Annual Meeting of the Directors of the NSIs of the Mediterranean ENP Countries

Development of Common Regional Harmonised Social Indicators

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Presentation outline

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Harmonisation under Medstat II

- Workshop in Libourne, 2007
- First list of harmonised social indicators – associated with related definitions
- Four rounds of data collection
- A series of publications (statistical bulletins, thematic analytical papers)
- And yet, more remains to be done
- Caveat: full consistency is neither achievable nor realistic
Why supporting the development of harmonised social indicators?

- Assist countries in building their capacities for improving the quality, reliability, and dissemination of their statistical outputs, including documented metadata;
- Assist countries producing comparable indicators to
  - Monitor progress in the Euro-Med cooperation in the ENP process;
  - Serve as a basis for economic and political dialogue between Mediterranean partners;
- Provide a methodological framework for comparison across time and space in the Mediterranean region, and with other countries;
- Support the regular data collection of social statistical carried out by Eurostat in the ENP South countries.
Our vision of the harmonisation process

- Building on existing national practices for producing harmonised, standardised, and comparable Social Indicators;
- Promoting the visibility of national outputs and increasing the use of national data by the international users’ community;
- Up-grading national methods and definitions for better consistency with international standards
- Harmonisation is more cost-effective at the beginning of the data collection process (upstream, source) rather than at the final stage of the production;
- Quality checks are performed in close coordination with the national source;
- Any change or adjustment of national data should be validated by the national source before publication;
- Publications should be supported by methodological references.
What did we achieve so far?

During the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Workshop in Paris, 1-4 March 2011 on Harmonising Social Indicators:

- Delegates reviewed and approved all proposed indicators (± 70) and associated international definitions (amendments, additions, removals);
- National differences (gaps) with international standards were highlighted;
- Delegates committed to reduce the (major) differences after approval by authorities;
- Delegates committed to achieve building Metadata files for each indicator;
- Delegates volunteered to actively participate in the new Technical Task Force (TTF) for completing the harmonisation process;
- Agreed on drafting Regional Guidelines for the harmonisation of social indicators for the Mediterranean ENP countries to be published as a Medstat III self-standing publication.
What are the outstanding issues?

- The large majority (± 90%) of social indicators currently produced and disseminated by the Mediterranean ENP countries are consistent with European and international standards;
- However, substantial issues remain for:
  - Education: quality, achievement (*not produced in most countries*);
  - TVET: enrolment, attendance, achievement, budget expenditure (*not produced in most countries*);
  - Labour: Employment (*inclusion or exclusion of armed forces*?), Unemployment, Underemployment, Informal employment, Decent Work, etc (*methodology and definitions*);
  - Salary indexes (*not produced in most countries*);
  - Poverty line (*absolute or relative*?), poverty incidence in monetary terms (*income or expenditures*?);
  - Access to social services: secured tenure of housing (*not produced in most countries*); energy consumption (*to construct*);
  - Under-five, neo-natal and peri-natal mortality rates (*to improve coverage*);
  - Vital registration including Death, Birth, Marriage, Divorce, Migration (*to improve coverage*).
  - Extension to Health statistics (*to identify new indicators*).
Some potential implications for the countries

- The shift from producing “non-comparable indicators” to “comparable indicators” may require some fundamental methodological changes up-stream;
- Better coordination with line ministries for improving MIS for collecting and processing administrative records;
- Staff training in data analysis, regional comparisons, and data dissemination;
- Keep staff up-to-date with changes in the international thinking;
- Wider dissemination of adequately presented statistics to meet users needs;
- Exploring new fields in social investigation;
- Allocating additional resources for introducing innovative methods.
Coordination with other partners

- **Partners:**
  - International partners: UN-ESCWA, UN-ECE, ILO, UNESCO, PARIS21, OECD, WHO, ETF, World Bank;
  - Bilateral partners: EU NSI, Research centres and Universities;
  - Mediterranean countries institutions

- **Areas**
  - Best practices
  - Contribution to planned events
  - Joint Technical assistance missions
  - Joint publications
Our expectations

- **During current meeting:**
  - Comment on the list of common Regional Harmonised Social Indicators;
  - Endorse the list of common Regional Harmonised Social Indicators;
  - Endorse the establishment and functioning of the Technical Task Force (TTF) on the harmonisation of social indicators under MEDSTAT III;

- **Before the end of the project**
  - Provide TA missions on selected outstanding issues:
  - Commitment by NSIs to producing and disseminating Social Indicators;
  - Completion of metadata files by the Technical Task Force (TTF);
  - Draft and publish Regional Guidelines for Harmonising Social Indicators for the Mediterranean ENP countries (MEDSTAT III publication);
  - Review progress done by the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Task Force on Social Statistics - to be scheduled at the end of 2012.
Expected outputs

- Set of common Regional Harmonised Social Indicators.
- Metadata files for each social indicator matching the 9 Mediterranean ENP countries with international standards.
- Regional Guidelines for producing standardised Social Indicators in the Mediterranean ENP countries.
Thank you for your attention