy makers, but also ensure that their full contribution is reflected correctly and consistently across all relevant statistics.

A 2009 regional survey indicated that only 29 out of 45 ADB DMCs had functioning SBRs of which only 18 had what could be described as comprehensive SBRs. The situation in Asia and the Pacific differs considerably from among the more developed statistical systems of the OECD countries, which treat SBRs as foundations of their NSSs, ensuring that they are up-to-date, integrated and comprehensive. The importance of SBRs has also been recognized in the African region, where the African Development Bank has recently developed the Guidelines for Building Statistical Business Registers in Africa and is actively working with its member countries on their practical application.

The need to establish and improve SBRs in Asia and the Pacific has been identified as a top regional priority for statistical development by the UNESCAP Committee on Statistics of which ADB is a member. The Committee on Statistics, the highest intergovernmental forum for statistics in Asia and the Pacific and which brings together the heads of NSSs from the region and international organizations involved in statistical development (including ADB), recognized this importance by endorsing the Regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific and the Implementation plan for the regional programme at its sessions in 2010 and 2012 respectively. These documents identify SBRs as one of the fundamental components of the statistical infrastructure that is needed for the production of a core set of economic statistics, and stress the significant and urgent need for the development of the statistical capacity in this area. Yet despite this recognition there is very little support currently provided to DMCs and no coordinated regional assistance is being implemented. The need for support in this area has also been communicated directly by NSSs from the region to statisticians in the Development Indicators and Policy Research Division (ERDI), who work closely with most of them and are members of a number of committees/steering groups on official statistics.

Impact

Improved information on small, medium and large enterprises and reduction in response burden of enterprises in participating DMCs

**Project Outcome**

**Description of Outcome**
Increased number of SBRs established or improved in participating DMCs

Progress Toward Outcome
SBR established or improved in five DMCs (Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka) by providing them with necessary training, advice, and guidance, as well as facilitating sharing of knowledge and enabling better access to tools to meet the needs of their national statistical system.

Implementation Progress

Description of Project Outputs
Assessments of the current SBRs situation and statistical capacity in participating DMCs; National proposal for developing and improving SBRs; Training programmes and study visits designed and organized; Strategies for continuing maintenance and improvement of SBRs; A standardized guide for NSSs on developing and improving SBRs published and disseminated; NSSs' staff trained on developing and improving SBRs; Asia-Pacific informal network for SBRs experts

Status of Implementation Progress (Outputs, Activities, and Issues)
The R-CDTA has undertaken the following activities: (i) organized the regional Inception Workshop to review concepts, methodologies and recommendations for establishing and maintaining SBR; and (ii) conducted national workshops in five participating countries to formulate the proposals for establishing basic SBRs (for those who do not have) and its updating and institutionalization (for those with existing SBRs); and (iii) Regional training course on SBR to provide good practices and exchanging experiences in dealing with the challenges and issues in the development, maintenance and use of SBR and for developing a business case for supporting an operation SBR suitable to national contexts.

The on-going activities of the project are:

1. Development and enhancement of Statistical Business Register System. The key features and characteristics of the system were: (1) organized storage of historical and current information on businesses for efficient retrieval of records; (2) generation of statistics aggregated / disaggregated according to the applied standard classification systems (geographic, industry, and commodity) or other variables; and (3) integration of information from multiple reliable sources to contribute to completeness and accuracy

2. Development of User Guide and Administrator Installation Guide on Statistical Business Register. These documents intend to provide guidance and specific instructions on the use of SBR database system.

3. Conduct of Users' training and installation of SBR System in Bhutan. The training aims provide technical support in the installation and configuration of the SBR system; and to train NSB staff involved in SBR project on the new features and functionalities of the system.

4. Conduct technical discussion on data management and assessment of IT Infrastructure for the development and implementation of SBR System in Lao, PDR.
The training specifically aims to discuss data management and to assist the SBR team members in assessing the availability of IT infrastructure for the implementation of SBR System under the R-CDTA 8594 with the implementing agency in Lao PDR the Lao PDR Statistics Bureau (LSB).

5. Conduct of 3rd Regional Technical Workshop on Statistical Business Register in Bandar Seri Begawan. This technical training aims to provide the technical staff of the National Implementing Agencies (NIAs), who are directly involved in the development and maintenance of database systems and information technology (IT) networks, advanced training in languages and tools essential for the development of a viable SBR, such as MySQL, PHP, and PHP Framework. Comprehensive training will also be provided on the operation of the newly developed ADB-SBR system. Further, NIA officials responsible for economic survey frame development and National Accounts production will be trained in using the ADB-SBR system to extract sample frames and to construct specific economic statistics.

Geographical Location
Regional

Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects

Environmental Aspects
Involuntary Resettlement
Indigenous Peoples

Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation

During Project Design
During Project Implementation

Business Opportunities

Consulting Services
The R-CDTA is expected to finance up to 64 person-months of consulting services and will require 2 international statisticians (8 person-months total); 1 international manuscript editor (1 person-month); 3 national IT experts (15 person-months total); 3 national statisticians (15 person-months total); and 1 national consultant (25 person-months). The outlines of the specific terms of reference for the consultants are in Appendix 3. All consultants will be selected and engaged individually by ADB in accordance with its Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2013, as amended from time to time). ERDI will designate a national staff for contract administration on regular basis to ensure smooth processing and implementation. Procurement and disbursement will conform to ADB's Procurement Guidelines (2013, as amended from time to time) and Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook (2010, as amended from time to time). Proper turnover of equipment, where applicable, will also be ensured at the project's completion date. Collaborations with other NSSs in the region, and selected international organizations will be established in the course of the TA implementation and individual resource persons will be engaged from them to source expertise for training, facilitating workshops and providing need-based technical
support. Assignment per resource person will not exceed 10 working days.

Contact

Responsible ADB Officer
Mariasingham, Mahinthan Joseph
Responsible ADB Department
Economic Research and Development Impact Department
Responsible ADB Division
Statistics and Data Innovation Unit (EROD-SDI)
Executing Agencies
Asian Development Bank

Timetable

Concept Clearance
11 Nov 2013
Fact Finding
MRM
Approval
17 Dec 2013
Last Review Mission
Last PDS Update
31 Mar 2018

Funding

TA 8594-REG

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Cumulative Disbursements

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<td>17 Jun 2022</td>
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