



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's presence at the inaugural meeting of the 2007 Economic and Social Council on 17 January is seen as a strong signal of his commitment to the work of the United Nations in the economic and social areas at this time of change and renewal.

A recording of the meeting can be viewed online at <http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/specialevents/se070117pm.rm>

inside this issue

Decent employment, weapon against poverty

Social integration and poverty reduction require more, and better, jobs for the world's poor, p. 1

Functional commissions play their part in UN reform, p. 4

Global dialogue on development, p. 6

Trends and analysis, p. 10

Technical cooperation, p. 12

Publications and websites, p. 13

Comings and goings, p. 15

Calendar, p. 16

Feature articles

Decent employment, weapon against poverty

Social integration and poverty reduction require more, and better, jobs for the world's poor.

The idea that creating more and better jobs is the best way to eradicate poverty may sound like a platitude to the man on the street. For policy-makers, however, full and decent employment has long been the missing link in the economic growth and poverty reduction equation. World leaders reformulated this equation at the 2005 World Summit, agreeing to put employment back into the UN development agenda and at the heart of national and international policies. Indeed, with unemployment on the rise and the quality of jobs deteriorating, and with half the world's workers earn less than a meager poverty line income of two dollars a day, addressing the employment dilemma is more pressing than ever. The Economic and Social Council adopted a Ministerial Declaration in 2006 on employment and decent work for all, with a number of

practical measures for creating an enabling environment to deal with the structural crisis of unemployment. Now the baton is passed to the Commission for Social Development which has placed the subject of full employment and decent work for all at the top of its February agenda.

The Commission's forty-fifth session, starting on 7 February, is expected to shed light on the impact of full employment and decent work on poverty eradication and social integration. Employment is a key pathway to poverty reduction and empowerment of marginalized groups. The impact of wages, income, job stability and decent work on people's vulnerability is direct. As workers are affected by increasing insecurity in the workplace and opportunities for decent work in labour markets shrink, progress in the fight against poverty and in building inclusive societies cannot be realized. This is one of the more sobering points stressed by the Secretary-General in his recent report on promoting full employment and decent work for all, which has been prepared for this session and will be the cornerstone of the Commission's discussions on employment.

The need to live up to the Copenhagen commitments

“Unemployment, underemployment and job insecurity are interlinked to income insecurity and poverty in a vicious circle in which one phenomenon reinforces the others,” according to the report. Poverty eradication, full employment and social integration were the foundation of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995. In this session the Commission will review progress or regress made in the implementation of those commitments.

The course of employment worldwide clearly points to regress and weakness in one of the Copenhagen pillars. Even though globally more people are working than ever before, between 1995 and 2005 the ranks of the unemployed increased nearly 22 percent to 192 million people, and continued to expand in 2006 to an all time high of 195 million. Altogether the unemployment rate worldwide has risen from about 6.0 to 6.3 percent over the last ten years. Unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa is the highest of any region having gone from 9.2 to 9.7 percent in one decade. In Southeast Asia and the Pacific, unemployment rose from 3.9 to 6.1 percent over the same period, due in part to the 1997 Asian financial crisis. In Central and Eastern Europe, in East Asia and in Latin-America and the Caribbean, unemployment levels remained more or less unchanged.

Relying exclusively on unemployment levels as indicators of working conditions nonetheless obscures the real face of poverty today. According to Johan Schölvinnck, Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of DESA, “unemployment and employment figures only apply to the formal sector of the economy and fail to reveal what is not captured by statistics: poor working conditions and hidden unemployment in the informal economy.” Promoting full employment is not sufficient to prevent situations of risk to human security. For this reason, “the



Commission stresses the promotion of decent work for all,” says Schölvinnck. “Having a job does not guarantee that people will have an environment of safe work.”

The spread of the working poor

Globalization and the drive for international competitiveness have greatly affected the employment situation in the last decade. They have helped spawn new job opportunities in some areas, such as research and development centres in some developing countries, but they have also widened the gap between skilled and unskilled workers, so “the opportunities offered by the forces of globalization,” notes the Secretary-General in his report, “do not reach the poor, who are largely unskilled.” They have also generated job losses, employment insecurity and new risks for the workforce.

Underemployment characterized by low productivity and inadequate income remains “pervasive and is probably on the rise,” according to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, José Antonio Ocampo. Underemployment affects especially the agricultural sector and the urban informal economy. In terms of the fight against poverty, this diagnosis has far-reaching implications since the sectors together account for the major share of employment in most developing countries, and in particular in least developed countries.

Although in decline as a percentage of the overall labour force, agriculture is still the world’s largest source of employment providing jobs to more than 1.1 billion people. Informal labour, for its part, accounts for between one half and three quarters of non-agricultural work in the bulk of developing countries, and is on the rise pushed by the fast growth of the service sector. The spread of underemployment and precarious forms of work in these areas means that work and poverty, two terms that would seem mutually exclusive, go hand in hand.

Most of the poor in developing countries do work but jobs often provide barely enough income to lift them above the poverty threshold. Of the more than 2.8 billion workers in the world in 2005, 1.4 billion working poor earned less than two dollars a day. Out of the 1.4 billion, 485 million struggled to survive on less than one dollar a day. Many of the poorest workers are often denied basic rights and legal protection in the workplace, and forced to work in hazardous conditions.

In developed countries too, job security has decreased fuelled by increased competition and the pressure to

seek more flexible work arrangements in order to cut costs. In addition to the end of the job for life, a major trend in today's workplace is the reduction of job-related benefits such as pensions, health insurance and unemployment allowance.

Workers also find themselves in a weakened bargaining position vis-à-vis their employers as the collective strength of trade unions and other labour organizations has diminished. As the Secretary-General's report indicates, this is a product of intense competition for jobs in manufacturing and service industries across countries, as well as increasing self-employment. Self-employment has indeed soared over the last years. In developing countries, self-employment outside the agricultural sector accounts for 60 to 70 per cent of informal work, while in the United States the number of businesses with no paid employees stood at 18.6 million in 2003.

The spread of precarious employment might be expected to lead to new social protection systems in line with the new risks but has it has not. As the report makes clear, current formal social protection systems are still largely designed to benefit those with long-term jobs in the formal economy, in the same country and with the same employer – that is to the extent that they exist at all. More than half the world's population is excluded from any type of social security protection.

Jobless growth, a challenge for the advancement of the UN development agenda

Liberalization policies adopted by many countries have given priority to economic growth to the detriment of employment. The link between global economic growth and the creation of new jobs has nonetheless proved to be weak. The increase in the unemployment rate from 6.0 to 6.3 percent between 1995 and 2006 occurred at a time when the global economy grew at a rate of 3.8 percent per year. Such jobless growth confirms that growth alone cannot guarantee job creation – much less decent work – nor ensure the significant reduction in extreme poverty needed to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as Under Secretary-General Ocampo has often said.

As DESA's 2005 report on the world social situation reminds us, the impact of growth on poverty reduction is significantly lower when inequality is on the rise than when inequality is in decline. Jomo K.S., Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, describes a case in point in the DESA working paper on "Growth with Equity in East Asia?" According to Jomo, Indonesia and Malaysia

experienced reductions in inequality between segments of the population over an extended period not as a result of market forces but due to government expenditures in employment and education programmes.

Interventions to reduce poverty through employment

National employment policies are essential if Governments are to promote full employment, and smooth adjustment to changes in the structure of production brought about by trade liberalization and globalization. Many countries have implemented policies intended to create jobs, such as employment subsidies, public works and self-employment assistance. Less directly, they have bolstered public employment services by improving the capacity of the labour market through training, while enhancing access through enhanced labour market information and job matching.

Employment policies, on the other hand, have been ineffective in some countries where a balance between labour supply and demand does not exist. According to the Secretary-General's report, the challenge in these cases is to devise a favourable macroeconomic environment that attracts investment which in turn boosts and supports labour demand. That said, globalization has intensified the interdependence between States in macroeconomic policies. Consequently, countries have little policy space to step up employment levels through more expansionary macroeconomic policies on their own. For this reason, better coordination of macroeconomic policy among countries is seen as a prerequisite to attain the global goal of full employment and decent work.

At the same time, in many developing countries, poverty reduction strategy papers are intended to serve as road maps for developing countries to reach the Millennium Development Goals. The coverage of employment issues in the strategy papers is, however, limited in terms of the quantity and quality of conditions of work. Progress reports required by poverty reduction strategies rarely mention decent work objectives, policies and programmes. Although employment and social protection are beginning to receive more attention in the strategy papers, only a few of them fully integrate employment into macroeconomic development policies relating to tax, public expenditure, social services, agriculture, industrial development, trade or investment.

Overall, the picture of decent work and full employment worldwide is grim. Even with strong global economic growth in 2007 there is serious

concern about the prospects for decent job creation and reduction in the numbers of working poor. The creation of an enabling environment at the international and national levels that promotes decent work together with economic growth, enterprise development and poverty reduction is therefore all the more urgent. As ILO concluded in January in its 2007 report on Global Employment Trends, the ball is now in the court of Governments and the international community. It is up to national Governments and international policy-makers to ensure that the favourable economic conditions materialize into decent job growth.

Full access to the report of the Secretary-General on promoting full employment and decent work for all, and further information on the 45th session of the Commission for Social Development are available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/csod2007.htm>

For more information on the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, please visit <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/>.

Functional commissions play their part in UN reform

This 2007 cycle of conferences on development policy begins with great anticipation as it marks the first time that the Economic and Social Council will hold an Annual Ministerial Substantive Review (AMR) and Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). Both events are expected to transform the fundamental way in which the Council operates, giving the Council a highly-visible role in development monitoring, and an active part in the process of mobilizing support for international development cooperation.

The AMR will allow the Council to assess the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits of the past fifteen years, including the internationally agreed development goals. Most important, it will bolster accountability in delivering and implementing these commitments, while helping determine what actions work and should be scaled-up.

Participants in the biennial DCF, on the other hand, will review trends in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing, promote greater coherence among the development activities of different development partners and strengthen the links between the normative and operational work of the United Nations.

The DCF will involve outreach to the many non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders with which the Council has close contacts. There is a genuine need to engage the private sector and academia in the Council's work and to hear the voices of the many actors involved in carrying out the development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

These two new functions should enable the Council to bridge policy-making and implementation more directly. Yet if the AMR and DCF are to add value as the General Assembly has envisaged, the subsidiary organs of the Council will need to play their part. The functional commissions of the Council in effect constitute the technical arm of the intergovernmental machinery, providing policy options, suggesting indicators and benchmarks, and carrying out the detailed analysis of economic and social issues needed to inject substance and decisiveness into the proceedings of their parent body.

For this reason, the members of the Commission bureaux have adjusted their respective work to correspond more closely with the Council's overarching themes for 2007: eradicating poverty and hunger through global partnerships (Millennium Development Goal 1), and promoting full employment and decent work for all. The Commissions' widespread use of multi-year programmes of work will further drive their agendas towards convergence with the priorities of the Council in support of the AMR and DCF mechanisms in years to come.



The 2007 cycle at a glance

The Commission for Social Development (45th session, 7-16 February) will focus on full employment and decent work for all. The Commission on the Status of Women (51st session, 26 February-9 March) expects to reach agreed conclusions on the theme of eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. The Statistical Commission (38th session, 27 February-2 March), has contributed extensively to the Council's work by conducting technical reviews of development indicators, and this year continues to call attention to the need to strengthen national statistical capacity as a way to improve the global Millennium Development Goals database. See Global Dialogue on Development in the current issue for more information on these three February meetings.

The Committee for Development Policy (9th session, 9-23 March), an expert body rather than a functional commission, is expected to consider the environment-poverty nexus and its bearing on development policy, with a special focus on climate change. The CDP's deliberations should lead to concrete recommendations on how global partnerships can contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger. The CDP will also recommend revised procedures for classifying least developed countries.

The Commission on Population and Development (60th session, 9-13 April) will focus on the theme of ageing, the inter-generational transfer of resources, and Africa's youth population. As called for by the General Assembly, the Commission will also discuss the issue of violence against women in the context of ageing.

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration (6th session, 10-13 April), another expert body, is expected to provide a public administration perspective to the AMR with an emphasis on combating poverty. The Committee will seek agreement on basic UN terminology for describing governance and public administration matters, which should add precision to the deliberations of the AMR and DCF. CEPA will review a policy brief on participatory governance for Member States that highlights key institutional and methodological issues, as well as models of inclusive decision making and good practices for reaching the international development goals.

The UN Forum on Forests (7th session, 16-27 April) is to contribute to the AMR and the DCF by concluding and adopting a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests in order to mobilize political

commitment on issues such as combating deforestation and favouring sustainable livelihoods through sustainable forest management worldwide. UNFF will explore the establishment of a new global funding mechanism for sustainable forest management and will also seek out greater interface on forest matters with the intergovernmental regional economic commissions of the United Nations.

At its 15th session, the Commission on Sustainable Development (30 April to 11 May), in its second, or policy, year of its implementation cycle will continue its review of energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution and the atmosphere and climate change. The Commission's policy recommendations on energy and climate change are expected to be particularly topical and relevant for this year's AMR and DCF.

Finally, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (6th session, 14-25 May) is to adopt recommendations on the theme of "land, territories and resources," and prepare a statement on the status of implementation of the MDGs from the perspective of indigenous peoples following a review of implementation by Member States of the recommendations of its last two sessions. The Forum will address the emerging issue of urban indigenous questions, with a focus on Asia, and take a human rights perspective throughout its deliberations.

H.E. Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis of Lithuania, President of the Economic and Social Council, outlines the Council's goals for 2007 in a press briefing on 18 January. The Ambassador's comments can be heard at

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/pressbriefing/brief070118.rm?start=00:23:22>.



Global dialogue on development

New impulse and greater depth in discussions on global social issues

Commission for Social Development, 45th session, New York, 7-16 February

The Commission for Social Development has renewed itself by setting in motion a two year-cycle intended to add greater depth to its work. The new architecture, which builds on the successful experiment of the sister Commission for Sustainable Development, will consist of two segments – review and policy. The review session will take place in the first year of each cycle, and the policy session in the second year. The priority theme for 2007-2008 is promoting full employment and decent work for all, taking into account the relationship of employment with poverty eradication and social integration. José Antonio Ocampo, Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, will open the session on 7 February. Les Kettleidas, Deputy Director-General of Labour Policy and Labour Market Programmes of the Department of Labour of South Africa, will deliver the keynote address.

This review session will look at the state of world employment, provide an overview on the topic by experts rather than policy-makers, and identify areas that require particular attention. It will also evaluate plans and programmes of action for social groups, including older persons, youth and persons with disabilities, and take up the impact, challenges and opportunities of youth employment under the topic of emerging issues. In addition, the Commission will conduct its regular assessment of implementation of the Copenhagen commitments of 1995, and further initiatives endorsed during the five-year review in Geneva in 2000.

A novel approach in 2007 will be the issuance of a chairperson's summary at the conclusion of the session with action-oriented strategies, replacing the usual negotiated resolution that will be left to the policy segment next year. The approach should inject greater depth into discussions, for example by increasing the number of dialogue panels to three from only one as was the case in previous sessions. The panels will cover macroeconomic policy for full employment and decent work on 7 February, moderated by Under

Secretary-General Ocampo, labour mobility, youth and families on 8 February, moderated by Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, and good practices for promoting employment and decent work on 9 February, moderated by José Manuel Salazar, Executive Director of the Employment Sector of ILO.

While the first week is devoted to employment, in the second week the focus will shift social groups, in particular to older persons and youth. Presentation of the World Youth Report 2007 on 12 February will encourage discussion on youth participation from multiple perspectives. A major challenge for this social group is unemployment, which hits young people between 15 to 24 years the hardest. It is estimated that 86.3 million youths were without work in 2006, comprising 44 percent of the world's unemployed.

Ageing continues to be a major global concern. The world is ageing rapidly. Last year, for example, one out of every nine persons was aged 60 or older. By 2050, one in five will be in this age group. As Alexandre Sidorenko, UN focal point on ageing, reminds us, "In the Madrid conference, the power of ageing was compared to that of globalization." The Madrid Plan of Action indeed called on societies to adjust to ageing. Small adjustments entail, for instance, increasing the age of retirement. "But others such as introducing new complementary systems of income security in old age, beyond social nets, also need to be enhanced," stresses Sidorenko.

In this connection, the Commission lays the groundwork this year for the 2008 review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on ageing. A panel devoted to this theme on 12 February will consider the extent to which the recommendations of the Madrid conference are included in the policies of the Member-States. An in-depth evaluation of priorities will subsequently be undertaken in the 2008 policy discussions.

Resolutions on ageing, youth, development of Africa and, possibly, disabilities are expected at the end of the session.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/csocd2007.htm>

Discrimination and violence against the girl child

Commission on the Status of Women, 51st session, New York, 26 February-9 March

At its fifty-first session from 26 February to 9 March 2007, the Commission on the Status of Women will devote priority attention to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. Ministers and other high-level representatives from national capitals will contribute to a high-level roundtable on the topic on 26 February, followed by two interactive expert panel discussions on 27 February.

The Commission will also review the status of implementation of its agreed conclusions of 2004 on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality through an interactive dialogue on 2 March. Under the agenda item “emerging issues”, there will be an interactive expert panel discussion on the elimination of all forms of violence against women in follow-up to the Secretary-General’s in-depth study at national and international levels. The Commission will have a preliminary dialogue in a parallel event on its priority theme for 2008, on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, in preparation for next year’s session.

Numerous parallel events by UN agencies, funds and programmes, Permanent Missions, and non-Governmental organizations will be held throughout the two-week programme. In addition, the Division for the Advancement of Women, in coordination with the NGO Committee on the Commission on the Status of Women, will hold two round table discussions in advance of the session. The first, on 15 February, will look at elimination of discrimination against the girl child. The second, on 20 February, will discuss effective strategies for ending violence against girls.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/51sess.htm>

Commission for Sustainable Development gets a head start

Intergovernmental preparatory meeting for the 15th session, New York, 26 February-2 March

The Commission for Sustainable Development is starting its engines for its next session, which will be held between 30 April and 11 May. An intergovernmental preparatory meeting with broad-based discussions on energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution and atmosphere, and climate change will take place this month, from 26 February to 2 March.

The purpose of the meeting is to identify policy options and possible actions to take on these themes.

Participants will concern themselves 27 February with providing energy for all by means of better access to reliable and affordable energy services, on promoting energy efficiency, bolstering the use and transfer of renewable technologies, and using financial resources from all sources for investment in energy infrastructure. The same day in the afternoon, the debate will revolve around the question of an enabling environment for industrial development, and capacity-building efforts to help developing countries diversify exports in particular by small and medium enterprises.

In the air pollution realm on 28 February, delegates will consider the challenges of reducing both outdoor and indoor air pollution from traditional biomass fuels. Climate change will dominate the afternoon meeting, with interactive discussions on how to encourage international cooperation to both mitigate and adapt to this global concern.

On Thursday, 1 March, a meeting will be devoted to linkages and cross-cutting issues such as the role of women and partnerships.

Conclusions that emerge from the interactive discussions will be incorporated into a chairman’s draft negotiating document that captures a range of policy options and possible actions for implementation. The Chairman’s draft will be made available for consideration by the Commission of Sustainable Development in April.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd15/csd15_ipm.htm

100 of the world's leading statisticians to gather in New York

Statistical Commission, 38th session, New York, 27 February-2 March

Representatives from about 100 national capitals, many of them heads of national statistical offices, are expected to gather in New York this year as the Statistical Commission celebrates its 60th anniversary. Against the backdrop of the anniversary, the thirty-eighth session of the Commission will focus on education statistics, among other issues, assisted by an in-depth review undertaken by the Government of Canada.

One of the current challenges in education statistics is the lack of an international conceptual framework that provides an understanding of what gets measured. This is a clear shortcoming given the importance of such a framework to a global statistical system. Another concern relates to the use of different definitions and methods in measurement, for example of the number of children in school. Is the problem with data quality, or with the use of different concepts such as enrolment and attendance, asks Statistics Canada.

The Commission will also make technical recommendations on the population and housing censuses of the 2010 round of national surveys, and on the national income accounts revision to be adopted in 2008, as well as discuss development indicators and national statistical capacity-building. This latter theme indeed builds on the 2006/6 Economic and Social Council resolution on strengthening statistical capacity, which called attention to the need to strengthen national statistical capacity and, thus, to produce reliable and timely statistics and indicators for use in monitoring of national development policies and achievement of all development goals.

The Commission will also share information on migration, energy and finance statistics, and hold a joint panel discussion with the Commission on the Status of Women on the measurement of elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission_current_session.htm

Commemorative events mark the Statistical Commission's 60th anniversary

The Statistics Division is rolling out the red carpet for the Commission's 60th anniversary. Among its list of many achievements of the last six decades, the Commission counts standardization of statistical methods, adoption of the System of National Accounts, launching of the World Population and Housing Census Programmes, and adoption of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

Commemorative events include a one-day seminar on 23 February on the evolution of national statistical systems. The seminar has been organized as a forum for the exchange of information on innovative approaches to meeting managerial challenges of a national statistical system. The themes of the discussion comprise the establishment of the system, including its legal framework, the management of resources and communication, for example in to keep up with fast changing technological developments, and the evolution of an efficiently functioning system.

The commemorative programme follows with a high-level forum on 26 February on the way forward for the Statistical Commission and the global statistical system. This half-day invitational event deals with the impact of new information needs. The forum features a high-level panel made up of users and producers of statistics who will give their views on how the global statistical system has evolved, the role of the Statistical Commission and challenges the Commission must face to move the global system forward.

Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, José Antonio Ocampo, will deliver welcome remarks, while Katherine Wallman, head statistician in the United States Office of Management and Budget, will serve as moderator. Panelists include Ivan Fellegi of Statistics Canada, Pali Lehola of Statistics South Africa, Hervé Carré of the European Commission, François Bourignon of the World Bank, Stephen Roach of Morgan Stanley, and Luis Beccaria of the Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social of Argentina.

A seminar on innovative technology in data collection, to be held on 28 February, and a dialogue on statistical development with international agencies on initiatives in statistical capacity building, on 1 March, will wrap up events.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/stacom_archive/statcom_commemorative.htm

NGO Committee recommends 92 NGOs for consultative status, while rejecting two others

Regular session of 2007, 22-31 January, New York

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations wrapped up its 2007 regular session on 31 January, two days ahead of schedule, recommending ninety-two non-Governmental organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council out of 147 applications. Two NGOs were not recommended for consultative status – the Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec, and the World Sindhi Institute. Four applications were closed. The Committee had before it six requests for reclassification, of which it recommended five. It reviewed 106 quadrennial reports, an unprecedented number, and took note of 100 of them with six deferred to May.

As a standing Committee of the Council, the 19-member panel uses various criteria to recommend general, special or roster status with the Economic and Social Council, including the applicant's mandate, governance and financial regime. Organizations that have general and special consultative status can attend meetings of the Council and circulate statements of a certain length. Those with general status can, in addition, speak at meetings and propose items for the Council's agenda, while NGOs with roster status can only attend meetings.

The Chairman of the Committee, Pedro Roa Arboleda of Colombia considered the early completion of the Committee's work a sign of the high efficiency of all participants.

For more information:

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

Trends and analysis

Bridging the digital divide: E-access for all

International workshop, Bangalore, 8-9 February

In the information age, where the price of not going online is social exclusion, ensuring e-access and participation of the poor to knowledge and technology is essential. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management is jointly sponsoring an international workshop on E-access for all with the Government of Karnataka, India, which will look into ways of bridging the digital gap between “haves” and “have nots” by expanding technology to developing countries.

The meeting will provide a forum for innovative development practitioners, decision-makers and policy developers to share their visions, policies and strategies on the topic of better access to knowledge for rural communities and the poor. The focus of the workshop will be to promote innovative and cost-effective solutions that place the poor at the centre of development in the global e-economy. Learning from the experiences of developed and developing countries alike, the workshop will discuss how to access the internet either by personal computer or mobile device at an affordable cost.

Several countries have come up with some innovative solutions allowing the poor to gain a foothold in the development ladder of the twenty-first century. Nigeria’s post offices, for example, guarantee e-access to citizens, as do tally centers in South Africa. Three of the industrial countries that have made more strides in spreading e-access – the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, and Singapore – are also represented in the workshop. In Singapore, 90 percent of the population now has access to the internet. The success of these countries after considerable work undertaken in infrastructure is largely due to broadband penetration.

Representatives from developed and developing countries, from both the public and private sectors, will draw on their experiences in putting forward innovative solutions and technology for connecting the poor. The workshop will be structured in country presentations and working groups. For example, the latter includes presentations by private companies on the usage of mobile telephony to promote e-access.

Identifying creative solutions to reduce the digital gap that exists in most developing countries is crucial for the inclusion and participation of citizens. An important outcome expected from the meeting is the creation of an on-going dialogue among the participants, especially at the local Government level. It is also expected that the strategies for e-access set out by the workshop in Bangalore will be applicable to other regions. A description of these “e-policies” and “e-services” will be made available through the DESA compendium on the UNPAN website.

For more information:

http://www.unpan.org/directory/conference/guest/browseoneconference.asp?conference_id=2023

Global Alliance for ICT gains momentum in its second year

Strategy Council meeting and special event, Intel Corporation headquarters, Santa Clara, California, 27-28 February

The UN Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development, a platform for cross-sectoral dialogue, was launched less than a year ago with the purpose of promoting effective use of information and communication technologies for development. Its mission was inspired by the World Summit on the Information Society, which forged a global consensus on the importance of ICT as tools for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

The Alliance’s Strategy Council, which is made up of sixty members of Governments, the private and non-profit sectors, and international organizations will meet for the second time on 27 February, in Silicon Valley at the headquarters of Intel Corporation. Craig Barrett, chairman of the Alliance is also Chairman of the Board of Intel. The Council provides guidance and set the priorities of the Alliance, and is composed of policy-makers, practitioners and experts. This year Council members will identify the ways in which they can contribute to implementation of the Alliance’s business plan, and on ways to engage the Alliance’s various stakeholders on the potential of ICT to bring knowledge and information to those so far untouched by the information revolution.

Last year, the Alliance spotlighted education, health, entrepreneurship and governance as areas where the use of ICT should be boosted, as reflected in the business plan for 2006 and 2007. Activities to promote

these areas are to take the form of partnerships, for example harnessing the resources of donor agencies and the private sector to bring broadband connectivity Africa, and to promote telecentre networks in developing countries.

A dialogue on the ways that technology and industry can bolster development is to follow the Strategy Council meeting, on 28 February. The debate is part of a special event in Santa Clara organized by the Alliance involving Silicon Valley's industry leaders and the academic community in what is expected to be a lively reality-check for both the computing industry and development practitioners.

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

Technical cooperation

The role of leaders in governance and development in Africa

Capacity-building mission. Abuja, 5-16 February

Does the environment engender leadership or do leaders shape their environment? The Division for Public Administration and Development Management is undertaking a mission to Abuja, Nigeria on 5 February to try to disentangle this and other questions surrounding the role of leadership in sub-Saharan Africa. Sponsored by the African Capacity-building Foundation, the purpose of the mission is to interview Nigerian Government and civilian leaders to find out how they perceive their roles, and how they are responding to the major governance challenges of Western Africa.

The inquiry is part of a wider study on the role of leadership in governance and development in Africa. For the purposes of the analysis, the sub-Saharan region has been divided into four sub-regions, namely Southern, Eastern, Western and Central Africa. Segmentation is intended to control for a variety of environments and avoid falling into one-size-fits-all patterns, explains Jide Balogun, the DESA official involved in organizing the Western Africa component.

The data collected from primary and secondary sources will be analyzed and then used to prepare a paper with recommendations on the leadership and development experience of the Western African sub-region. Papers addressing the other sub-Saharan regions will be prepared by other teams, and integrated into a full-length position paper of the African Capacity-building Foundation, which will in turn form the basis of a project proposal to enhance leadership capacity on the African continent.

Balogun makes it clear though that before moving to the stage of training for capacity-building, there must be “disciplined commitment to core values and rules.” That is to say, leaders must “ensure that democratic institutions operate as expected, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.” In the past, this has been, Balogun says, an Achilles heel for African governance.

Fellowships, one of the best coordinating activities in the UN system

The path towards one United Nations is shorter thanks to the coordinating machinery for training and fellowships provided by DESA and its predecessors for more than thirty years. Since 1976, the Department has served as secretary and focal point for inter-agency fellowship coordination, playing a central role in harmonizing fellowship practices among UN agencies so effectively that the ACC Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) considered it, in 1991, to be one of the best coordinated areas in the UN system. Since then, further steps have been taken to continue to advance inter-agency coordination.

Thirty years ago before the Department was given its coordination mandate, “every agency used to give different – sometimes completely different – treatment and entitlements to fellows”, acknowledges Tom Rudi, a fellowship officer in DESA. “There was a complete lack of coordination.” The main achievement throughout this three-decade span is arguably the fact the rules of the game among UN agencies have become unified and consistent.

The sixteenth meeting of senior fellowships officers of the UN system which took place recently at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, from 6 to 8 November, was strongly influenced by the idea of their being a single United Nations. The meeting made a recommendation on common standards for fellowship evaluation in line with the report of the High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence.

Theo-Ben Gurirab, who is Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia and former President of the 54th session of the General Assembly, delivered a speech recognizing the positive effect fellowships have in developing countries. As a former UN fellow himself, Mr Gurirab speaks from experience. UN fellowships are intended for Government officials in developing countries and meant to provide them with short- or long-term specialized training. The training can take place either within the fellow’s own country or abroad. The impact is far-reaching: while officials upgrade their skills in areas of high priority to their Governments, prospects for raising national capacities for development in these countries multiply.

For more information:

<http://esa.un.org/techcoop/fellowship.asp>.

Publications and websites

Technical reports



International Finance and Development

This title offers a comprehensive survey of the major financing issues influencing economic development since the historic Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002. Edited by José Antonio Ocampo, Jan Kregel and Stephany Griffith-Jones, it argues that most recent international private capital flows have been unlikely to significantly enhance new productive investments in the developing countries. In consequence, it considers it is necessary to design appropriate mechanisms to ensure they contribute to development. Recent trends in official development financing offer, regardless, some grounds for optimism, although much more needs to be done.

For more information and to order:
<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06350>



Participatory Dialogue: Towards a Stable, Safe and Just Society for All

To be launched on 13 February

What makes some societies more resilient and others more vulnerable to social tensions? This publication explores the elements that lead to one or another situation, reviews global trends influencing social integration dynamics, and identifies lines of action. The report focuses on participatory dialogue, a mechanism of action intended to create a more inclusive society. A society for all is defined as one in which people play an active role in peace and development; where they engage in processes guided by the principle of unity within diversity.

This title, which includes an overview of social integration and related concepts, builds largely on background papers and recommendations adopted at the expert group meeting entitled “Dialogue in the

Social Integration Process: Building Peaceful Social Relations – by, for and with People” which took place in New York, from 21 to 23 November 2005. The publication also provides examples of tools and practices from around the world so that it incorporates a practical approach to conceptual explorations.

For more information:
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egm/index.htm>



Flat World, Big Gaps: Economic Liberalization, Globalization Poverty and Inequality

Edited by Jomo K.S. with Jacques Baudot, this book critically considers the impact of economic liberalization and globalization on inequality and poverty. The first half surveys the major analytical issues in the recent study of global inequalities. The second half of the volume surveys recent inequality trends in various parts of the world including the OECD, the USA, Eastern Europe and the CIS economies, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, India, East Asia and China.

For more information and to order:
<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06348&title=Flat+World%2c+Big+Gaps%3a+Economic+Liberalization%2c+Globalization+Poverty+and+Inequality>



Policy Matters

This publication advances the analytical debate in elaborating relevant economic and social policies to achieve more sustainable and equitable development in our times. It holds that policy matters in a context in which trade liberalization may well have worsened unemployment, working conditions and undermined existing productive capacities and reducing the policy space for developing better and competitive new economic capacities.

For more information and to order:
<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06349>

Meeting records



Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work

This title is a compilation of statements, issues papers and summaries of high-level roundtable dialogues that took place during the substantive session of the Economic

and Social Council in July 2006. The theme of the dialogue was the creation of an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development. The publication is intended as a resource for policy-makers and scholars, while also explaining to a public audience the place of employment within the broader global development agenda.

For more information and to order:

<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06234>

Statistical compilations



National Accounts Statistics 2005: Main Aggregates and Detailed Tables, parts I, II and III (PDF version)

This is the PDF version of the forty-seventh issue of National Accounts Statistics: Main

Aggregates and Detailed Tables showing detailed national accounts estimates for 178 countries and areas for the reporting years 1994 to 2005. The national data for each country and area are presented in separate chapters using uniform table headings and classifications recommended in the UN System of National Accounts. A summary of the conceptual framework of the SNA and definitions of important terms are also included. Other statistical information covered includes gross domestic product, national income, savings, private and government consumption, and transactions of institutional sectors.

For more information and to order:

<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06342>



Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles 2004 (PDF Version)

The PDF version of the Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles 2004 is the thirteenth issue in an internationally series of comparable energy data for selected developing countries, including balances and electricity profiles for 72 and 95 countries respectively. The data are arranged to show energy production, trade, conversion and consumption for each fuel used in the country.

This publication is a source of overall consumption statistics of energy commodities in all sectors. Special electricity profiles for an additional group of countries are published to cover, exclusively, detailed information on production, trade and consumption of electricity, net installed capacity and thermal power plant input for selected developing countries.

For more information and to order:

<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=B06344>



Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

MBS 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 long-term trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance. The latest issue is Volume LX, December 2006.

For more information: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>

Websites

Evolution of National Statistical Systems

Seminar site and forum for the exchange of information on innovative approaches to meet the managerial challenges of national statistical systems.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/statcom_seminar/evolution_natstats.htm/

Comings and goings

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in December 2006:

Ms. Maria Luz Aragon, Senior Staff Assistant, Office of the Under-Secretary-General

Ms. Elia Armstrong, Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Mr. Andrei Barac, Associate Statistician, Statistics Division

Mr. Bogdan Dragovic, Information Systems Officer, Statistics Division

Ms. Julitha Kiswaga, Documentation Management Assistant, Office of the Under-Secretary-General

Ms. Martha Luque, Programme Assistant, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Mr. Predrag Vasic, Associate Information Network Officer, Office of the Under-Secretary-General

Goings



Mr. Martin Butterfield retired on 31 December 2006. He joined the United Nations in April 2005 as Inter-regional Advisor on Population and Housing Censuses. Mr. Butterfield provided technical services to Member States in support of the 2010 World Programme on Population and

Housing Censuses, promoting internationally agreed standards and methods, and assisting countries in the conduct of national surveys. A native of Australia, Mr. Butterfield was employed in various statistical offices from 1970 to 2005, and worked for fifteen years as a senior census manager, introducing new technology to census operations, overseeing procurement and logistical arrangements, client liaison and output production efforts.

Calendar

February

Commission for Social Development

45th session, New York, 7-16 February

DESA/UNDP International Workshop on E-access for All

Bangalore, 8-9 February

Press launch of Participatory Dialogue: Towards a Stable, Safe and Just Society for All

New York, 13 February

60 Years of Building the Global Statistical System

Celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Statistical Commission

New York, 23, 26, 28 February and 1 March

Statistical Commission

38th session, New York, 27 February-2 March

Commission on the Status of Women

51st session, New York, 26 February to 9 March

Commission on Sustainable Development

Intergovernmental preparatory meeting for the 15th session, New York, 26 February-2 March

Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development

Strategy Council meeting, Intel Corporation headquarters, Santa Clara, 27-28 February

March

Development Cooperation with Middle-income Countries

Special conference, Madrid, 1-2 March

Committee for Development Policy

9th session, New York, 19-23 March

International children's art competition

To commemorate the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October and the First Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Postal Administration are sponsoring an art competition for children to design a UN stamp on the theme "We can end poverty"

The best six designs selected by the Panel of Judges will be presented during the commemoration of the International Day on the Eradication of Poverty, and will be issued as stamps of the United Nations Postal Administration. The deadline for submissions is 30 June. Participants must be between five and fifteen years old.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/art.htm>

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.