



Sub-regional Advocacy Workshop on MDGs for South-East Asia

24-26 June 2014

Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background

The latest ESCAP/ADB/UNDP¹ Regional MDG Report summarizes recent progress in the Asia-Pacific region towards the achievement of the MDGs and presents some perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda as part of the global as well as regional dialogue on the next internationally agreed development agenda expected to succeed the MDGs after 2015. Launched in September 2013 in Bangkok, the report provides guiding principles for a transformative post 2015 agenda which encompass economic prosperity, social equity and environmental responsibility dimensions of sustainable development.

The report finds that Asia-Pacific region as a whole has made considerable progress in achieving the MDGs, but is off-track in several areas including hunger, health, and sanitation. Further, there are significant variations in realizing the MDGs both within as well as across countries and sub-regions. At the current pace, MDGs will remain unfinished while new development challenges face the region. New threats include rising inequality, unplanned urbanization, increased incidence and severity of natural disasters, climate change consequences and environmental pressures such as pollution, increased stress on natural resources and water scarcity.

Soon after the report is published, the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Regional MDGs Partnership initiated preparatory work for the next and final publication under the current phase of the partnership. This publication, likely to be published and launched in September 2015 to coincide with the final global deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals will focus on three inter-related implementation issues, namely (a) financing the post-2015 development agenda; (b) technology transfer, innovations and trade facilitation; and (c) data and information for supporting the post-2015 development agenda. The publication will also discuss innovative and regional cooperation measures for supporting the realization of the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs.

¹ *Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda*, Bangkok August 2013. This is the ninth in the series since 2002 published by the ESCAP/ADB/UNDP MDGs Regional Partnership, tracking the progress of the Asia and Pacific region towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Each of the reports has focused on a particular theme, taking into consideration the key development challenges faced by the region in achieving the MDGs.

II. Objectives of the sub-regional advocacy workshop

ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Regional Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Partnership will organize the first Sub-regional Advocacy-cum-consultation Workshop on MDGs and post-2015 for South-East Asia in Vientiane from 24 to 26 June 2014. This workshop will be organized in cooperation with the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic. It constitutes the advocacy for work that has been carried out by the three partners in support of accelerated achievement of the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific region. It also aims to draw from multi-stakeholder consultations for readiness to address implementation challenges for a post-2015 development agenda.

The key objectives of the sub-regional advocacy workshop to be organized in Vientiane are as follows:

- (a) To disseminate the key findings and messages of the publication, *Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda* with a particular focus on the progress achieved by the countries in South-East Asia;
- (b) To discuss some of the critical implementation issues in realizing the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals and how regional and global cooperation could support the implementation of a post 2015 Development Agenda in Asia-Pacific. Implementation issues to be addressed in this workshop include financing the post-2015 development agenda, technology, innovations and trade facilitation, and data and information in realizing the vision of a transformative agenda.

The advocacy workshop in Vientiane will also facilitate enhanced sub-regional cooperation by sharing information and relevant good practices in achieving the MDGs and discuss how an integrated ASEAN after 2015 can contribute to realizing the goals of sustainable development, including the effective integration of the 3 LDCs into AEC 2015.

III. Participation and implementation strategy

The ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Regional MDGs Partnership has been able to mobilize limited resources to fund participation of 3 participants each from eight developing countries of South-East Asia and 20 local participants from Lao People's Democratic Republic, consisting of policy makers, academia/professional experts, private sector, media and NGOs. The eight countries to be funded by the partnership are Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. Nominations for the 3 participants from each of the participating countries will be sought through UNDP Country Office located in each of these countries and will comprise of one from the Ministry of Finance, one from the Ministry of Education or Health or Environment, and one from the private sector/NGOs. In addition to inviting the UN Country Team in all the participating countries, the Bangkok-based members of RCM will also be invited on a self-financing basis. UNCT in Lao People's Democratic Republic would be approached to share their expertise and knowledge on MDGs and the post-2015 development agenda including the sustainable development issues and concerns.

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