



Video

Call to action for young men and women

The theme of this year's International Youth Day on 12 August was "Sustainability: Our Challenge. Our Future." Jean-Pierre Gonnot, Acting Director of DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development noted in the message on behalf of the Secretary-General that "our world faces multiple, interconnected crises with severe and far-reaching impacts that fall disproportionately on the young," including unemployment and climate change. "Let us renew our pledge to support young people in their development. Sustainability is the most promising path forward, and youth can lead the way."

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/specialevents/2009/se090812am.rm> (1 hour 27 minutes)

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"The transition to a low-carbon economy will be difficult, but it will also yield great benefits across the spectrum of human activity. We can catch two birds -- climate change and economic growth -- with just one stone," says the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the University Presidents' Forum on Climate Change and Sustainable Development in Seoul on 17 August, p. 1

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Climate change and economic growth

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birds -- climate change and economic growth -- with just one stone," says the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the University Presidents' Forum on Climate Change and Sustainable Development in Seoul on 17 August.

Climate change is central to economic growth and development. It is vital to the well-being of billions of people, particularly in the poorest countries of the world. Addressing climate change will not only

promote a cleaner environment; it can also foster sustainable global growth. More and more, leaders around the world understand and embrace this fact.

When countries invest in green technology or make their operations more energy efficient, they show that what is good for the environment is also good for economic prosperity in the twenty-first century, which will belong to those who are the first to take the low-carbon path. Those countries who act today will be more economically competitive tomorrow. And the benefits will continue for decades to come.



To achieve a sustainable solution to climate change, the Secretary-General says further that “the negotiations will, in turn, have to resolve four difficult political issues: First, setting ambitious midterm targets for industrialized countries; Second, determining nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries; Third, providing essential finance and technology support for adaptation; and fourth, determining institutional arrangements and governance to manage this support.”

World Economic and Social Survey 2009 launched on 1 September

The central message of this flagship survey, published on 1 September on the topic of “Promoting Development, Saving the Planet”, is that addressing the climate challenge cannot be met through ad hoc and incremental actions.

In the first place, it requires much stronger efforts by advanced countries to cut their emissions. The fact that in this regard more than a decade has been lost since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change only adds urgency to those efforts. However, even if advanced countries begin to match their

words with deeds, their efforts are, by themselves, unlikely to be sufficient to meet the climate challenge. The active participation of developing countries is now required and such participation can occur only if it allows economic growth and development to proceed in a rapid and sustainable manner.

This Survey argues that switching to low-emissions, high-growth pathways in order to meet the development and climate challenge is both necessary and feasible. It is necessary because combating global warming cannot be achieved without eventual emissions reductions from developing countries. It is feasible because technological solutions that can enable a shift towards such pathways do in fact exist. It is, however, neither inevitable nor inconsequential.

Such a switch would entail unprecedented and potentially very costly socioeconomic adjustments in developing countries—adjustments, moreover, that will have to be made in a world more rife with inequalities than at any time in human history. If it is to happen, the switch will require a level of international support and solidarity rarely mustered outside a wartime setting.

The Survey also argues that achieving such a transformation hinges on the creation of a global new deal capable of raising investment levels and channeling resources towards lowering the carbon content of economic activity and building resilience with respect to unavoidable climate changes. Most developing countries do not currently have the financial resources, technological know-how and institutional capacity to deploy such strategies at a speed commensurate with the urgency of the climate challenge. Failure to honour long-standing commitments of international support in those three areas remains the single biggest obstacle to meeting the challenge. Bolder action is required on all fronts.

The Survey contends that, in line with common but differentiated responsibilities, the switch will demand an approach to climate policy in developing countries different from that in developed ones. It will, in particular, require a new public policy agenda—one that focuses on a broad mix of market and non-market measures while placing a much greater emphasis than has been seen in recent years on public investment and effective industrial policies, to be managed by a developmental State. The mix in developed countries is likely to entail a larger role for carbon markets, taxes and regulations.

Finally, issues of trust and justice will need to be taken much more seriously so as to ensure fair and inclusive responses to the climate challenge. The Survey argues that one determinant of success will be the capacity of developed and developing countries to create a more integrated framework and joint programmes with shared goals on, inter alia, climate adaptation, forestry, energy (including energy access), and poverty eradication.

High-level Summit on Climate Change

This upcoming summit will be held at Headquarters on 22 September, a day before the opening of the General Debate of the General Assembly, where more than a 50 Heads of State or Government are expected to attend. The Summit will not be a negotiating forum, but it is meant to galvanize political will for a successful outcome in Copenhagen. It should bring countries closer on issues where they differ.

In addition to the opening and closing plenary sessions, there will be a total of eight parallel interactive roundtables addressing the same four broad themes: mitigation commitments; mitigation actions; adaptation; and building trust. The technology and finance issues will cut across these themes. Each roundtable would be chaired by two Heads of State or Government, who will be supported by a climate change Principal. The Secretary-General will provide a Chair's summary at the closing plenary of the summit.

There will also be a lunch-time event, organized by the Global Compact Office, for Heads of State or Government, private sector CEOs, and heads of CSOs. DESA is supporting the organization of the event, in particular by identifying participants in the thematic areas of energy and water.

High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Transfer

This upcoming conference in New Delhi on 22-23 October will seek to advance understanding on key actions needed to accelerate technology development and transfer in all countries in accordance with their national needs. The conference will throw light on technology scenarios, institutional and business models of development and deployment, and mechanisms to promote technology transfer to developing countries and to enhance the scope for cooperation on research and development.

The international community has long emphasized the importance of technology for sustainable development and for meeting climate change challenges in a reasonable time-frame, both in developed and developing countries. Development and transfer of mitigation and adaptation technologies are of importance to align sustainable development and economic growth imperatives in an era of climate change. In addition, appropriate mitigation technologies can align energy security with climate change concerns.

This understanding of the central role of technology development and transfer has been incorporated in the Bali Action Plan, which emphasizes the critical importance of technology to successfully implement mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries. However, the global community has yet to develop a strategy to unlock the full potential of technology.

The Delhi Conference will advance the discussions initiated at the *Beijing High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Technology Transfer*, co-organized by the Chinese Government and DESA on 7-8 November 2008. The Beijing Conference took stock of the clean technologies, the barriers to transfer and the potential for technology collaboration. Participants also presented case studies. The conference clearly recognized the need for new and innovative mechanisms of international cooperation, particularly in research, development, deployment and transfer of climate related technologies.

Road to Copenhagen Summit in December

Nations are expected to wrap up negotiations in the Danish capital, Copenhagen, in just over 100 days on a treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol, whose first commitment period ends in 2012. The latest round of negotiations towards a pact in Copenhagen wrapped up on 14 August in Bonn, Germany, with only "limited progress" having been made.

With only two more conferences, totaling 15 days, scheduled before the December meeting, "negotiations will need to considerably pick up speed for the world to achieve a successful result at Copenhagen," said Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Some strides were made regarding the negotiating text at the week-long meeting in Bonn, with countries also discussing how to translate mid-term reduction pledges (for the year 2020) by wealthier nations into

legally-binding targets as part of the deal to be clinched in Copenhagen.

“Industrialized countries need to show a greater level of ambition in agreeing to meaningful mid-term emission reduction targets,” Mr. de Boer said. “The present level of ambition can be raised domestically and by making use of international cooperation.”

Based on UN News Center and Press Releases

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2009forthcoming.html>,

<http://www.un.org/esa/desa/climatechange/>,

http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_cc/cc_conf1009.shtml

ICT and innovation for education

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be a powerful enabler to bring sustainable development to countries of this world. Today, we live amidst an unprecedented revolution in the advancement of ICT. Education has become a primary focus of the recently forged Information and Communication Technology for Development community, especially in Least Developed Countries.

The United Nations’ Second and Third Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are achieving universal primary education and promoting gender equality, respectively. ICT plays an important role in reaching these goals. It allows learning to take place 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This contributes immensely to the inclusion of traditionally excluded populations such as girls and women, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities. For the female population in particular, their increased access to education has a huge impact on the society.

A major gap has always existed between affluent people living in developed societies with access to modern information technology and underprivileged people living in impoverished and rural communities in developing and least developed countries. Even today, an unequal adoption of technology excludes many from harvesting the fruits of the digital economy.

While there is agreement that ICT can be a powerful tool for advancing education efforts going forward, the challenge we face today is turning the potential of Information and Communication Technology for

Education (ICTE) into reality with results. This is a tremendous challenge, compounded by the realistic fears that if not used properly, ICT can increase existing social and economic inequalities, particularly if access and use of ICTE is not equally available to everyone.



Implementation of ICTE must be case specific and locally driven, or the development community may risk further isolating impoverished populations rather than promoting inclusion and social advancement.

A vibrant education sector is fundamental for developing human capital within countries. With an active and transformative education policy and a supportive infrastructure, the development of a knowledge-based population can apply itself to sustained and equitable growth. ICT can play a vital role in increasing access to education as well as providing better quality education.

GAID Global Forum 2009

On 2-4 September 2009, Ministers, policymakers, business leaders, and innovators in the field of ICT for development from around the world will converge in Monterrey, Mexico for the Annual Global Forum of DESA’s Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID). GAID is the principal platform within the United Nations system for policy dialogue and collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders on the strategic use of ICT for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

The Global Forum, which is the flagship event of GAID, will be jointly organized with the Government of Mexico and Indigo Media. The event in Monterrey will bring together IT leaders and the development community under the umbrella of the Global Alliance for a focused dialogue on emerging issues and

challenges in the field of ICT for development, particularly in the areas of Education and Innovation, and foster cooperation among governments, private sector and civil society.

This year, the Global Forum will feature the “i-MarketSpace”, an innovative platform to showcase and promote ICT-based projects and initiatives with the aim of raising awareness, sharing experiences, acquiring new partners and/or members, and finding potential sponsors.

The Global Forum will be held in conjunction with the World Summit Awards Gala, which will showcase and celebrate the most outstanding local e-Content and innovative internet applications.

Increased access to education through ICT

ICT is used worldwide to increase access to, and improve the relevance and quality of education. The unprecedented speed and general availability of information due to ICT extends educational opportunities to marginalized and vulnerable groups. ICT gives students and teachers new tools with which to learn and teach.

Geographical distance is no longer an obstacle to obtaining an education. It is not necessary for teachers and students to be in the same space, due to innovations of technologies such as teleconferencing and distance learning, which allow for synchronous learning. If given access and appropriate training in ICT, the Internet can also provide these groups with an abundance of online learning materials, covering a wide range of subjects that are up-to-date and produced by cutting-edge technologies.

In addition, many world-leading conventional universities are now offering some of their academic courses through various ICTs for their distant learners. Applications and processes of e-learning include web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration, where content is delivered via the internet, intranet/extranet, audio/and or video tape, satellite TV and CD-ROM. Although many developing countries have begun to take initiatives to introduce virtual classrooms at their schools, the use of e-learning continues to be a challenge for the least developed countries.

Improved quality of education through ICT

ICT can improve the learning process through the provision of more interactive educational materials that increase learner motivation and facilitate the acquisition of basic skills. The use of various multimedia devices such as television, videos and computer software can offer a more challenging and engaging learning environment for students of all ages.

Twenty-first century education reform policy has been focused on a shift from the traditional teacher-centered pedagogy to more learner-centered methods. Active, collaborative learning environments facilitated by ICT contribute to the creation of a knowledge-based student population.

Education leadership, management and governance can also be improved through ICT by enhancing educational content development and supporting administrative processes in schools and other educational establishments. By supporting management and reforming administrative procedures more effectively, ICT would serve as an incentive for leaders and staff at all levels to institutionalize its use.

Educating ICT leaders through ICT

Educating ICT leaders is a challenging task, especially in developing countries. A research project focusing on computer aided consulting has produced innovative services that can be used to educate ICT leaders in complex real life situations. Results have shown that these computer aided consulting services greatly help in teaching difficult to explain concepts in difficult to teach ICT courses.

Developing countries need ICT leaders who can manage and lead entrepreneurships and small to medium businesses (SMBs). However, educating these leaders is difficult in developing countries due to the lack of local expertise and resources. A unique challenge in educating ICT leaders is that they need to develop problem solving skills for complex real life situations and manage the intricate business and technology interdependencies in these situations.

To address these challenges, a unique educational approach is needed that plays the *dual* role of solving real life problems for real life industry segments, and educating the students on the complex issues of IT planning, integration, security and administration. Research and analysis of educational as well as professional practice tools revealed no clear winners. Most educational tools are too simplistic and do not capture real life situations while most professional

practice tools solve real life problems but are not designed for learning.

Challenges of ICT in education

Countries everywhere are facing similar challenges in implementing ICT in their education systems. Unfortunately, many local, national and regional government bodies are still not giving ICTE the attention and priority it deserves despite the benefits it brings. Providing basic access to ICT to young people living in either impoverished communities or rural locations often neglected by policy makers is one major challenge being faced. These areas oftentimes lack basic infrastructure such as classrooms, let alone Internet connectivity. The availability of quality teachers to apply ICT to the existing education systems is also in short supply.

Bringing long-term, sustainable ICTE reform will also be costly and will challenge policymakers handling national budget allocations to make difficult decisions in how to allocate national monetary resources and foreign aid. Finally, shifting the existing focus from the traditional educational models in place, depending on the specific country, to one that is ICT driven, will certainly not be easy.

Today, citizens in many countries share a common problem in that they have been left behind when it comes to ICT connectivity, and have become part of a *digital divide*.¹² This gap exists where people have been divided by ICT in one way or another, but mostly between those in the middle and upper classes, and those who live below the poverty line or in rural areas. By bridging the gap between the various groups, countries can make significant progress in eliminating the social and economic inequalities that are detrimental for sustainable development.

Teachers and ICT

ICT can improve the quality of education and heighten teaching efficiency provided through preservice training and programs relevant and responsive to the needs of the education system. This will allow teachers to have sufficient subject knowledge, a repertoire of teaching methodologies and strategies, as well as professional development for lifelong learning. These programs will expose them to new modern channels of information, and will develop self-guided learning materials, placing more focus on learning rather than teaching.

However, it is important to point out that ICT is used to enhance teaching styles, and should not replace the role of the teacher. ICT helps create structured and systematic teaching as well as better school management and organization of ICT usage. Teachers should be provided with adequate and appropriate support in their classroom, and be guided by professional standards that incorporate a code of conduct.

High costs and other difficulties in the transition to ICTE

Offering affordable ICT to underdeveloped regions remains a complex and difficult challenge. Assessing the costs related to Internet connectivity, for example, varies tremendously between countries and within the countries themselves. The disparities are dependent on a number of factors, including existing infrastructure, the nature of the Internet provider and the nature of the Internet technology.

Oftentimes, government-owned telecommunication companies have failed in their efforts to provide affordable and efficient services. In their attempt to control national telephone networks, some governments have been reluctant to ensure a competitive market for communication services, thus, impeding better connectivity and sustainability. This has led sometimes to high levels of corruption and profiteering among state-owned telecom companies. Governments should consider reevaluating their licensing policies and initiate regulatory frameworks conducive to more cost-effective and enhanced choices for connection.

Any initiative, be it from the government, private sector or civil society, should make lobbying for more investments in computers a priority. Insufficient access to computers is one of the main obstacles in ICTE programs. This is particularly relevant for educational institutions located in rural areas where the school or training institution is the only access point for computers. Although this will require massive investments in the infrastructure, it is nevertheless essential in order to guarantee equal access and overcome the digital divide.

Recommendations for implementation of ICT in education for development

What the experiences of countries pursuing ICTE have taught us thus far is that while there is tremendous potential for broad ranging improvements across many sectors of education through the use of ICT, the road will certainly not be

easy. It will take a continued commitment from all stakeholders involved to make any kind of substantial and sustainable change. A key to success is to adopt a comprehensive, end-to-end, systematic approach, with a phased and learn-as-you-go implementation that can be adjusted to adapt to the specific needs and a changing environment.

Special consideration should be given to ICT connectivity and accessibility for educational purposes. Bandwidth and spectrum of radio and television wavelengths should be allocated for education. Planning for connectivity infrastructure and regulations should promote and facilitate educational use of ICT. The trends towards convergence and new mobile platforms for internet-connectivity need to be fully exploited through innovative policies and partnerships that can help lower cost and expand access.

It is necessary to focus on training teachers and instructors to use ICT to develop their own teaching support materials. This approach assures ownership by teachers and instructors and enhances the usability of products. Many projects still focus on using materials for teachers and students that have been developed externally. However, such materials often fall short of providing appropriate or relevant content for the local situation.

Any initiative, be it from government, private sector or civil society, should make lobbying for more investments in computers a priority. Insufficient access to computers is one of the main obstacles in ICT for education programs. This is particularly relevant for educational institutions located in rural areas where the school or training institution is the only access point for computers.

Sustainable partnerships between the government, private sector and civil society must be built to offset costs and mitigate the complexities of the integration of ICT in education. Good will, dedication and flexibility are necessary from all partners to ensure agreement and progress. Due to high costs, investments made must be strategic after careful planning, finding creative ways of financing, and creating networks and synergies.

Based on *White Paper on Information Communication & Technology (ICT) in Education for Development*, prepared by graduate students at The New School University, under the supervision of Prof. Rafat Mahdi on 15 May 2009 for the GAID Global Forum 2009

Based on *Paper on Educating ICT Leaders Through ICT – An Innovative Approach*, Prof. Amjad Umar
For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/tabid/1068/Default.aspx>

Global dialogue on development

Legislative measures to implement the disabilities convention

States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will gather from 2-4 September in New York for the second time

The first meeting of States Parties was held on 31 October and 3 November 2008, where the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was formally established and its members elected. The Conference also considered matters related to the Convention, and held a panel discussion on "The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a human rights instrument and a tool for achieving the Millennium Development Goals". The Committee's membership comprises of 12 independent experts tasked to monitor the implementation of the Convention.

The States Parties to the Convention will convene their second conference at United Nations Headquarters from 2-4 September. The participants in the conference will discuss legislative measures to implement the Convention. Non-governmental organizations will participate along with Governments in an informal session on emerging issues related to the global economic crisis, poverty and the implementation of the Convention.

There will be two round tables on the theme, the first one on accessibility and reasonable accommodation (2 September, 3:00-6:00 pm), and the second one on equal recognition before the law, access to justice and supported decision-making (3 September, 10:00 am-1:00 pm). On 4 September (10:00 am- 1:00 pm), there will be an interactive segment to discuss the on-going work of the United Nations system and its support for the implementation of the Convention.

An informal session entitled "Forum on the emerging theme of the global economic crisis, poverty and the implementation of the Convention" will be held on 3 September from 3 -5 pm. Additionally, there will be several side events.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1479>

Climate change summit to precede general debate of the General Assembly's 64th session

General debate, which provides Heads of State and Government the opportunity to express their views on major international issues, gets underway on 23 September in New York

Prior to the general debate, on 22 September there will be an all-day high-level event on climate change for Heads of State and Government, hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Mr. Ban underlined that the Summit is not a negotiating forum but is meant to galvanize political will for a successful outcome in Copenhagen this December. The main concern of the Secretary-General is to bring countries closer on issues where they differ.

The opening plenary will feature speakers representing both developed and developing countries, including the most vulnerable countries. In addition, there would be eight parallel interactive roundtables: four in the morning, and four in the afternoon. All roundtables will address the same four broad themes: mitigation commitments; mitigation actions; adaptation; and building trust. The technology and finance issues will cut across these themes. A closing plenary will build upon the inputs from the eight roundtable discussions, resulting in a "seal the deal" commitment from attendees.

There will also be a lunch-time event, organized by the Global Compact Office, for Heads of State and Government, private sector CEOs, and heads of CSOs. The event is planned to be carbon-neutral. Included in the calculation was the transport of each Head of State and Government and an advisor, plus the energy used to hold the summit itself.

The summit will also feature several innovative elements. Among them is an attempt to change the nature of the discussion through active exchanges between participants in the short time available at a one-day event. Therefore, in lieu of live national statements in the plenary, all Heads of State and Government have the opportunity to send in a pre-recorded video statement that will be made available on the Internet, including on the Summit on Climate Change Web site and on YouTube.

64th session of the General Assembly

At its 64th session, the Assembly will address the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. This will include macroeconomic policy questions, sustainable development, eradication of poverty, social development as well as advancement of women.

For the topic macroeconomic policy, the Assembly will discuss international trade, financial systems, external debt and development and commodities. There will also be a discussion on the follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference.

For sustainable development issues, the Assembly will focus on the implementation of the Agenda 21, the development of Small Island Developing States, disaster reduction, climate change and desertification. For social development matters, the Assembly will discuss youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family.

Second and Third Committee

The Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee) and the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee) will discuss the items on the agenda related to economic questions and social and humanitarian issues, respectively. The Committees seek where possible to harmonize the various approaches of States, and present their recommendations, usually in the form of draft resolutions and decisions, to a plenary meeting of the Assembly for its consideration.

The Assembly's Second Committee – dealing with the economic and financial aspects of development – will convene starting on 5 October. DESA's has planned a number of side events including panel discussion. The Assembly's Third Committee – dealing with social, humanitarian and cultural matters – will also convene on 5 October to discuss items questions relating to advancement of women, youth, ageing, the disabled, humanitarian assistance and related issues.

The Assembly is the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN, a forum for multilateral negotiation. While it is empowered to make only non-binding recommendations to States on international issues within its competence, it has, nevertheless, initiated actions – political, economic,

humanitarian, social and legal – which have affected the lives of millions of people throughout the world. The Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, for example, reflected the commitment of Member States to reach goals to achieve development, poverty eradication, promote the rule of law, meet the special needs of Africa and protect the environment.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/ga/>

Trends and analysis

Virtual discussions on energy statistics

Oslo Group will focus on draft chapters of the International Recommendations on Energy Statistics (IRES) from 31 August – 18 September

Environmental indicators are a key tool for environmental assessment, reporting and policymaking. The Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 2007) endorsed the UNECE Recommendations on environmental indicators and indicator-based assessments and invited the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, South-Eastern Europe and other interested countries to implement the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators prepared by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in close cooperation with the European Environment Agency and other international organizations.

To promote the implementation of these recommendations, a joint meeting will be organized by DESA’s Statistics Division and UNECE for interested UNECE countries from 31 August – 18 September. The meeting will comprise of virtual discussions on the draft chapters of the IRES, including consultations on key issues to be incorporated into the chapters. The first draft of IRES is expected to be ready before the Fifth Oslo Group Meeting, to be held in February 2010 in Cork, Ireland, and this virtual meeting aims at speeding up the writing and revising process.

The joint meeting will discuss priorities and modalities of cooperation between environmental experts and statisticians in 2009-2010, review in detail selected indicators covered by the Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators, exchange information on international developments related to environmental indicators and initiate discussions on modern presentation formats and tools for effective dissemination of environmental indicators.

For more information:
<http://unece.org/stats/documents/2009.05.envIRON.htm>

Harmonizing economic and social classifications

Experts to meet in New York from 1-4 September to discuss a variety of classification topics

The Expert Group was established to ensure harmonization and convergence among the classifications in the International Family of Economic and Social Classifications. It examines the status of the work on international classifications, make recommendations concerning future directions to the U.N. Statistical Commission, and serves as the central coordinating body in the work on international classifications.

The group agrees on strategies for updating and revising classifications and reviews the underlying principles as well as practical proposals to bring about convergence of existing classifications. It is composed of members from international organizations - custodians and major users of international and economic classifications, as well as representatives from developed and developing countries and regional agencies.

The next meeting of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications will take place from 1-4 September in New York. The Expert group will discuss a variety of topics including the implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), the Central Product Classification (CPC), including documents for the implementation and application of these classifications, the implementation of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), the development of environment- and energy-related classifications, the review of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and the revisions of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and the International Classification for Health Accounts (ICHA).

For more information:
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/expertgroup/2009/ac190-2.asp>

Focusing on ICT and education

Annual Meetings of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) and the Global Forum on ICT

and Innovation for Education will be held from 2-4 September in Monterrey, Mexico

The annual meetings will be jointly organized by GAID, the Government of Mexico, Indigo Brainmedia and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The event in Monterrey will bring together the ICT and development communities for a focused dialogue on emerging issues and challenges with an emphasis on innovation in education. The meetings are also intended to foster cooperation among governments, private sector and civil society. 500 to 600 policymakers, business leaders, and innovators in the field of information and communication technologies for development from around the world are expected to attend.

GAID has launched online discussions on themes that the Alliance may address in the coming year: financial and economic crisis and poverty eradication; health and education; climate change; gender; network development and outreach. The results of these discussions will be presented at the Strategy Council meeting on 2 September in Monterrey, Mexico. GAID aims at developing an agenda for action in each of the themes listed above, in order to align its work with the broader UN Development Agenda and address emerging issues.

For more information: <http://www.un-gaid.org/tabid/1027/Default.aspx>

Governing the global statistical system

14th session of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) will be held in Bangkok from 9-11 September

The Committee was established in 2002, taking over its key objectives from the former Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), Subcommittee on Statistical Activities, namely to promote coordination, integration and complementarity among the statistical programmes of the international organizations.

Members of the Committee comprise of international and supranational organizations, whose mandate includes the provision of international official statistics in the context of the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities, which have a permanent embedded statistical service in their organization and regular contacts with countries.

The Committee focuses its work on six main activities: efficient functioning of the statistical system; common standards and platforms; development of methodologies; inter-institutional support; outreach; and advocacy for statistics. It meets twice a year and an annual report on its ongoing activities is made available to the United Nations Statistical Commission. If necessary or desirable, the report is referred to the High Level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). This is the first time when the CCSA Session will be held in Asia, hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

The agenda of the 14th CCSA meeting includes a special session on the Governance of the Global Statistical System and the role of CCSA, and discussions on various topics, such as population estimates, use of non-official data in estimations made by the international organizations, reporting mechanisms on Statistical Capacity Building activities, modalities of data sharing among the international organizations, quality assurance frameworks, and celebration of the World Statistics Day.

For more information: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/workpartner_ccsa.htm

Examining strategies for poverty reduction

International Conference on Global and National Strategy for Poverty Reduction on 28-29 September in Seoul will focus on the state, development and poverty reduction

United Nations Project on Governance (UNPOG) will assist the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and the Graduate School of Public Administration of Seoul National University in organizing an international conference to examine different countries' experiences of poverty reduction, paying particular attention to the policy regime in Korea that led to successful economic development and poverty reduction.

Participation and discussion by academics, development practitioners, government officials, and staff from the United Nations and NGOs will be

expected to shed light on whether social policy provides the vital link between the economic development and poverty reduction.

During the conference, UNPOG will make a presentation entitled, “Korea’s International Cooperation Policy” in line with the UN Development Agendas, and from the perspective of the Millennium Developments Goals.

For more information: danhovision@ungc.org

Forming the world e-Governments Organization

Chief Information Officers (CIOs) from cities around the world will come to Seoul from 28-30 September to participate in the World Cities CIO Forum 2009

Organized by the Government of Seoul Metropolitan City with the participation of DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) through the United Nations Project on Governance (UNPOG), this forum will discuss preliminary issues and map out a detailed timeline for the establishment of “World e-Governments Organization” to be scheduled in 2010.

Specifically, UNPOG will organize a special session focusing on e-government issues and activities of the United Nations including the electronic/mobile-Government Knowledge Repository project (emGKR), a flagship project of DPADM underway in every region of the world.

70 CIOs from as many as 40 cities will be expected to attend, which will provide a unique platform to discuss a world-wide collaboration on e-government.

For more information: <http://www.we-gov.org/>

Capacity development

Implementing industrial classifications of economic activities

International workshop will be organized in Kunming, China, from 14-16 September by DESA's Statistics Division and the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics

The Statistics Division offers training in Statistical Classifications through the conduct of international workshops. Workshops are planned with an awareness of the importance of statistical classifications to the implementation of the 1993 SNA, and to the implementation of the current round of Population Censuses and household survey programmes. United Nations Classifications Workshops emphasize basic principles of classification methods while specifically covering classifications of economic activity and products. The workshops may also cover other reference classifications of the international family, such as those of education, occupation, employment, time-use or health.

This workshop from 14-16 September will focus on issues of implementation of the Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) Revision 4 and the Central Product Classification (CPC) Version 2 and cover general implementation such as the setup of an implementation plan, the development of national adaptations, the implementation of the revised classifications in the business register and surveys, as well as issues of backcasting. The workshop will also discuss the interpretation and application of the classifications in key areas of interest, based on new concepts introduced.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/training/chi/na09/ac191-2.asp>

Preparing for the 2010 Population and Housing Census

Census evaluation and post enumeration surveys will be the focus of the regional workshop in Addis Ababa from 14-18 September

DESA's Statistics Division, in collaboration with UN Economic Commission for Africa, is organizing a regional workshop for English speaking African countries on census evaluation in the context of the 2010 World Programme for Population and Housing Censuses. The purpose will be to present an overview of the various methods of evaluating censuses with a focus on the post enumeration survey (PES) methodology.

More specifically, the workshop will cover elements of the PES with regard to planning and implementation; frames and sample design; methodologies for evaluating content and coverage errors; matching procedures; imputation of missing values; and tabulation and dual system of estimation. The workshop will also offer the possibility to the participants to present and discuss the experience of their countries on different aspects of census evaluation and the post enumeration survey.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm

Leveraging technology for parliamentary libraries and research services

Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, the Italian joint Parliamentary Library and the IFLA Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section, held a training session on 18 August

The one-day training focused on the use of new technologies to enhance the capacity of parliamentary libraries to respond to parliaments' information needs. Special attention was given to existing free and open source solutions for libraries and to the use of Intranet for digital information services. A specific session was dedicated to the negotiation and management of contracts for electronic resources.

The event, directed at Heads of parliamentary libraries and IT staff providing support to the libraries from a number of parliaments in developing countries and economies in transition, provided a great opportunity for participants to enhance the understanding of the potential of technology in the library and research services environment.

The training was held on the eve of the 25th Annual Pre-Conference of the IFLA Library and Research Services for Parliaments Section which focused on

*Digital Information for Democracy: Management,
Access and Preservation.*

For more information:

<http://www.preifla2009.parlamento.it/ifla/45150/49212/paginabicamerale.htm>

Publications and websites

Technical report



World Economic and Social Survey 2009: Promoting Development, Saving the Planet

The central message of this flagship survey, published on 1 September, is that an integrated approach based on the concept of sustainable

development is urgently needed if climate and development objectives are to be met together. The key to such an approach is a low-carbon, high-growth transformation of the global economy — a transformation that can keep temperature increases consistent with environmental stability as identified by the scientific community, while at the same time fostering the strong growth and economic diversification in developing countries that would allow convergence of incomes worldwide.

The Survey seeks argues that a massive global investment programme is needed to ensure that mitigation and adaptation efforts can move as part of a consistent development strategy. While acknowledging that a variety of market and non-market institutional mechanisms will be needed if advances are to be made along those paths, the Survey contends at the same time that a critical role must be played by developmental States able to mobilize public finance and build appropriate technological capacity.

This potentially win-win strategy will require the readiness of the international community to step up to the plate with multilateral financing on a much larger scale than has been forthcoming to date and new approaches to transferring technology from rich to poor countries.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/>

To read the overview:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/desalert/2009/WESS_overview_en.pdf

Overview of the 2009 Report on the World Social Situation

The report to be published later this year notes that although considerable progress has been made in reducing levels of absolute poverty, overall, the world is not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals of halving levels of extreme poverty by 2015. According to the World Bank, the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day in developing countries declined from 1.9 billion to 1.4 billion between 1981 and 2005 at 2005 purchasing power parity.

Improvements in overall poverty levels have depended, to a large extent, on growth. Countries or regions that have experienced strong growth during the last two decades have managed to reduce poverty levels, particularly in urban areas. This includes countries such as China and India. It is the success of these countries that has largely driven global poverty trends downward. However, not every region or country has recorded such remarkable progress. The absolute number of poor people has gone up in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in Central Asia.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/index.html>

Reports on Social Policy and Development for the 64th session of the General Assembly

DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development has prepared reports for the General Assembly on the following topics:

- Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing
- Cooperatives in social development
- Legal Empowerment of the poor and eradication of poverty
- Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family
- Follow-up to the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly
- Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities through the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto.

- Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth: progress and constraints with respect to the well-being of youth and their role in civil society

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/un-reports.html>

Statistical compilations



Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

The bulletin presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or annual and quarterly data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

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Quarterly and bimonthly tables included in this issue: Indices of world industrial production by branches of industry and by regions, Producer price indices, Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials, Earnings in manufacturing, by sex, Construction of new buildings, and Total exports and imports by regions: volume and unit value indices and terms of trade.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>

Discussion papers

World Economic Situation and Prospects – Monthly Briefing, August 2009

This 11th issue indicates that the global recession is moderating, with trade and industrial production stabilizing and financial markets partially improving. However, the prospects for a true global recovery are highly uncertain as demand continues to depend to a great extent on fiscal stimuli, as unemployment rates

continue to rise and as global imbalances remain large. Several economies, mostly in Asia, rebounded in the second quarter of 2009, but many other economies remain mired in recession.

This issue of the Monthly Briefing includes a new feature designed to assess the impact of the global financial crisis on the vulnerability of countries based on the “Integrated Monitoring and Analytical System for Crisis Response by DESA”, work which is still in progress. The tentative results show that the economic crisis has triggered a prodigious global trade shock, equivalent to about 4 per cent of world output. Countries with a strong concentration of exports in the energy sector have proved to be the most vulnerable to such shocks, followed by manufacturing and mineral exporters.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/esa/policy/publications/dpad_wes_pmbn.html

Websites

Launch of ‘RSS’ online news for gender equality and women’s empowerment

WomenWatch, the UN portal on gender equality and women’s empowerment, launched a new online service to provide a “one-stop” hub of RSS-based gender equality news from participating UN entities. It displays these news items on a single web page, with a view to publicizing the work of the UN on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The newsfeed is a collaborative effort of staff from the DESA, DPI as well as UNIFEM, UNFPA and INSTRAW. It is based on RSS (“Really Simple Syndication”) technology, an emerging way of publishing information on the internet that is increasingly subscribed to by internet users. It currently compiles gender equality-specific RSS news items from over 140 individual RSS feeds.

To browse: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ungen/>

Comings and goings

Goings



Mr. Oscar de Rojas, Director of the Financing for Development Office, retired on 31 August 2009, bringing to an end a distinguished career during which he had also served for 27 years in the Venezuelan Foreign and Civil

Services, attaining the rank of Ambassador, and holding senior-level posts in his country's diplomatic missions at UN Headquarters in New York and Geneva, in Paris, and in the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

At the United Nations, and particularly in DESA, Mr. de Rojas will be remembered for his diplomatic and organizational skills, which were significant contributors to the success of the path-breaking International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002. More recently, he was the Executive Secretary of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development in Doha, Qatar in December 2008. Mr. de Rojas brought to his work an astute and nuanced appreciation of the workings of the intergovernmental process. This quality, taken together with his efficiency and diplomacy, led to him gaining the trust and respect of Member States and all other stakeholders of the Financing for Development process.

During his career, Mr. de Rojas held numerous noteworthy positions in his country, including those of Director of Exports Promotion (1976-1978), Director for International Technical Cooperation (1980-1983), and Director-General for International Economic Affairs and Cooperation (1990-1992). While serving as Deputy Permanent Representative of Venezuela in Geneva, he was President of UNCTAD's Trade and Development Board (1989-90) and, as Deputy Permanent Representative in New York, served as Chairman of the General Assembly's Second Committee (1997-98).

The following staff members also retired in August 2009:

Mr. Alexandre Sidorenko, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Mr. Mohammad Akhter, Economic Affairs Officer, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Ms. Blanca Bugallo, Reference Assistant, Division for Sustainable Development

Ms. Almaz Worgessa, Secretary, Division for Sustainable Development

Ms. Anna Huttman, Editorial Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Leslie Lawrence, Administrative Assistant, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in August 2009:

Mr. Curtis Hosang, Human Resources Officer, Technical Cooperation Management Service

Ms. Andrea De Luka, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Maria Cynthia Sicangco, Team Assistant, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Mr. Israel Machado, Library Assistant, Development Policy and Analysis Division

Calendar

September

Launch of World Economic and Social Survey: Promoting Development, Saving the Planet

1 September

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/>

Expert Group Meeting on International Economic and Social Classifications

New York, 1-4 September

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/expertgroup/2009/ac190-2.asp>

Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

2nd session, New York, 2-4 September

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1479>

Annual Meetings of GAID and Global Forum on ICT and Innovation for Education

Monterrey, Mexico, 2-4 September

<http://www.unpan.org/tabid/1027/Default.aspx>

Workshop on establishing a performance and evaluation management system in Latin America

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, 7-10 September

[http://www.unpan.org/Events/BrowseEventsbyCalendar/tabid/94/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/1532/ItemID/1381/language/en-](http://www.unpan.org/Events/BrowseEventsbyCalendar/tabid/94/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/1532/ItemID/1381/language/en-US/Default.aspx?selecteddate=9/7/2009)

[US/Default.aspx?selecteddate=9/7/2009](http://www.unpan.org/Events/BrowseEventsbyCalendar/tabid/94/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/1532/ItemID/1381/language/en-US/Default.aspx?selecteddate=9/7/2009)

Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

14th session, Bangkok, 9-11 September

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/workpartner_ccsa.htm

International Workshop on Implementation of ISIC and CPC

Kunming, China, 14-16 September

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/training/china09/ac191-2.asp>

Workshop on the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses

Addis Ababa, 14-18 September

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm

General Assembly

64th session, New York, 15 September - December

<http://www.un.org/ga/>

• General Debate

23-30 September

<http://www.un.org/ga/64/agenda/agenda.shtml>

• High-level Event on Climate Change

22 September

<http://www.un.org/en/events/index.shtml>

October

General Assembly

64th session, New York

<http://www.un.org/ga/>

• Second Committee

5 October – December

<http://www.un.org/ga/second/>

• Third Committee

5 October – December

<http://www.un.org/ga/third/>

International Day of Older Persons

1 October

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/un_meetings.html

CSD-18 Regional Implementation Meeting for Western Asia

Cairo, 4-6 October

http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd18_rims.shtml

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

17 October

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays/IntlDay/index.html>

High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Transfer

New Delhi, 22-23 October

http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_cc/cc_conf1009.shtml

Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific

8th United Nations Conference, Bangkok, 26-29
October

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/METHODS/CARTOG/unrccap.htm>

CSD-18 Regional Implementation Meeting for Africa

Addis Ababa, 26-30 October

http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd18_rims.shtml

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. Prior to January 2007, DESA News was issued every other month. It is now issued monthly.

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