

Training Workshop on the Use of Administrative Data for Migration Statistics in Maldives

10-12 December, and 16 December 2024

Concept Note

Background

Considering the increasing significance of international migration and its intersection with socio-economic policy and human rights, it is essential for countries, especially ones with unique demographic dynamics such as Maldives, to harness data to understand migration patterns and challenges for informed policymaking and service provision. Maldives, being an archipelago with a distinct set of challenges related to labour, internal, and international migration, is well positioned to benefit from capacity building in these areas of statistical production.

The Maldives national statistical system (NSS), guided by the Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS), has identified migration as one of the areas of priority for capacity building under the DA13 project "Administrative data for disaggregated Sustainable Development Goals indicators in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America." A key area of focus is the utilization of administrative data for migration statistics. Administrative data presents detailed insights, but its effective use demands better inter-agency cooperation, efficient data sharing methods, and improved data processing capabilities.

Following the mandate given by the Statistical Commission in 2018 through its decision 49/101, the United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics, in collaboration with the Statistics Division, has undertaken a comprehensive revision of the 1998 Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration to better meet current and emerging data needs. The revised conceptual framework and concepts and definitions on international migration and the core and additional indicators on international migration and temporary mobility have been endorsed by the Statistical Commission as core components of the revised Recommendations. The finalized Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and Temporary Mobility will be presented to the Statistical Commission at its 56th session in 2025.

Recognizing the importance of understanding migration data and effectively producing and utilizing migration statistics in line with the global recommendations, UNSD developed an eLearning course, "Introduction to International Migration Statistics", based on the revised conceptual framework, statistical definitions, and core indicators on international migration.

As a component of the support to the Maldives NSS, the eLearning course was customized to the Maldivian context, combining the theoretical and conceptual framework on migration statistics with practical elements relevant to the production of migration statistics in Maldives, including data sharing arrangements within the NSS. To complement its efficacy, the self-paced eLearning modules were integrated with instructor-led sessions, providing an enriching experience for the Maldives NSS

through direct interactions with subject matter experts. This hybrid course was carried out over several sessions from November 2023 – April 2024.

Following a parallel initiative to enhance the IT infrastructure and technical capacity of MBS, including the setup of a data storage and sharing system (MinIO), as well as training in Python, an in-person mission is planned to accelerate progress in the area of migration statistics with the participation of MBS and relevant administrative data producers in the Maldives NSS. The mission will consist of a three-day hands-on workshop to discuss the data collected by each of the relevant agencies and associated metadata with a view towards data integration and the calculation of core migration statistics. The workshop will be followed by bilateral consultations with stakeholders relevant to the topic in order to explore the potential of alternative data sources. The mission will culminate in a high-level meeting to report back on progress and obtain commitment to continued collaboration from leadership.

Aim and Objectives

The workshop's primary aim is to equip Maldives with the necessary skills to ensure continuous production and disaggregation of core international migration statistics. Specific objectives include:

1. Present the revised conceptual framework on international migration and temporary mobility statistics, defining key concepts and highlighting core statistics;
2. Discuss steps necessary for integrating administrative data sources across the NSS for the production of migration statistics;
3. Discuss and finalize data dictionaries across data producers, highlighting discrepancies and methods to account for differences; and,
4. Provide support to MBS through follow-up activities to finalize the calculation of core statistics.

Key outputs of the workshop

At the end of the workshop, each of the participating agencies will have finalized their migration metadata and data dictionaries. MBS will have received microdata through the MinIO platform and will be ready to begin creating data integration scripts to combine data from administrative sources with census data toward the production of core migration statistics, or, where significant gaps remain, a plan will be devised to improve data collection for the eventual production of migration statistics from a combination of data sources.

Dates, Location and Duration

The technical workshop will be conducted over three days, 10-12 December 2024, at Maldives Immigration offices in Male, Maldives, from 8am – 3:15pm. The high-level meeting will take place on 16 December 2024 at the same venue.

Participant Profiles

The workshop is intended for statisticians involved in the collection of migration data and the production of migration statistics. It is expected to have a maximum of 20 participants.

Preparatory Assignments

- All participants in the workshop are expected to have reviewed the UNSD eLearning course “Introduction to Migration Statistics.”
- Data sharing agreements should ideally be in place between MBS and Maldives Immigration and potentially other administrative data holders.
- Each participating agency is requested to bring a sample dataset and the associated data dictionary for discussion in the workshop.
- Based on the agreed agenda, specific presentations will be requested of the participating agencies.

Requirements for the workshop

- Software: Excel, web browser
- Hardware: Preferably one computer per person
- Internet: High-speed internet connection
- Projector, screen, microphones

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Programme of Work

Day 1: Tuesday, 10 December		Presenter
8:00 – 8:15	Arrival and registration	All
8:15 – 8:30	Opening remarks by Maldives Immigration and UNSD	MBS, Maldives Immigration, María Isabel
8:30 – 9:15	Workshop introduction and goal setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ice breaker / introductions - Sharing expectations for the workshop - Going over the agenda and proposed outcome 	María Isabel, Elena / All
9:15 – 10:00	Discussion of current migration statistics being produced and discussion of additional policy data needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Go through key policy questions concerning migration and data availability table with inputs from agencies 	María Isabel moderates group work
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	-
10:30 – 11:15	1. Refresher on conceptual framework, concepts and definitions for production of international migration statistics, followed by discussion	María Isabel
11:15 – 12:00	2. Refresher on data sources for migration statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Go through table on potential use of administrative sources for international migration statistics with input from group 	Elena / All
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch</i>	-
13:00 – 13:30	3. Presentation on importance of metadata	Elena
13:30 – 15:00	Presentation and discussion of data dictionaries / available data by <ol style="list-style-type: none"> MBS Maldives Immigration Ministry of Homeland, Security and Technology Ministry of Higher Education, Skills and Labour 	MBS, Maldives Immigration, MHST, MHESL
15:00 – 15:15	Review of work accomplished and plan for next day	María Isabel
Day 2: Wednesday, 11 December		
8:00 – 8:15	Arrival	All
8:15 – 8:30	Recap of previous day	Elena

8:30 – 9:15	Demonstration of MinIO platform for data sharing, discussion	MBS
9:15 – 9:45	<i>Coffee break</i>	-
9:45 – 10:30	Assessing data quality and coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group discussions with mixed groups from MBS, Maldives Immigration, MHST, MHESL, followed by plenary presentations 	MBS, Maldives Immigration, MHST, MHESL
10:30 – 12:00	4. Presentation on Data Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hands-on Session: Harmonizing variables across data sources – group work 	Elena / All
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch</i>	-
13:00 – 13:45	Continuation of harmonization exercises	All
13:45 – 14:15	5. What is needed for data integration? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentation by UNSD – Presentation by National Centre for IT 	UNSD, National Centre for IT, MBS
14:15 – 15:00	6. Presentation of revised ILO guidance on labour migration	ILO
15:00 – 15:15	Review of work accomplished and plan for next day	María Isabel
Day 3: Thursday, 12 December		
8:00 – 8:15	Arrival	All
8:15 – 8:30	Recap of previous day	Elena
8:30 – 9:30	Core migration stock statistics (1.1 and 1.2) – assessment of data gaps and methodological challenges	MBS
9:30 – 10:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	-
10:00 – 11:00	Core migration flow statistics (1.3 and 1.4) – assessment of data gaps and methodological challenges	MBS
11:00 – 12:00	7. Presentation on indicators for disaggregation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups to discuss what is available at the national level 	María Isabel, MBS / All
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch</i>	-
13:00 – 14:00	8. Presentation on data sharing agreements - UNSD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MBS presentation on MOU and discussion of data sharing arrangements 	Elena / All
14:00 – 14:30	9. Presentation on alternative sources of data for migration statistics, including MPD	Elena
14:30 – 15:00	10. Way forward – plans for harmonization, data sharing and integration	María Isabel
15:00 – 15:15	Closing of the workshop	

Sunday, 15 December

- Bilateral meetings with MBS, UNCT, MHLUD
- Exploratory meeting with mobile phone regulating authority

Monday, 16 December

- High-level meeting with leadership of MBS and Ministries
 - Opening remarks by MBS, Maldives Immigration, MHST, UNCT and UNSD
 - Overview of mission goals
 - Presentation on achievements with data sharing agreements / MOU
 - Reporting back on the achievements of the technical workshop and strategic implications
 - Presentation of potential capacity building opportunities
 - The way forward