

Statement by NEW ZEALAND

Agenda Item 2 Strategic Direction of the Committee on Statistics

E/ ESCAP/CST(4)/CRP.2	Strengthening data and statistics for the development agenda beyond 2015 in Asia and the Pacific
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New Zealand welcomes the report and compliments the Bureau on drafting a thoughtful document on such an important topic. New Zealand contributed to some of the thinking that underpins the paper, through its chairmanship of the Steering Group on the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES) and through attendance at the EGM in December 2014. The current report accurately captures the conclusions of the EGM which inform the report's proposals.

New Zealand agrees with and supports the overall content of the report and the direction provided by the proposals. In particular we strongly support:

- Proposal 1 which re-confirms the strategic direction of CST with its strong focus on capacity development via a number of regional programmes. We agree that there is scope to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the programmes, including their interaction with the Partners, and support the review proposed by the Bureau. (para.10).
- Proposals 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11. These confirm (a) the key role (ownership and leadership) that national statistics offices need to take in any capacity building programmes; and (b) the importance of the development partners aligning their work programmes to assist with these programmes. New Zealand believes that these facets will be critical not only to the CST achieving its strategic goals but also to meeting the additional aim of successfully developing the monitoring indicators needed for the post-2015 agenda.
- Proposals 12 which sets out the need for an overall monitoring framework to capture progress on achieving the Committee's goals. As set out in para.36, this framework needs to cover both institutional and infrastructural elements, as well as linking to the performance indicators of the domain specific regional programmes. An effective monitoring system can serve two roles: (i) as a guide to the regional programmes and other capacity development initiatives by identifying gaps and/or short-comings; and (ii) as an assessment tool for CST to monitor progress "towards achieving well-resourced and well-functioning statistical national statistical systems".

However, New Zealand notes the following:

- The nineteen proposals cover many aspects of "statistical strengthening", especially when the post-2015 agenda is included, and it will not be possible to make strong progress on all of them. Some prioritisation is needed.
- The review of the programmes put forward in Proposal 1, to be entrusted to the Bureau (as per para.10), is critical as it potentially impacts on the scope and