



Video

## Development not a privilege but a right for all

Addressing the largest bloc of developing countries at the United Nations, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed that development should not be “a privilege of the few, but a right for all.” Mr. Ban told the Group of 77 developing countries and China at a ceremony on 11 January at which the group’s chairmanship was handed over from Pakistan to Antigua and Barbuda.

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/specialevents2008/se080111.rm> (12 minutes)

Audio: <http://radio.un.org/play.asp?NewsID=8546> (1 minute)

Full coverage: <http://www.un.org/webcast/SE2008.html>

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## Feature articles

### Financing for gender equality

*Investing in women engenders development that benefits everyone*

If women are to benefit fully from development, policies and actions need to be sustainable, gender-sensitive and people-centred. But are national strategies and plans actually looking at development cooperation from women’s perspectives? With just a few months to go before a comprehensive review of the implementation of the 2002 Monterrey Consensus, the evidence suggests that on the whole they do not.

Doors have been opening slowly for women in the labour force, among other things, and too few resources are channeled towards women’s empowerment. Even as progress has been made in gender-responsive budgeting, greater efforts are needed to incorporate gender equality into national poverty reduction and development strategies. For example, women’s participation in paid, non-agricultural employment has increased by just three percent worldwide between 1990 and 2005 with no discernable progress in Northern Africa; there, just one in five paid employees is a woman.

World leaders committed in Monterrey to unleashing and increasing financial resources and achieving the economic conditions needed to reach internationally agreed development goals. The Consensus acknowledged the part played by gender equality in realizing good governance and sound economic

policies, coupled with the need to empower women through appropriate national policy and regulatory frameworks. Gender-sensitive investments in basic social and economic infrastructure, microcredit for women, and business frameworks that are sensitive to the gender dimension were seen as the specific prescriptions needed to advance.

Yet although gender perspectives were injected into the Monterrey outcome, the issue of gender equality and empowerment of women has received “little attention” in follow-up processes, according to Carolyn Hannan, Director of DESA’s Division for the Advancement of Women, speaking to experts on financing for gender equality last September. Clearly, there is a “need to influence” the upcoming follow-up to Monterrey in Doha from a gender perspective. The priority theme selected for this year’s Commission on the Status of Women which gets underway in New York on 25 February is a response, in part, to that need.

The Commission’s upcoming session will be “a unique opportunity for the international community to adopt concrete policy recommendations which promote greater coherence between macroeconomic policies and resources allocations and internationally agreed development goals on gender equality,” said Ms. Hannan. Women stand to benefit as much as men from improved economic and social conditions. However, disparities between men and women will only be reduced in the process if gender equality is recognized as a key component of poverty reduction and national development. In addition, women need to be fully represented in decision-making, and equally included among development beneficiaries.

### The case for investing in women

Investing in women and girls can have a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, says the Secretary-General in his report on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, prepared for the 52nd session of the Commission. According to a gender action plan entitled “Gender equality as smart economics” launched by the World Bank, the business case for expanding women’s economic opportunities is becoming more and more evident. Investing in women and girls is thus not only a matter of human rights, it also makes economic sense. According to the Secretary-General, an increase in resources to promote equality and empower women – Millennium Development Goal three – would play a

major role in the achievement of all other development goals.

Moreover, gender inequality limits pro-poor growth, according to the UNDP magazine “Poverty in Focus.” Addressing gender inequality in education and employment, access to productive assets and increased time burdens due women’s to unpaid work can help improve overall economic growth and specifically contribute to pro-poor growth. Yet despite the economic benefits, research suggests that there has been only limited progress in allocating and channeling resources to translate the commitment to women’s empowerment and equality into action.

Achieving gender equality goals requires, first of all, a reallocation of existing resources and a huge injection of additional and predictable funding, experts concluded at the September meeting organized by DAW. It has been estimated that the financing gap for implementing Millennium Development Goal three on gender equality and gender mainstreaming activities in low-income countries will range from \$8.6 billion in 2006 to \$23.8 billion in 2015. To realize MDG3 by 2015 would require external resources dedicated to financing interventions that promote gender equality to the tune of \$25-28 billion annually in the world’s low-income countries alone.

“While the costs of addressing gender inequality are significant, the means to meet these costs are available,” said Hannan, noting that research has shown that investing in women’s empowerment could be carved out of existing commitments to official development assistance. However, she added, gender equality should be funded, at least in part, through the mobilization of domestic resources to promote ownership and sustainability.

### Funding women’s development

A more gender-friendly look at the Monterrey picture from its different thematic angles could help move the cause of gender equality forward. Starting with the first thematic chapter, how do we ensure that macroeconomic policies lead to mobilization of sufficient domestic resources for women’s empowerment?

Macroeconomic stabilization plans have tended to pursue a strict deficit control strategy and constrain public investment often leading to cuts in basic public services, says a UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

paper on gender perspective in financing for development presented to the DESA expert group meeting. Women can be hit hard by this sort of macroeconomic intervention since health and education services tend to receive substantial cuts. With women taking on responsibility for household maintenance and family care to a much greater degree than men, reductions in public sector expenditure imply an increased burden for women in the domestic sphere. Plus, everyone ends up paying the opportunity cost of reduced economic activity among women outside the home.

“Many implicit decisions on raising the price of health services, the cost of water or delaying infrastructure building or maintenance imposes a burden on the time of women that prevents them from taking part in the paid labour force or engaging in other activities,” says Manuel Montes, head policy analyst in the Financing for Development Office in DESA.

Public investments in infrastructure, skills, health care and so on are all the more needed as the private sector will not provide them. At the same time, they are vital to spur investment from the private sector, explains Mr. Montes. Ultimately, “closing the gender gap in participation and productivity increases the size and capacity of the labour force and the economy’s international competitiveness.”

How can the Monterrey consensus be reformed to finance gender equality? First and foremost, Montes stresses, “Through the design and implementation of public policies, trade policies and private investment that ensure employment and decent work.” This principle did not find its way into the Monterrey Consensus of 2002. However, a general consensus emerged in the 2005 World Summit that domestic resource mobilization should nonetheless be channeled to activities that promote decent work.

Women tend to be the last hired and the first fired since their earnings are still often seen as supplementary, INSTRAW cautions. This may account in part for the fact that while record numbers of women have entered the labour market in recent years, unemployment rates for women are higher than for men in almost all parts of the world. Even in industries where women have tended to constitute the bulk of workers, often in poorly paid and insecure jobs, the female proportion of the labour force has declined. Simply, competition in job markets has intensified, forcing men into industries traditionally



dominated by women, such as textile and clothing export industries – under similarly poor conditions.

Appropriate policies and credit targeting are therefore pivotal for generating employment opportunities for women particularly in labour-intensive small and medium enterprises, notes the Secretary-General, where women tend to have more opportunities. The role of microfinance for enterprises, especially in rural areas and for women, for bolstering the social and economic impact of the financial sector was indeed acknowledged in the Monterrey Consensus.

#### Impacts of spending on women and men

Governments have discovered another way of tackling gender inequality goals: gender-responsive budgeting in which the impact of various budget allocation scenarios on women and men is assessed. This is an initiative, endorsed by the Monterrey Consensus, which has proven to be an effective strategy for linking gender policy to government action and encouraging decision-makers to devote resources to achieving gender equality objectives.

In Russia, a gender-responsive budget initiative coincided with recent administrative and social policy reform. Extensive analysis of budget plans, undertaken by national gender equality advocates with the assistance of UNIFEM, probed the budget adoption process, estimated the share of expenditures for improving women’s status, assessed funding mechanisms for pensions and social insurance, and proposed support for economic opportunities that would reduce gender discrimination.

The initiative expanded the role of women and gender experts in a critical public policy-making exercise. As a result, certain laws governing budget policy decisions now require input from gender experts, and about \$1.5 billion from the federal

budget has been shifted into gender-responsive measures such as increases in wages in industries where women predominate and tax breaks that benefit families. The project helped develop long-term national capacities through the intensive training of national and local gender budgeting experts. A course on gender-responsive budgeting is now mandatory for students at the Russian Academy of Public Administration, according to a UNIFEM discussion paper on gender equality for development effectiveness in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Other country experiences also demonstrate the potential application of gender budget analysis and tracking tools. Gender budget initiatives have contributed to structural changes where finance ministries are instituting policies that ensure budgeting from a gender perspective, as is the case at the national level in Morocco, Egypt, India and Venezuela, and at the local level in India, Nepal, Ecuador and Bolivia. In the Moroccan case, a gender-sensitive economic and financial report was first produced to accompany the country's finance bill in 2006. This report includes a gender assessment that now serves as a baseline to measure progress in relation to budget and outcome indicators in the ministries of finance, health, education and agriculture.

More than fifty countries have been launching those budget initiatives over the past decade. At this point, the Secretary-General notes in his report, many initiatives have involved the analysis of budgets but there has been less emphasis on implementation. Broadening the focus to include expenditures analysis along with the revenue side of budgets is needed. Tax systems, he cautions, can perpetuate gender inequalities as well. Indirect taxes, such as value-added and excise taxes, can put a greater burden on poor women as they consume goods and services that benefit family health, education and nutrition.

### Making investment sustainable

The importance of foreign direct investment and other private flows to development is highlighted in the second chapter of the Monterrey Consensus. FDI offers a means to transfer knowledge and technology, create jobs, boost productivity and, ultimately, eradicate poverty through economic growth and development. As women make up the bulk of the labour force in export-oriented companies, many job opportunities have emerged for them in countries

benefiting from FDI, notes the Secretary. Yet competition to attract FDI, he cautions, may result in a weakening of female workers' bargaining power over their wages and working conditions.

INSTRAW points out that suppression of minimum wages and the right to strike, as well as temporary contracts or subcontracts depriving women of access to healthcare, have created "an overall climate of instability and unpredictability." Recent studies, adds the paper, show that the effects of knowledge and technology transfers are also very limited, as women tend to be left out of areas that call for upgrading skills.

"The kind of foreign direct investment one would like to see," Mr. Montes concludes, "is one that raises productivity and wages, respects labour legislation, and represents a long-term commitment to the country."

### The differential impact of trade

A commitment to trade liberalization and to ensuring that trade plays its full part in promoting growth, employment and development for all was reaffirmed by world leaders in Monterrey. Yet the Consensus did not reflect the differential impact that trade could have on women and men. By way of example, trade policies can create jobs for women in countries that export labour-intensive manufactured goods, but may also lead to unemployment of women, the Secretary-General cautions, if a decline in import prices forces local industries to shut down or lay off workers.

The report of the expert group meeting held last year by DESA stresses that trade liberalization has been pursued vigorously "without sufficient attention to the fact that such liberalization can have a negative impact on government budgets." This is especially so in countries which depend heavily on trade-related taxes. Trade liberalization can also impinge on food security in some countries because local producers may be forced out of business. "The removal of tariffs and other trade barriers has an impact on prices of goods and services consumed by households," Ms. Hannan recalled in the meeting. "Decreases in government revenues can lead to cuts in social spending, with direct impact on household budgets, and disproportionate impact on women."

Setting in motion strategies to ensure that women are protected against trade-related job losses, that they benefit from job creation and have expanded access to trade opportunities is one of the main

recommendations of the Secretary-General's report. Giving women's organizations a say in decisions that concern trade is also seen as vital.

### Positive spillovers of investing in women

Allocating resources and sufficient staff in the gender units of donor agencies is another challenge. A survey of OECD members has revealed that while most aid agencies have gender equality policies, some do not allocate sufficient staff and financial resources for follow through on global gender equality goals. Tellingly, from 2001 to 2005 only \$5 billion of a total \$20 billion in bilateral aid allocated to gender-sensitive sectors such as health and education were devoted to activities that had gender equality as a significant objective. Two thirds of that funding was directed to the social sectors such as health and education, and one third to agriculture, infrastructure, and finance though the latter are seen as critical for women's economic advancement.

Increasing resources to gender equality and empowerment of women is vital as it could play a major role in the achievement of all other development goals, the Secretary-General notes. Conversely, missing the MDG 3 target on gender equality may place a drag on economic progress, and cut growth rates by between 0.1 and 0.3 percentage points per capita. The Asia-Pacific region is already losing \$42 billion to \$47 billion annually because of women's limited access to job opportunities, according to estimates from the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2007, and a further loss of \$16 billion to \$30 billion annually as a result of gender gaps in education.

### From the margins to the mainstream

Women and girls all too often bear the brunt of countries' debt burden, especially if debt servicing leads to cuts in public spending in the areas of health and education. This reduces women and girls' access to public services and increases the caregiving burden. Debt cancellation, says the Secretary-General, can be particularly beneficial to women if resources are diverted to financing for women's empowerment. Some countries have used debt cancellation to fund educational programmes on nutrition and family planning.

The Secretary-General calls in his report for eliminating conditionalities in debt relief and debt financing that perpetuate or exacerbate gender inequalities, and for earmarking resources released by

debt relief to addressing specific gender equality targets. "What does it mean for women to be at the table when external agencies have decided on our behalf what is good for us and what is not?" asked Marina Durano of UNIFEM at the roundtable on financing for gender equality, held on 28 January in New York and co-organized by DESA.

Also within national governments, national machineries for the advancement of women are ineffective because "they are marginalized in the governments and hampered by a lack of resources and political support," according to Hannan. "It is essential that these mechanisms receive the financial and human resources necessary to carry out their mandates in support of the implementation of policies that promote equality and women's advancement."

It is crucial to pull gender perspectives out of the shadows and, as the Secretary-General stresses, integrate women's concerns into development policies across sectors if the global economic system is to promote the advancement of all people. The message of world leaders in the 2005 World Summit should resonate loudly at this year of the Monterrey Consensus Implementation Review: "Progress for women is progress for all."

*For more information:*

<http://www.womenwatch/daw/csw/52sesspriority.htm>  
[html](#)

## The challenge of capacity development

*DESA's support to national capacity building is an important reality check on its global research and analysis*

All institutions that conduct research and analysis are faced with the challenge of sharing what they have discovered with those who can put this knowledge into practice to make a difference in the lives of people. Agricultural and industrial research centres at the country level rely on elaborate extension networks to get their message to practitioners in their sectors. Extension workers, employing a variety of promotional and communications techniques, interact directly with producers' associations and often directly with producers to share the techniques and findings that researchers have arrived at. Good

extension workers also inform researchers of the concerns and ground realities of practitioners.

For DESA, as an important centre for research and analysis on economic, social and environmental themes, such extension work takes the form of its capacity development activities for the benefit of member states. Interregional advisers and other technical cooperation personnel perform analogous functions to those of extension workers at the country level. The research conclusions and policy recommendations that they transmit to those who shape and make policy at the country level result typically from in-depth analysis by research staff and consultants of the Department.

Transmitting knowledge and skills requires, in addition to substantive knowledge of a subject area, good communications, training and organizational development abilities, a different set of skills than those required for research alone. As with extension work at the country level, the lessons learned from the interaction with practitioners through technical cooperation are fed back to the researchers who analyze economic and social issues to arrive at conclusions and policy recommendations. Contact with practitioners serves DESA as a vital reality check to keep its research and analysis relevant to actual country perspectives.

#### From technical cooperation to capacity development

For decades, the keyword in the United Nations for the sharing of knowledge and skills with and among countries was technical cooperation. In recent years, at both the intergovernmental and organizational level, the focus has shifted from technical cooperation and capacity building, which both refer to the processes by which knowledge and skills are shared, to capacity development, which focuses on the outcomes of these processes in the form of



stronger institutions, better working methods and better trained personnel at the country level. The shift in focus to capacity development implies a higher aspiration in terms of progress and the need to ensure that international cooperation is truly meeting the needs of national managers and staff who have the central responsibility for capacity development.

#### A mandate for all countries

Most of the media attention and intergovernmental debate on economic and social development focuses on developing countries and the poorest of the poor. In sharing its knowledge, skills, and norms, however, DESA has a mandate for all countries. Whether it is conveying standards to national statistical offices, suggesting macroeconomic policy options, population policies, alternatives to address challenges of indigenous peoples, youth, elders or those with disabilities, or recommending sustainable patterns of consumption and production, DESA's focus and messages are at all times on the 192 member states of the United Nations.

This universal focus and breadth of interests makes DESA unique among international organizations, most of which have specific sectoral or geographic mandates. DESA serves therefore both as a repository of living knowledge and skills as well as a network through which countries can tap sectoral and cross-sectoral knowledge from other countries, both developed and developing. In fact, developing countries are providing an increasing share of knowledge and expertise for development.

#### Cooperation among developing countries

The international community generally agrees on the importance of South-South cooperation as a complement to North-South cooperation in supporting efforts in low-income countries to achieve national development objectives as well as the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs. While countries of the South stress their ownership of the agenda and priorities of South-South cooperation, the international community recognizes the role for countries of the North and multilateral organizations to support the growth of South-South cooperation through what is called triangular cooperation, where a donor country might provide funding for exchanges of expertise between developing countries.

Recognizing the need to strengthen South-South cooperation, the Assembly decided to convene a

high-level UN Conference on South-South cooperation by the first half of 2009. Several other high-level UN forums will provide opportunities to integrate considerations of South-South cooperation into intensifying global efforts to implement commitments on achieving the MDGs. These include UNCTAD-XII in April 2008, the first session of the Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council in mid-2008, and the Review Conference on Financing for Development in Doha, from 29 November to 2 December 2008. Working closely with UNCTAD and the Regional Commissions, DESA is facilitating and supporting these intergovernmental processes, which will provide further guidance for its capacity development activities.

Along with the other economic and social entities of the United Nations, DESA has also helped forge an inter-departmental agenda and work plan on South-South cooperation, which provides for developing a supportive institutional framework for this modality, supplying technical assistance, undertaking studies on current trends and emerging issues, strengthening programmes for the promotion of South-South trade and investment, supporting efforts in regional integration, and generally strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation.

### Cross-cutting, integrated capacity building

In facilitating the sharing of expertise between both developed and developing countries as well as among developing countries, DESA integrates closely its normative, analytical and operational work. Examples of such integration are plentiful. In the statistical field, DESA is the lead in setting standards for indicators for measuring the MDGs and training national statistical offices on such standards. The implementation of capacity training on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women has led to increased implementation and reporting by Member States. DESA promotes improved national standards for civil service with commitments to transform public sectors in performance oriented and citizen responsive institutions. Advisory work in youth, ageing, and disability helps Member States formulate national policies which reflect their international commitments. And assistance on national sustainable development strategies contributes to integrated water resources management and energy efficiency initiatives.

### Digital technology

At a time when untied capacity development resources are rare or non-existent, “e-TC” – technical cooperation with the aid of digital technologies – as well as other internet-based tools represent a cost-effective means to share DESA's knowledge and message in all its mandated areas, not only those that are of interest to donors as in conventional donor-funded capacity building. Knowledge tools currently available include departmental and divisional sites that are being increasingly configured as user-friendly knowledge portals from which clients can download DESA publications, data, reports and other knowledge products for free, web forums devoted to specific topics, which enable sharing of views, information and experiences across continents asynchronously at each participant's convenience in terms of time, and self-paced e-learning courses.

DESA's web services are actively used. The main economic and social affairs portal, which is available in the six UN languages, and the Department's divisional websites received a total of some 33 million visits over the 2006-2007 biennium, some 16.5 million visits per year. Some challenges to overcome may be access, connectivity or bandwidth issues in the least developed countries. However, innovative solutions such as cyber buses that tour villages are helping to provide accessibility to people living in poverty. The introduction of the high-speed Internet2, an initiative in which the Secretariat including DESA is expected to participate over the next two years, can provide the infrastructure for overcoming current bandwidth issues. Additional resources for e-learning and website development, both through the regular departmental budget and the Development Account have been sought to permit further expansion of these modalities so as to serve Member States more effectively.

To address the challenging implementation gaps of the internationally-agreed development goals in Africa, DESA is working closely with the International Telecommunications Union and other key organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the private sector, so as to pool their capacities and knowledge together, through the development of a consortium for capacity building in Africa focused on training for education, health, e-governance and e-entrepreneurship.

### Operationalizing the United Nations Development Agenda

Ultimately, DESA's capacity development efforts serve to convert the United Nations Development

Agenda, the synthesis of all the internationally-agreed development goals, into a reality at the country level. Through its support to the intergovernmental processes, particularly the conferences and summits of the past two decades, DESA has helped Member States forge the United Nations Development Agenda. “DESA is at the centre of the Development Agenda’s operationalization,” Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang told the G-77 at its hand-over ceremony on 11 January. “Indeed, strengthening the UN development pillar and supporting the Secretary-General’s development priorities are at the core of DESA’s vision for 2008.”

*For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/desa>*



## Global dialogue on development

### Taking action on employment

*Ministers, employers and workers sit elbow-to-elbow at the Commission for Social Development*

Practical measures for countries to implement full employment and decent work are expected to be debated during the 46th session of the Commission for Social Development, which is taking place between 6 and 15 February in New York. This year's gathering – the second of a two year cycle – will focus on the constraints and barriers to implementation of policies that promote full employment and decent work. Building on the 2007 review session, the upcoming policy session is expected to bear fruit in the form of an action-oriented document, which may include a follow-up mechanism destined to keep the issue high on the UN development agenda.

The Commission's Chairperson, Alexei Tulbure of Moldova, will open the meeting on 6 February, followed by statements by Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy-Secretary General, and Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs. Carlos Tomada, Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Protection of Argentina, will deliver the keynote address.

Ministers, employers and labour representatives will sit elbow-to-elbow in a high-level panel discussion in the afternoon to share experiences and discuss fruitful ways of easing employment creation. The five discussants include: Sudha Pillai, Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Employment of India; Sanja Crnkovic, Director of CEPOR, a Small and Medium Enterprises Policy Centre in Croatia; Daniel Funes, employer and Vice-chairperson of the ILO Governing Body; Gladys Branche, of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress, and; Vladimir Spidla, European Commissioner for Employment.

The commitment to create full and productive employment and decent work is indeed a considerable challenge given that 1.5 billion people, or one third of the working age population worldwide, were either out of work or underemployed in 2006, notes the Secretary-General in a report prepared for the session. In contrast to past experience, he says, economic growth in recent years

has not been strongly associated with the growth of formal employment.

To better understand the links between economic well-being, employment, and social inclusion, a number of side panels will be held starting 5 February on issues such as universal social protection and its impact on poverty eradication, and employment in old age. The idea of recognizing indigenous peoples' community-based approach to management of natural resources as a legitimate form of work will be the subject of discussion on 6 February, as will the challenges of youth employment.

On 8 February, the policy implications of the recently launched DESA World Youth Report 2007 will be taken up, along with a panel on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its regional follow-up. The place of disability in the UN development agenda, an emerging issue, will be the subject of a panel discussion on 12 February, followed by a briefing on 13 February on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women in the workplace.

In addition to an action-oriented outcome on employment and decent work, it is expected that delegates will conclude the session with further resolutions on ageing and disabilities.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/csocd2008.htm>

### Top statisticians reflect on relevance, integrity, innovation

*Leading practitioners meet in New York starting 22 February to consider labour, social, administrative, migration, gender statistics and a host of other issues*

Heads of the National Statistical Offices of over 120 countries are set to gather in New York for the 39th session of the Statistical Commission, which runs 26 through 29 February. New technical norms in the areas of national accounts, tourism statistics, industrial statistics and distributive trade statistics will be before the Commission for review. The Commission will also discuss education statistics, population and housing censuses, development indicators and national statistical capacity building. In addition, information will share information on health, trade and environment statistics.

Of note, statistical development in Africa will be given special consideration this year. ECA has prepared a report for delegates that, among other things, deals with the links between global and regional intergovernmental bodies against the backdrop of a recent trend to revamp statistical functions in major regional organizations. That trend has been in part a response to the repeated demand to address underdevelopment of statistical services in Africa.

The Commission will consider an in-depth programme review of labour statistics, prepared by the Office of National Statistics of the United Kingdom. The opening of national economies to trade, foreign capital and foreign workers brought about by globalization has important implications for the field of labour statistics. Measuring the movement of labour across national boundaries is a serious challenge, for example, and the programme review underscores the need to develop a standardized approach to measuring short-term migration to complement existing standards for gathering statistical data on longer-term migration.

A seminar on new directions on social statistics to be held, on 22 February, before the formal session begins will reflect on the challenges of social statistics, an area often used to monitor social changes or to assess and advise social policies. The meeting will be an opportunity for chief statisticians to share experiences on developing a programme of work on social statistics and is expected to wrap up by examining the possibilities of building a framework to guide coherent measurement.

Another seminar on administrative data sources in statistics, on 27 February, will provide an overview of the register based statistical system in support of the use of administrative data in production of statistics.

A high-level forum on official statistics, on 25 February will allow participants to explore progress and setbacks in the advancement of the global statistical system, as well as consider pivotal issues in official statistics. Concepts such as relevance, integrity and innovation will guide the debate.

“When compiling statistical data, it is essential that statistical analysis matches the needs of each country, as these are different depending on their level of development,” explains Virgilio Castillo of the DESA Statistics Division, which services the Commission. In addition, innovation of ideas and

strategies coupled with technological innovation are critical. Technology plays a big part in statistical compilation, projection analysis and sophisticated technological measuring, adds Mr. Castillo. Unfortunately, it remains a challenge for some poor countries.

Joining forces with the Commission on the Status of Women, a joint dialogue will take place, on 28 February, with the goal of developing a set of appropriate indicators to measure violence against women.

*For more information:*

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission\\_currrent\\_session.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission_currrent_session.htm)

## **Commission takes up financing for gender equality and women’s empowerment**

Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women will be the priority theme at the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women, to be held in New York from 25 February to 7 March. To enrich the discussion, Ministers and other high-level representatives from national capitals will take part in a roundtable on this topic on 25 February, followed by two interactive expert panel discussions on 26 February.

The Commission will also consider the emerging issue of gender perspectives on climate change through an interactive expert panel discussion on 28 February. The Commission will review the status of implementation of the agreed conclusions on women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace building, adopted in 2004, through an interactive dialogue on 29 February.

The Commission will organize a lunch time panel on 27 February to enable a preliminary discussion on its priority theme for 2009 on equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. On 28 February, the Commission will hold a joint panel with the Statistics Commission on indicators on violence against women.

A large number of parallel events will be organized by UN agencies, funds and programmes, permanent missions, and non-governmental organizations throughout the two-week session. Over 2000 NGO representatives are expected to attend.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm>

## Haitian diplomat elected to lead ECOSOC

*The Haitian permanent representative to the United Nations, Léo Mérorès, was elected the 64th President of the Economic and Social Council at the opening of its organizational session on 14 January*

Mérorès took over from Dalius Cekuolis of Lithuania. In his acceptance speech to the 54 members of the Council, the Haitian diplomat paid tribute to his predecessor for leading the Council through an important year that saw some change in the outlook of the Council in 2007.

“He [Cekuolis] capably steered the implementation of the new functions of the Council and ... improved its effectiveness,” said Mérorès. He emphasized the importance of building on progress that his predecessor has established and to help bring to fruition improvements and new mandates of the ECOSOC as per the recommendations of the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, also present at the meeting, was emphatic about the role of the Council in advancing the development agenda. He said the newly formed Development Cooperation Forum will pave the way for an inclusive framework to address the latest trends in development cooperation and the critical issues of aid quality and quantity.

“The UN development agenda, especially the Millennium Development Goals, can be achieved if immediate steps are taken to implement existing commitments...In 2015, we must be able to say that we have done everything possible to follow through on our commitments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. ECOSOC has a critical role to play in ensuring that we win the race to the Goals and that we advance our global development agenda,” said the UN Secretary-General.

The outgoing Council President, Dalius Cekuolis said the Council is well on its way to becoming “the

Charter body that was envisaged by the founding members of this Organization.” He said the Council has raised the visibility of the development agenda by engaging and mobilizing the international community to find practical measures to address poverty.

Two new functions of ECOSOC were introduced last year – the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum – providing a vehicle for accelerating implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015 target date.

The new president Léo Mérorès highlighted the theme of the 2008 Annual Ministerial Review which will be implementation of the agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development. He said the Council can provide a forum for the integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development that is presently lacking at the global level.

“I will make every effort to ensure the success of the first-ever biennial Development Cooperation Forum,” said the newly elected President. He added that the Forum, to be held in New York in July, is expected to become the core for global dialogue and policy review on key development cooperation issues.

*For more information:*

<http://www.ecosoc/about/bureau.shtml>



*H.E. Mr. Léo Mérorès of Haiti, President of the Economic and Social Council for 2008, addresses delegates following election on 14 January (16 minutes)*

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/specialevents/2008/se080114.rm?start=00:17:07&end=00:32:28>

## General Assembly advances on Doha

*GA President outlines preparatory process for Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development*

The President of the General Assembly has circulated an outline of the preparatory process for the international follow-up conference on financing for development to be held in Doha from 29 November

to 2 December this year. It is expected that Heads of State or Government, ministers, special representatives and other high-level dignitaries will arrive at a negotiated outcome reaffirming goals and commitments while setting out measures for further implementation of the Monterrey Consensus of 2002.

Preparatory discussions will take place in New York, starting with a review session on mobilizing domestic financial resources for development on 14 February, followed by a session on foreign direct investment and other private flows the next day. From 10-12 March, negotiators will turn to questions of external debt, as well as the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems. Increasing international financial and technical cooperation for development will come up in April, followed by dialogue on international trade in May. Hearings with civil society and the business sector will take place in June.

The General Assembly has also called on the UN regional commissions, with the support of regional development banks and other relevant entities, to hold their own consultations during the first half of 2008.

After the review sessions, in the second week of July, the Secretary-General will issue an advanced unedited version of a progress report on implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. By the end of July, the President will circulate a draft outcome document for the consideration of Member States.

*For more information:* <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

## Joining forces on climate change

*Thematic debate in General Assembly examines strategies to widen and deepen partnerships*

Coming on the heels of the UN Conference on Climate Change and its Bali Action Plan, a thematic debate entitled “Addressing Climate Change: The United Nations and the World at Work” will take place on 11 and 12 February in New York. The meeting is intended to explore how the UN system can best team up with Member States, the private sector, and civil society to address climate change. Partnerships are seen as vital for making headway on adaptation, mitigation, technology, and financing, as

well as deforestation, which are the main elements of the Bali action plan.

The debate will open with statements by Srgjan Kerim, President of the General Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of the City of New York. A panel on 11 February will then examine ways to expand the reach and effectiveness of cooperative ventures. Governments and NGOs are currently joining in partnership with businesses at local, national, regional and international levels. Yet despite recent progress, the current framework backing the transfer, deployment and diffusion of technology is thought to be insufficient. If so, technology partnerships and transfers could make a difference. Twenty trillion dollars of investment in the energy sector by 2030 could make an important contribution to mitigation efforts by spurring movement to low-carbon economies.

In this connection, discussants will consider the critical elements of effective public-private partnerships and how they contribute to the design and implementation of innovative financing mechanisms for adaptation and mitigation. In addition, the debate will look at ways in which partnerships can bolster cooperation among developing countries.

A second panel discussion on the UN response will revolve around questions such as what strategic objectives the UN should pursue to address climate change, how the UN can best achieve those goals, how the UN system can improve the contribution of its activities and partnerships to mitigation and adaptation and ways in which the UN can assist Member States in policy-making on this issue. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Achim Steiner of UNEP, and Kemal Dervis of UNDP, among others, will take part.

The following day, 12 February, will be devoted to plenary meetings in the General Assembly.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/ThematicDebates/themclimatechange.shtml>

## **NGO Committee recommends six civil society groups for consultative status**

Of the twenty-four applications considered, a further sixteen were deferred until May, and two rejected

Concluding its 2008 regular session on 30 January, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decided to recommend six civil-society groups for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. It also adopted a resolution and two oral decisions on its working methods in addition to its report.

Recommended for special consultative status were: Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda, a national organization based in Mexico which aims to conserve the natural resources and promote sustainable development of the Sierra Gorda region; Hunter College Center for Community and Urban Health, a New York City-based international organization that addresses urban health issues in a holistic manner; Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology, an international society of all marine professionals with headquarters in the United Kingdom; Santé de la reproduction pour une maternité sans risque, a Niger-based national organization focusing on reproductive health; Africa Humanitarian Action, an international humanitarian assistance organization based in Ethiopia; and Fundación para la Libertad, a national organization in Spain that promotes human rights within Basque society.

Following a lengthy procedural debate, the Committee voted against recommending consultative status for Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales, a Spanish national organization supporting the rights and social acceptance of people of alternate sexuality. The Committee also decided against recommending consultative status for the American Sports Committee, an international organization that promotes exercise for health, after the representatives of China and Egypt said the range of its activities relating to the Council was much too narrow.

The 19-member Committee recommends general, special or roster status with the Council according to such criteria as the applicant's mandate, governance and financial regime. Organizations enjoying general

and special consultative status can attend meetings of the Council and circulate statements. Those with general status can, in addition, speak at meetings and propose items for the Council's agenda, while NGOs that have roster status can only attend meetings.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/>

## Trends and analysis

### City dwellers set to surpass rural inhabitants in 2008

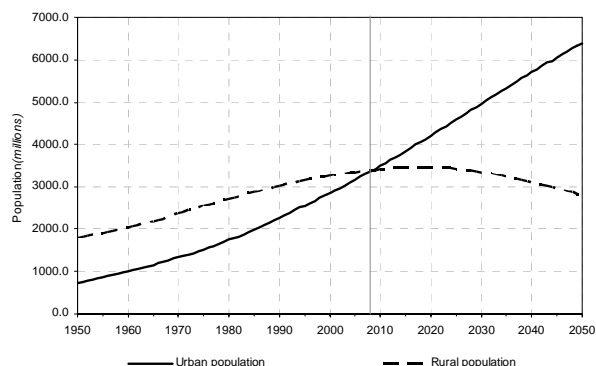
*Developing countries are experiencing particularly rapid rates of urbanization*

The world's population has been undergoing a major transformation: over the past century it has been transformed from being mostly rural to being predominantly urban. In 2008, for the first time in history, half of the world's people will live in urban areas, according to the latest revision of World Urbanization Prospects, a record of official estimates and projections of urban, rural and city populations prepared by DESA's Population Division.

Not all regions are equally urbanized, however. Whereas in developed countries as a whole, 74 percent of the population lives in urban areas, just 44 percent of the population of developing countries does so, with these figures rising to 86 and 67 percent, respectively, in 2050 on current trends.

Between 2007 and 2050, the urban population is expected to increase by 3.1 billion. The largest numbers will be added to the urban population of Asia at 1.8 billion and Africa at 0.9 billion.

Today, Asia has the largest number of urban dwellers at 1.6 billion although its level of urbanization remains low at 41 percent. Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean have the second and third largest urban populations, at 0.53 billion and 0.45 billion respectively, and both are highly urbanized. Africa, with 0.37 billion urban dwellers, follows, although at 39 percent it has the lowest level of urbanization among the major regions of the world.



In discussing urbanization, the focus often is on large cities. Yet despite their visibility and dynamism, megacities – with at least 10 million inhabitants – accounted for just 8 percent of world population in 2007. Over half of all urban dwellers reside in localities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants.

Moreover, the urban population of the world is highly concentrated in a few countries. Three-quarters of the world's urban population lives in just 25 countries, notably China, India and the United States which today account for 35 percent of all urban dwellers. In addition to China and India, Bangladesh, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines are expected to account for a major proportion of the increase of the urban population in developing countries between 2007 and 2025.

World Urbanization Prospects presents estimates and projections for the urban and rural populations of 229 countries or areas and is published every two years. The complete 2007 revision is scheduled for release in February.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/>

### Online discussion on sustainable development

DESA and UNDP will hold a moderated discussion on achieving sustainable development hosted on MDGNet from 4 February to 14 March. Experts, practitioners and policy-makers from within and outside of the UN system will interact online to share experiences and generate practical input for the Economic and Social Council's Annual Ministerial Review taking place in New York in July.

The discussion will consist of two parts. Part one, which runs from 4 to 22 February, will explore challenges countries face in integrating the goals of economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Part two, from 25 February to 14 March, will cover concrete policy initiatives that can help countries achieve sustainable development.

Expert moderators will guide participants through a series of questions that will lead to recommendations for strengthening national and international efforts. The discussion presents an opportunity for the

broader development community, in particular those working at the country level, to provide input to the Economic and Social Council.

*For more information and to sign up:*

<http://www.ecosoc/newfunct/amredis.shtml>

## Global dimensions of desertification

*Experts at Beijing conference discuss practical measures for combating desertification*

Representatives of governments, organizations of the UN system and other international and regional institutions, as well as major groups, gathered for an international conference in Beijing from 22-24 January to discuss the challenges of desertification and measures to combat it.

Reinforcing the notion that the natural environment knows no political boundaries, participants concluded the meeting by stressing that desertification is a global issue with serious implications for worldwide eco-safety, food security, socio-economic stability, and sustainable development. Indeed, two billion people in the world today live in arid and semi-arid areas, said DESA Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang pointing out that “Ninety per cent of them live in the developing world, where increasing ecological stresses caused by desertification are threatening livelihoods.”

Combating desertification and land degradation requires large and long-term investments that are difficult to mobilize from central and local government budgets alone. It also requires providing economic and non-economic incentives to stakeholders, including small-scale land users, to invest in the sustainable management of land, forests and other natural resources. Such incentives may include, among others, establishing tenure security and access rights to land, water and forests, facilitating access to credits and technology, including IT, at favorable terms, improving early warning and information exchange on desertification and drought, and capacity-building.

The high level of rural poverty in many developing countries, particularly in Africa, continues to be among the most serious constraints to progress in combating desertification and land degradation. At the same time, desertification and land degradation exacerbates rural poverty in affected developing

countries. “Of the countries ranked low on the human development index,” noted Sha, “the great majority are suffering from drought and desertification.” In fact, the average infant mortality rate for these countries is ten times higher when compared with the average infant mortality rate in developed countries. Their per capita income is also among the lowest in the world.

“We cannot allow this scourge to continue, afflicting millions of people,” Sha emphasized. “We have a historical responsibility to act, and to act quickly, in partnership.”

The conference was convened as part of preparations for the upcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in May, which will address the issue of desertification, along with agriculture, land, drought, rural development, and Africa. The State Forestry Administration of the People’s Republic of China organized the event together with DESA, the secretariat of the UNCCD and other UN organizations.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/desertification/beijing2008/>

## Technical cooperation

### GAID launches regional ICT network for Latin America and the Caribbean

*ICT use for health, science and technology and disaster preparedness remains limited in the region*

Development experts will gather in San Salvador on 4 and 5 February to launch the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Network of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development and to elaborate ways of exploiting information technology for poverty eradication, health promotion, education, youth employment and e-government in the region. According to ECLAC, the region as a whole has made significant advances in the use of ICT in community centres, local government, research networks, and education, while making very limited progress in applying ICT to health, science and technology, and disaster preparedness.

The network is expected to analyse needs of the countries in the region. To this end, its members will engage in a wide range of activities from defining ICT sub-regions to organizing workshops and lobbying for a legal framework that supports public-private partnerships. The main idea is to create links with other regional groups, and promote the participation of major stakeholders in ICT planning and development in countries of the region.

This consultation – jointly organized by GAID, the Inter-American Development Bank, and ECLAC – is part of a larger initiative known as eLAC, a regional action plan designed to help countries realize the benefits of the information society. Within the eLAC framework, governments take the lead in elaborating public policy while encouraging private sector, civil society, academic, and international actors to participate actively in implementation. A basic premise of the plan is that access to information technology is a right of every individual, as is development itself.

The group's recommendations will be presented to the Second Ministerial Conference on the Information Society for the region taking place from 6 to 8 February, also in San Salvador. It is expected that delegates will adopt a declaration of principles for advancing ICT in the region, as well as a further course of action through 2010.

For more information: [http://www.un-gaid.org/en/regional\\_networks/lac](http://www.un-gaid.org/en/regional_networks/lac)

### Statistics Division brings knowledge on standards and technology to South Pacific

DESA's Statistics Division will present a workshop on international standards for conducting population and housing censuses in Noumea, New Caledonia from 4 to 8 February to strengthen regional cooperation in carrying out population and housing censuses in the Pacific region. Among the topics to be discussed are the use of optical character recognition technology for census and survey data capture, and geographical information systems and other geospatial technologies in census mapping activities.

Participants will learn about revised international standards for conducting population and housing censuses, focusing on recommended core topics as identified in the United Nations Principles and Recommendations Revision 2. They will also discuss ways of improving the capacity of national statistical offices to implement the principles, for example by reviewing a proposed Pacific islands model census questionnaire. New approaches in census geography will be explained, including the use of geographical information systems and global positioning systems in census mapping, data collection and dissemination, and disaster management, as well as optical character recognition for census and survey data capture.

For more information: [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/Demographic/meetings/workshops/New\\_Caledonia\\_4Feb08/](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/Demographic/meetings/workshops/New_Caledonia_4Feb08/)



## Publications and websites

### Technical reports

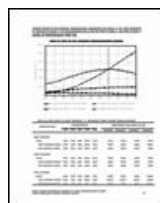


#### World e-Parliament Report 2008

On 28 February, DESA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union will release the World e-Parliament Report 2008. The report provides an overview of the emerging trends and common challenges in the use of ICT in parliaments and serves as a baseline for review of the further application of ICT to lawmaking, parliamentary oversight, and representation. It is intended to help parliaments assess the use of ICT in the day-to-day functions of the legislature while drawing upon the experiences of other institutions. The report is based on the findings of a worldwide survey conducted in the second half of 2007 to which over 100 assemblies and parliaments contributed.

An official launch will take place in New York during a meeting of the Board of the Global Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Parliament, a joint initiative of DESA and the IPU established as part of the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society.

For more information: <http://www.ictparliament.org>

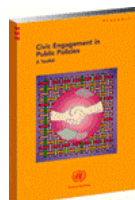


#### World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision

Every two years since 1988, DESA's Population Division has issued revised and updated estimates and projections of the urban and rural populations of all countries in the world and of their major urban agglomerations. The 2007 edition of the report, to be made available online, will be launched in New York on 26 February.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm>

## Handbooks



#### Civic Engagement in Public Policies: A Toolkit

While many governments and civil society organizations have committed themselves to promoting public governance, there are few practical tools available to guide them. This title provides advice on programme formulation and evaluation for social mobilization along with step-by-step methods for implementation. Drawing lessons from successful cases around the world, the toolkit lays out concrete strategies for expanding public participation in policy-making, budgeting, and other areas.

Civic Engagement is a product of DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management. Publications sales no. 08.II.H.1.

To download:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN028366.pdf>



#### Indicators of Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Methodologies, 3rd Edition

The new revised edition of Indicators of Sustainable Development has been produced in response to calls by governments for further work at the country level in line with national conditions and priorities. Since the last edition knowledge of and experience with sustainable development indicators has increased significantly while interest in measuring progress on sustainable development has grown.

The third edition includes a synopsis of international efforts to measure sustainable development, along with an overview of methodologies for 96 indicators that can guide countries in their adoption and application within specific national contexts. A subset of 50 core indicators is recommended. Detailed methodology sheets are provided in an accompanying CD-Rom and online. Produced by the DESA Division for Sustainable Development. Publications sales no. 08.II.A.2.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/isd.htm>

## Working papers

### **A Framework for Analyzing Tariffs and Subsidies in Water Provision to Urban Households in Developing Countries**

This paper presents a basic conceptual framework for understanding the main issues and challenges relating to tariffs and subsidies in the water sector in developing countries. The paper introduces the basic economic notions relevant to the water sector, presents an analytical framework for assessing the need for and evaluating subsidies, and discusses the recent evidence on the features and performance of water tariffs and subsidies in different regions with a special focus on Africa. The discussion is limited to the provision of drinking water to urban households in developing countries.

*To download:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2008/wp63\\_2008.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2008/wp63_2008.pdf)

### **Building Capacities for Public Service in Post-Conflict Countries**

This paper represents a nuanced contribution to the discourse on post-conflict reconstruction by focusing on some of the most fundamental and earliest elements to be addressed in the conflict/post-conflict/reconstruction spectrum, namely: constitutional enshrinement of the character of government institutions; political will and leadership; and the necessity of inclusive and participatory processes for the articulation of national aspirations followed by translation into an organizational structure for the new public service to fulfill them. Different concepts are presented side-by-side followed by in-depth descriptions by practitioners of how this has been achieved in a variety of post-conflict situations.

*To download:*

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN028646.pdf>

### **Governance Strategies for Post-Conflict Reconstruction, Sustainable Peace and Development**

This paper provides insight into governance challenges and suggests guideposts to assist government leaders in post-conflict reconstruction

efforts. The author argues that although the specifics of post-conflict reconstruction activities depend on the challenges each country has to face, a sound mix of policies based on universal values and the proper use of management systems and tools are crucial. The paper outlines the determinants of effective strategy, emphasizing in particular the importance of a situation analysis to understand context and identify key elements of reconstruction plans. It further shows the need to be “peace sensitive” and “development oriented”, taking into consideration public policies and institutions that mediate relations between government, civil society, the private sector, and international actors.

*To download:*

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan028332.pdf>

### **Political Decentralization in Africa: Experiences of Uganda, Rwanda and South Africa**

This paper looks at political decentralization and assesses how successful it has been in promoting grassroots participation in decision-making. The practical reasons for devolution are discussed, along with issues in decentralized governance and institutional arrangements for public participation in local government. The paper relates the experiences of Uganda, Rwanda, and South Africa in an attempt to uncover cases where devolution has worked and where it has not.

*To download:*

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan028411.pdf>

### **Democracy and its Electoral Challenges: The Case of Bangladesh**

This paper describes the current successes and difficulties of post-1990 democratic governance in Bangladesh. While the country has experienced several developmental successes since 1990, its public institutions continue to encounter major democratic deficits. The paper argues that many institutional shortcomings – such as dwindling rule of law, endemic corruption, and lack of transparency and accountability – are most prominently attributable to poor leadership resulting from a struggle for influence between different parties. Political influence is also determined by the electoral process: who and how party nominations are obtained, how one gets elected, and by what means.

To download:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan028465.pdf>

## Outreach material



### UN Enable Newsletter

DESA is pleased to announce the launch of UN Enable, a monthly electronic newsletter of the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities intended to keep UN offices, NGOs, the media, and other interested parties informed about the work of the UN system on disability issues. The convention secretariat is located within the Division for Social Policy and Development.

To read and subscribe:

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=313>



### UN Statistics Division: Major Work Areas and Accomplishments

The Statistics Division in DESA has produced a comprehensive brochure describing its work, accomplishments in advancing the global statistical system, and extensive product line.

To download:

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/img/Unstats/side\\_events/brochure\\_web.pdf](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/img/Unstats/side_events/brochure_web.pdf)

## Websites



### UNPAN Online Training Centre

Registration for online training in public administration opens in

February with a new interactive course. Learning the essentials of e-government has been made even easier with graphics that illustrate complex concepts, quizzes for reinforcing key points, and a glossary to facilitate the understanding of discipline specific terminology.

For more information and to register:

<http://unpan3.un.org/tlm40/Login.aspx>

## Comings and goings

### Goings



**Ms. Najet Karaborni** is set to retire at the end of February following a distinguished fifteen years with the United Nations. A senior adviser to national governments on the complexities and challenges of public

administration, Ms. Karaborni has guided DESA technical cooperation projects in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East in such diverse areas as governance, civil service reform, ethics, gender mainstreaming, NGO capacity-building, and human resources development.

Ms. Karaborni began her career as a development practitioner in 1972 in the Tunisian Ministry of Public Works and Habitat, working her way up to the position of Commissioner General for Land Management and Regional Development. She first joined the United Nations in 1991 heading a team in Senegal to develop a national land use plan for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Her success in that project led her to the Division for Public Administration and Development Management in New York in 1993.

Ms. Karaborni holds a Ph.D. level degree from the National School of Administration (ENA) in Tunis, and is the author of numerous toolkits, guidelines and other training materials.

*The following staff members retired in January:*

Mr. Girma Mulugetta, Associate Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Mr. Viet Vu, Chief of National Accounts Section, Statistics Division

## Calendar

### February

Workshop International Standards, Contemporary Technologies and Regional Cooperation in Population and Housing Censuses  
Noumea, New Caledonia, 4-8 February

DESA/UNDP e-Discussion on Achieving Sustainable Development  
4 February-14 March

#### **Economic and Social Council**

Organizational session of 2008, New York, 5-8 February

#### **Commission for Social Development**

46<sup>th</sup> session, New York, 6-15 February

General Assembly  
Thematic debate on addressing climate change, New York, 11-12 February

Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development  
Preparatory review session on the Monterrey Consensus, New York 14-15 February

Economic and Social Council  
Special event on philanthropy and the MDGs, New York, 25 February

#### **Commission on the Status of Women**

52<sup>nd</sup> session, New York, 25 February-7 March

#### **Statistical Commission**

39<sup>th</sup> session, New York, 26-29 February

Launch of the World e-Parliament Report  
New York, 28 February

### March

Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development  
Preparatory review session on the Monterrey Consensus, New York 10-12 March

#### **Committee for Development Policy**

10<sup>th</sup> session, New York, 17-20 March

## Observances

### **World Day of Social Justice proclaimed**

The General Assembly recently proclaimed 20 February as the World Day of Social Justice, inviting Member States to devote this special day to the promotion of concrete national activities in accordance with the objectives and goals of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world". The day is to be observed for the first time in 2009.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays/IntlJustice/>

*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.*

*Inquiries should be addressed to [esa@un.org](mailto:esa@un.org).*