

2006 / 6

Strengthening statistical capacity*

The Economic and Social Council,

Deeply concerned that (a) there still exists in many countries a lack of adequate data to (i) assess national trends in the context of monitoring progress towards the realization of all the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and (ii) inform and monitor the implementation of national development policies and strategies, and (b) in many countries where data do exist, there is lack of capacity to use them and, in certain cases where country data are available, they are not used to the extent possible,

Affirming that without a coordinated effort to enhance and sustain statistical capability in many developing countries and countries with economies in transition, effective monitoring of progress towards national as well as internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, is being compromised,

Recognizing the fundamental importance of sustainable national statistical capacity to produce reliable and timely indicators of a country's progress,

Expressing its concern about the validity of the use by international agencies of imputed data, particularly when there is a lack of transparency in their methodology,

Recalling its resolution 2000/27 of 28 July 2000, in which it reaffirmed the importance of national efforts to build statistical capacity in all countries, including through statistical training, and of effective international support in this context for developing countries and countries with economies in transition,

Further recalling its resolution 2005/13 of 22 July 2005, in which it noted the critical importance of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses for meeting data needs for the follow-up activities to the international conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit,

Stressing that all review and follow-up processes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields must focus on the progress made in the implementation of commitments,

Reiterating the need for continued efforts by the Statistical Commission to further improve the list of indicators on implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, including by means of methodological and technical refinement of the existing indicators,

Further reiterating the need to apply and further develop indicators on means of implementation to evaluate progress towards conference goals in creating an enabling environment for development,

1. *Calls on* Member States to intensify their efforts to strengthen national statistical capacity in order to produce reliable and timely statistics and indicators for the monitoring of:

- (i) National development policies and strategies;
- (ii) The implementation of commitments and the achievement of all development goals at the national, regional and international levels;

2. *Calls upon* the United Nations system, including the United Nations Statistics Division and the regional commissions and international agencies to support national efforts in building and strengthening national statistical capacity, in particular of developing countries;

3. *Encourages* the strengthening of statistical capacity of the relevant international agencies;

4. *Urges* donor countries and organizations and the international and regional statistical community to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition in strengthening statistical capacity in support of development. They should largely build upon existing national, regional and international initiatives in a coordinated manner and encourage other initiatives to address significant gaps that might emerge;

5. *Calls on* all international agencies, through the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators, under the coordination of the United Nations Statistics Division and in accordance with the guidance provided by Member States through the Statistical Commission, to improve the coverage, transparency, and reporting on all indicators in order to enhance the database on all Millennium Development Goals, including through:

(a) Defining priorities and developing a strategy to improve data for all indicators;

(b) Identifying ways, including through capacity-building where needed to improve countries' reporting on all MDGs;

(c) Avoiding imputation unless specific country data are available for reliable imputations following consultations with concerned countries and through transparent methodologies;

(d) Ensuring that the supporting metadata complies with guidelines developed by an expert panel constituted by the Statistical Commission for that purpose, and in this regard requests the Secretariat to forward recommendations to the Statistical Commission for consideration and adoption;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution in the context of the regular report on statistical capacity-building to be presented under the relevant agenda item for discussion by the Statistical Commission at its thirty-eighth session.

37 Plenary meeting

25 July 2006