



2nd MEETING OF THE OIC STATISTICAL WORKING GROUP

SUMMARY OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

15-16 June, 2009

(22 – 23 Jumada Thani 1430H)

SESRIC, Ankara – Turkey

2ND MEETING OF THE OIC STATISTICAL WORKING GROUP (SWG)

SUMMARY OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

1. The 2nd Meeting of the OIC Statistical Working Group (SWG) was hosted by SESRIC at its Headquarters in Ankara on 15-16 June, 2009 (22 – 23 Jumada Thani 1430H). The membership of SWG comprises the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, IDB, ICCI and ICDT.
2. The objectives of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG were to (i) take stock of the progress made so far on the activities assigned to OIC institutions as contained in the recommendations of the 1st Meeting of the OIC SWG and (ii) discuss future action plan for strengthening coordination, harmonization, and standardization of statistical activities among OIC institutions so as to avoid duplication of efforts and reporting conflicting statistics.
3. The SWG emanated from one of the recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Statistical Capacity Building organized by IDB on 29 April 2007 (12 Rabi-Thani 1428H) which called on IDB to “*establish a working group, in collaboration with relevant OIC institutions, to meet regularly to harmonize statistical activities, exchange experiences and best practices, develop common methodologies for collecting and processing data from Member States*”. Similar proposal in the form of a project was also suggested by the Director General of SESRIC, Dr. Savas Alpay, during his visit to IDB on 3 December 2007 (23 Dhu'l Qaida 1428H). Against this background, the IDB organised the 1st Meeting of the OIC SWG at its Headquarters on 25-26 March 2008 (17 – 18 Rabi-I 1429H) which later prepared and printed the proceedings of the meeting.
4. At the 24th Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC), held in Istanbul from 20 to 24 October 2008 (20 – 24 Shawwal 1429H), SESRIC made presentation on SWG. COMCEC welcomed the establishment of the OIC SWG, appreciated the efforts of the founding members of the SWG and suggested as follows:
 - a. Called on National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) and other relevant institutions in the Member States to cooperate actively with the SWG in scaling up statistical capacity activities, and technical cooperation to ensure timely access to reliable, consistent, accurate, and complete data on key indicators for monitoring progress of OIC initiatives including OIC-Ten-Year Program of Action.
 - b. The SESRIC was requested to report on the activities of the SWG to the annual sessions of the COMCEC and Follow-up Committee Meetings.

- c. All relevant OIC institutions were requested to inform COMCEC Focal Points about events and activities related with the work of the COMCEC.

ATTENDANCE

5. The 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG was attended by the representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB, COMCEC and the four NSOs (Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Turkey) (see Annex 1 for the list and information about the participants). ICCI could not attend the meeting but sent its views and progress report to SESRIC.

AGENDA

6. The agenda of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG (see Annex 2) was composed of opening and working sessions. The opening session was graced with the presence of the Director General of the SESRIC, Dr. Savas Alpay, who delivered the welcoming address. He underlined the importance of harmonisation of data among OIC institutions for building greater confidence and producing consistent publications. He also thanked SWG members for their efforts in bringing statistical issues on the agenda of COMCEC. The address of Dr. Alpay was followed by an opening statement by Dr. Abdullateef Bello (Chief, Data Resource Center, IDB)(see Annex 3 for the statements made during the opening session).

7. During the working sessions, mostly chaired by Dr. Sidika Basci (Director of Statistics and Information Department, SESRIC), the participants made presentations on various themes and also contributed actively to the general discussions. As is customary, SESRIC will prepare the proceedings of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG, as background document for the next SWG meeting. The proceedings will contain the welcoming address of the Director General of SESRIC, the statement of the Chief of IDB Data Resource Centre, the presentations made by the participants and the minutes and outcome of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

8. The participants of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG acknowledged the progress made by members in implementing the various activities assigned to them from 1st Meeting of the OIC SWG and in order to expedite action, ensure accountability, and proper monitoring of progress decided to give each OIC institution a maximum of two weeks from the date of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG to send to IDB their information about the dates for completing the activities assigned to them. To this end, the IDB was requested to compile the information and cast it into Action Plan for distribution to members for implementation.

9. The participants decided that institutions that are focal points for producing joint documents (such as Special Brochure on Intra-OIC Trade, Islamic Ummah in figures etc.) are

required to first share the outline of the documents with the rest of the SWG members and ensure that agreement on the structure of the contents is reached before proceeding with the preparation of the documents. It was also decided that only documents meeting this requirement would be accepted.

10. While recognizing that some level of coordination has been recorded in the area of peer review of draft publications before their final printing, the participants called on all members to keep the momentum by ensuring that their draft publications are first circulated for review among themselves to avoid reporting conflicting figures.

11. The participants of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG decided to transform its future meetings into a knowledge-sharing platform and agreed to develop a Work Programme that will feature workshops and training activities whereby experts in areas of statistics and statistical capacity building will be invited to share their thought and experience with the members. In this regard, it was agreed to include such activities in its future agenda items.

12. The participants requested SESRIC to prepare regular reports on the outcomes of the UN Committee for Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) Meetings and distribute them to the SWG members.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13. The participants of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG agreed on the need to intensify efforts to strengthen coordination, harmonization, and standardization in core areas of statistical activities (i.e. data collection, data processing and data dissemination) and statistical capacity development as follows:

(A) DATA COLLECTION

14. On common questionnaire for socio-economic data collection, SESRIC was requested to finalize it in close collaboration with SWG members. The questionnaire shall include indicators that are unique to Islam such as zakah, awqaf, Islamic finance and banking etc. In this connection, IDB was requested to use its regional offices and field representatives in member countries to assist in increasing the response rate to both online and paper questionnaires.

15. Concerning the existing databases in OIC institutions, the participants called on NSOs to cooperate by supplying timely, accurate, reliable and complete data whenever requests are sent to them. It was also agreed to expand the coverage of BASEIND at SESRIC to include other indicators of Islam such as zakah, awqaf etc.

16. Due to low response rate by NSOs to SESRIC's online questionnaire, the participants decided that the members of the SWG would continue to use secondary data obtained from the international sources. Accordingly the following institutions are requested to facilitate identification of the international sources for secondary data:

- Trade Statistics – (ICDT)

- Socio-Economic and Financial Statistics (SESRIC/IDB)
- Private Sector Statistics (ICCI)

(B) DATA PROCESSING

17. The participants of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG agreed to study the issue surrounding aggregation methodology that varies from one indicator and institution to another (e.g. IMF, World Bank) and decided to: either prepare a document explaining the statistical techniques underpinning the aggregation or will design a programme for use by all SWG members with adequate training to be provided.

(C) DATA DISSEMINATION

18. The participants agreed to exchange statistical publications before and after publication process so that each member is aware of what the other is publishing as well as contribute to improving the contents.

(D) STATISTAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

19. The participants agreed to work together to finalize as soon as possible a coordinated mechanism to develop the Framework for Statistical Capacity Development for OIC Member States. They also decided to provide and support statistical training individually or collectively for member states upon request.

20. The participants agreed to target statistical capacity activities of member countries that will make maximum impact and called on members to ensure that such activities are within the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS) and for those without NSDS, recommended them to give priority to it and develop one.

(E) NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICES (NSOs)

21. The participants agreed to introduce a new “SWG Newsletter” as a means to reach out to a wider audience and communicate development and initiatives taking place at different OIC institutions in the area of statistical capacity building. In this regard, the participants of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG assigned the responsibility of managing the SWG Newsletter to SESRIC.

22. The participants of the 2nd Meeting of the OIC SWG decided to organize the “**1st Meeting of NSOs of OIC Member States**” in the first quarter of 2010 in Istanbul, Turkey. They agreed that both SESRIC and IDB should jointly organize the meeting. In preparation for the meeting, the participants also decided that a concept paper detailing the rationale and

issues to be discussed should be developed and circulated to NSOs and SWG members as soon as possible for their feedback. In addition, a Technical Task Force for organizing the meeting and preparing Agenda will be set up.

(F) DATE AND VENUE OF THE 3RD MEETING OF THE OIC SWG

23. The IDB offered to host the 3rd Meeting of the OIC SWG at its Headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in the first quarter of 2010. Also, it was emphasised that SWG meetings will continue to be on rotational basis among OIC Institutions and that the host institution for an SWG meeting shall act as the Secretariat. In this regard, IDB will prepare the agenda and relevant documents in close collaboration with the members of SWG.

ANNEX I: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE 2nd MEETING OF THE OIC SWG

Name of Participant	Institution/ Country	Title	Focal Point: Email, Telephone, Fax Number
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ANNEX 2: AGENDA FOR THE 2ND MEETING OF THE OIC STATISTICAL WORKING GROUP, 15-16 JUNE 2009, ANKARA, TURKEY

Monday, 15 June 2009	
08:30 - 09:30	Registration
09:35 - 09:40	Recitation from the Holy Qur'an
09:45 - 10:00	Welcoming Address by the Director General, SESRIC
10:00 - 10:45	Opening Statements
	Statistical Working Group: Where Do We Stand?
10:45 - 11: 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past (Review of SWG-1) (IDB) • Present (SWG-2 plan & approach) (SESRIC)
11:40 - 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 - 13:30	Progress Report on the Activities Outlined in the Recommendations of SWG-1
	SESRIC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a unified questionnaire for sourcing data from OIC Member Countries • Ways and means to increase response rate to the questionnaire (with IDB) • Represent SWG in the UN Committee for Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) (progress or update of activities) • Provide definitions for socio-economic and financial statistics indicators (with IDB) • Coordinate the selection of the most reliable international sources for socio-economic and financial statistics indicators (with IDB) • Prepare a concept paper on a common database on OIC indicators • Jointly prepare "Islamic Ummah in Figures" (with IDB) • Prepare "A Framework for Statistical Coordination among OIC Institutions" • Prepare a document on the coordination of statistical capacity building (with IDB)
	IDB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide definitions for socio-economic and financial statistics indicators (with SESRIC) • Ways and means to increase response rate to questionnaire developed by SESRIC (with SESRIC) • Coordinate the selection of the most reliable international sources for socio-economic and financial statistics indicators (with SESRIC) • Provide methodologies for calculating aggregation for socio-economic and financial statistics (with SESRIC) • Jointly prepare "Islamic Ummah in Figures" (with SESRIC) • Prepare "A Charter for Statistics at OIC level" • Prepare a document on the coordination of statistical capacity building (with SESRIC)
	ICDT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide definitions of trade statistics indicators • Coordinate the selection of the most reliable international sources for trade statistic indicators • Provide methodologies for calculating aggregation for trade-statistics
	Prepare a concept paper on issues related to measurement of intra-OIC trade
	Jointly produce a "Special Brochure on Intra-OIC Trade Statistics" to be relates during the forthcoming COMCEC Meeting (with SWG members)
	General Discussion on Activities for All Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange of statistical publication before publication • Cross-reference of each other's web page
	13:30 - 14: 45
14: 45 - 16:00	Statistical Initiatives at SESRIC, IDB and ICDT
	SESRIC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical Capacity Building Programme of SESRIC
	IDB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A New approach to Statistical Capacity Building and IDB New Database
	ICDT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Trade-Related Statistical Activities/Systems 	
	General Discussion
16:00 – 17:00	Issues and Way Forward
Tuesday, 16 June 2009	
09:30 - 11:00	The Role of National Statistical Offices in SWG: Issues and Prospects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, and Turkey • Discussion
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 - 13:00	Agenda and Work Programme of the First Meeting of The National Statistical Offices of the OIC Member States
13:00 - 14: 30	Prayer and Lunch Break
14:30 - 15: 30	Way Forward: Issues for Discussions and Recommendations

ANNEX 3: OPENING STATEMENTS

Dr. Savaş ALPAY, SESRIC, Director General

Bismillahi Ar-Rahmanir-Raheem

Distinguished Participants,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh

It is a great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of SESRIC, to the Second Meeting of Statistical Working Group taking place today at SESRIC Headquarters. I would also like to express our thanks and appreciation to you for honouring our invitation. The First Meeting of Statistical Working Group was held on 25-26 March 2009 at IDB Headquarters. It was the first time in the annals of OIC, where representatives of OIC Institutions dealing with statistical activities were brought together during that Meeting to discuss and put in place a coordination mechanism for achieving greater synergy between OIC Institutions and for better organizing statistical programs and activities with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and reporting conflicting statistics. It is a great pleasure now to welcome the representatives of some of the National Statistical Offices of the member states as well in addition to the OIC Institutions to get their views on the role of National Statistical Offices in Statistical Working Group.

I do not want to get into details of the progress observed since the First Meeting of the Statistical Working Group since this august committee will be discussing this and the way forward during these two days of the Second Meeting. However, I believe that there are some points which are worth mentioning. Firstly, it is very important that in the history of COMCEC Sessions, coordination of statistical activities at the OIC level took place for the first time in the agenda of COMCEC during the 24th Session of COMCEC which was held in Istanbul on 20-24 October 2008 and the Framework of Statistical Working Group had been presented during the Session.

Secondly, it is very exciting to notice that there is more synergy now among the institutions of OIC. Since the First Meeting of the Statistical Working Group, institutions started sharing their statistical publications for review and feedback before they are printed and released. Moreover, there are links provided to the databases of institutions in the web sites. BASEIND of SESRIC had been started to be used as the main source, rather than World Bank or UN databases, in most of the OIC publications. More than 1000 people are visiting SESRIC web site everyday and most of these visits are to BASEIND. In addition to this, I would like to mention that SESRIC receives many requests of data related to Islamic Countries from

various research institutions and universities which shows the acceptance and trust to SESRIC as a provider of data.

Distinguished Guests,

It also gives me great pleasure to observe that the relations with the National Statistical Offices of the member states are improving continuously. The initial steps of improving synergy between the institutions and the National Statistical Offices were taken during the Meeting with the Delegates of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of the OIC Member States to the 40th Session of UN Statistical Commission which was held on February 26, 2009 in New York. IDB and SESRIC represented Statistical Working Group during that Meeting. Introduction of the new interface of online data submission to the National Statistical Offices during that Meeting was very important and I am very honoured to inform you that some of the countries started to use the interface. One other very important outcome of that Meeting is the decision on organizing regular meetings of National Statistical Offices of the OIC Member States. The first Meeting is planned to be organized during the first quarter of 2010 in Istanbul and it is in the agenda of this Second Meeting of Statistical Working Group to discuss the agenda and work programme of this exciting event.

In concluding, I wish all the success to this Meeting, and may Allah SWT bestow his mercy on the undertakings of this august committee.

Dr. Abdullateef Bello, IDB, Chief of Data Resource Centre

Director General, SESRIC

Distinguished Participants from OIC Institutions and NSOs

Assalaam 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh

It is a great honour and privilege for me, on behalf of the Islamic Development Bank, to address this important 2nd Meeting of the Statistical Working Group (SWG-2) which begins today in this beautiful city of Ankara, Turkey. I would like to thank and register our appreciation to SESRIC for hosting the meeting, for the generous hospitality we have received, and for all the excellent arrangement made towards the SWG-2.

More than one year ago today, the SWG was set up as a forum for addressing statistical issues, strengthening cooperation, and harmonizing statistical activities among OIC institutions. It aimed, among other things, to avoid duplication of efforts, cut-cost, and minimize (as much as possible) any discrepancies in data and aggregate figures reported in various statistical publications released by OIC institutions.

At the first meeting of SWG, held at IDB Headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 25th March 2008, the participating OIC institutions collectively resolved to work together to take up the challenges of the 21st century in the realm of statistics especially in the wake of proliferation of initiatives at national, regional, international and institutional levels. The initiatives –such as the MDGs, OIC Ten Year Program of Action and IDB 1440H Vision --- present additional tasks for statisticians and statistical institutions who are required to translate the goals and targets in the initiatives into indices for the purpose of measuring progress of member countries. Between SWG-1 and SWG-2, the world has seen four new crises – food, energy, financial, and economic—all of which require comprehensive, reliable, consistent, accurate and timely data to gauge their impacts, understand the channel of transmission, and develop adequate policy response.

In today's world, statistical institutions are facing serious challenges. The demand for data has increased tremendously but the resources available to provide quality data services are limited. Because statistical institutions do not generate data themselves, they must rely on member countries who are at different development levels to obtain data on various development indicators. In order to encourage these member countries to supply timely data, efforts must be made to assist them to scale up their statistical capacities which cannot be undertaken by a single institution. Therefore, there is a need for statistical institutions to pool resources and collaborate to design a mechanism for cost-sharing and developing joint programs.

It was in the spirit of these joint programs that we all agreed at our last SWG-1 meeting to assign responsibilities to each institution so that in our next meeting which is taking place today, individual institution will report its progress made in completing the assignments given to it. As is evident in the agenda of SWG-2, each institution has been allotted time to present its journey so far concerning the assignments to be completed. Unless, we enshrine this type of accountability in all our SWG meetings we risk becoming a talk-shop.

It is too early to say anything about the progress of SWG, but hopefully this afternoon when all institutions would have presented their reports we shall then be able to tell whether progress has been made or not. I would like to stress that SWG was never conceived to encroach on the functions of any member's mandates. Every institution in SWG will continue

to do its work and publish all its documents; all what SWG stands for is strengthening coordination, harmonization, and standardization. We need to coordinate statistical activities to save cost and avoid duplication of efforts. We need to harmonize sources of data we use to avoid sending conflicting messages to the public and policy makers. We need to standardize our method of calculating aggregation to avoid reporting conflicting figures in our respective statistical publications.

To achieve coordination, harmonization, and standardization among OIC institutions, we need the support of member countries' national statistical offices, who are represented in this meeting today. These NSOs should try as much as possible to be responsive, transparent and helpful. They should treat OIC institutions like any other international organizations to which they supply data on regular basis. They should be transparent when they request for statistical capacity assistance and not to exaggerate cost and waste resources, rather they should be bold to declare other sources of resources they expect to receive for their activities.

At IDB, we have taken steps to assist member countries' NSOs to break from the vicious circle of underperformance by creating statistical capacity building facility -- called IDB-STATCAP -- whose aim is to provide financial and technical supports for statistical capacities. The facility provides scholarships for MSc. degree in statistics ---the first STATCAP to include human capital development as one of the pillars --, training (on or off site), physical infrastructure including equipment, and statistical operations. The utilization rate of the facility during its first year (2008) by member countries was encouraging but somewhat low. We therefore encourage member countries with inadequate statistical capacities to make use of the facility as well as statistical institutions to work with us and help spread information about the IDB-STATCAP to our common member countries. We are now entering a new phase in the implementation of IDB-STATCAP where we will target only the statistical components in the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) and for countries without NSDS, we plan to embark on preparing country statistical diagnostic studies for them.

Our deliberations in the next two days will test our will to succeed, our desire to remain committed and move SWG forward and our capacity to play to win in the interest of our institutions and member countries. It is better for all of us to ride the wave than to lean against it. Let it be known that we cannot move the clock back because the SWG is here to stay, and your support and sincerity in fulfilling obligations is required. We should resist any tendency of one party taking undue credit for the work undertaken by another; it destroys trust, betrays confidence, and discourages others. In any activity of SWG, let us consult each other at all cost and resolve differences politely and professionally. We should take inspiration from the motto of IDB: "Together we build a better future". I am convinced that we can build a better SWG future if all hands are on deck working closely as a team and sharing best practices, experiences, and lessons learnt in various initiatives embarked upon by SWG members.

I would like to assure you that IDB stands ready to do all it takes to support the SWG and looks forward to other members of SWG as well as NSOs to do the same, so that together we can work in attaining the required cooperation and commitment level needed to stay the course and achieve a win-win situation. In this meeting, I expect us to reach consensus in three broad areas namely (i) adopting the OIC Charter of Statistics, (ii) harmonizing questionnaire for sourcing data from NSOs, and (iii) scaling up statistical capacities at institutional and national level.

Wishing you all successful and productive discussions in the next two days.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Wassalam 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh