

Technical Working Group on Disaster-Related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND

ESCAP Resolution 69/12 called for strengthening evidence-based policymaking for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and invited member States to improve the quality and availability of data related to disasters. Subsequently, the ESCAP Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction at its third session requested that the ESCAP secretariat work towards more effective monitoring of the resilience of member States to disasters; and through the development of a basic range of disaster-related statistics in close coordination with the ESCAP Committee on Statistics.

The ESCAP Commission at its 70th session subsequently passed the resolution 70/2 entitled *Disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific* to take the mandate forward by establishing an expert group comprising of statisticians and disaster management experts to work towards developing a basic range of disaster-related statistics.

The Expert Group developed the Disaster-related Statistics Framework (DRSF), which was endorsed by the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at its 6th session in 2018. The Committee also supported the recommendation of the Expert Group to transform the Group into a technical working group as an international network of professionals and experts to support the capacity of member States to implement the basic range of disaster-related statistics that are internationally comparable, subject to review by the Committee on Statistics of the draft terms of reference for the technical working group.

2. KEY FUNCTIONS

The objective of the Technical Working Group (hereafter, the TWG) is to expand the production and dissemination of a basic range of disaster-related statistics by countries through applying the DRSF. Implementation of recommendations contained in the DRSF shall be aligned to national priorities and shall be coherent with the internationally-agreed development frameworks, particularly the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Towards achieving this objective, the key functions of TWG are:

- a) To provide a platform for discussion and sharing of experiences and research on development of new tools and data sources for producing official statistics related to disasters;
- b) To maintain and expand a pool of expertise for technical support: to guide the national implementation of norms and standards for disaster-related statistics; and to develop materials for technical training;
- c) To review and improve (as appropriate) the technical guidelines on the production and dissemination of the basic range of disaster-related statistics;
- d) To develop standards and recommendations to help ensure coordination among producers of data and other stakeholders of the basic range of the DRSF at the national level;

- e) To conduct analyses and develop tools, as appropriate, to support coherence and harmonization of reporting for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- f) To develop recommendations and technical guidance, where appropriate, in support of improvements to national reporting for the global Sendai Framework Monitoring System and the global monitoring framework for the 2030 Agenda.
- g) To coordinate and exchange advancements from Asia and the Pacific with related global and regional initiatives from other regions and to global initiatives.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The TWG shall function as a community of practice, as per ESCAP Committee on Statistics decision 6/1¹ and shall be open to experts from national statistics offices, national disaster management agencies (or equivalent national authorities) and relevant international organizations. It shall coordinate its work with the Global Partnership on Disaster-related Statistics.

Members shall include experts from countries in Asia and the Pacific and regional and international organizations, where the membership is based on the individual's technical capacity rather than as formal representatives of national governments or organizations.

The secretariat shall circulate a call for expression of interest in membership to Governments in Asia and the Pacific and regional and international institutions with expertise in statistics or disaster management.

The composition of the TWG shall, to the extent feasible, represent knowledge and experts from statistics and disaster risk management backgrounds; and perspectives from all five ESCAP Subregions (i.e. Central Asia, East and North-East Asia, the Pacific, South and South-West Asia, and South-East Asia).

The TWG shall conduct its business through electronic means only, complemented by a meeting of experts when possible. Such meetings and related events shall involve a broader network of experts, including professionals from academic institutions, regional and international organizations, and NGOs.

4. METHODS OF WORK

The TWG, upon formation, shall agree on a 5-year (2020-2024) strategy with work streams, objectives and expected outputs. The TWG shall review the identified issues through electronic discussion, sharing of resources on the group's website, and exchange of emails.

5. CHAIR

¹ ESCAP/CST/2018/6, decision 1: "The Committee decides to establish communities of practice covering the dimensions of process, data, conceptual and disciplinary integration and requests the Bureau of the Committee, with support from the secretariat, to develop terms of reference for the communities of practice, with the modality of the communities being electronic only."

The TWG shall elect a Chair; and one or more Vice Chairs from among its members. The Chair shall serve for a period of 2 years after which he/she will be eligible for re-appointment.

6. REPORTING

The TWG shall report on the progress of its work and achievements on a regular basis, in the form of a written report and, if requested, through an oral report to the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at its biennial meeting. The written report shall be prepared by the secretariat in close collaboration with the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Group and shall be reviewed by other members of the TWG prior to submission.

7. SECRETARIAT

The Statistics Division of ESCAP shall serve as secretariat of the TWG, supported by the Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division of ESCAP, whenever necessary. The secretariat shall support the TWG in carrying out its functions.

8. REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The TWG may review the current Terms of Reference as the need arises, to ensure that it carries out its functions efficiently and effectively based on the required mandate.

9. SUNSET CLAUSE

The ESCAP Committee on Statistics shall conduct a review and evaluation of the functions, work program and achievements of the TWG at its eighth session in 2022, at which point the eventual continuation of the work shall be decided.