



FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE 3RD MEETING OF OIC STATISTICAL WORKING GROUP

The 3rd Meeting of the OIC Statistical Working Group (OIC-SWG-3) was hosted by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) at its Headquarters in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 20 Muharram 1432H (26 December, 2010). It was attended by the representatives of the OIC General Secretariat; Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC); Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT); Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI); IDB; and Central Department of Statistics and Information, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

During the opening session, the Director of Data Resources and Statistics Department of IDB, Dr. Abdullateef Bello, delivered the welcome address on behalf of the Vice President (Corporate Services) and Acting Chief Economist of IDB, Dr. Ahmet Tiktik. He called on the participants to strengthen and improve coordination of statistical activities and urged them to accelerate the implementation of activities assigned to respective institutions from previous meetings of the OIC-SWG. He also stated that the recent financial and economic crisis was a blessing in disguise for both data producers and data users for three reasons. First, the crisis drew the attention of policymakers and researchers worldwide to the importance of having available high quality data for assessing and quantifying the impact of the crisis on their economies. Second, it exposed the weaknesses in the global statistical system which failed to capture data on key statistical indicators relevant to the crisis. Third, for the first time the UN General Assembly requested all its member countries to celebrate the “World Statistics Day” on 20 October 2010 to raise the profile of statistics.

After the welcoming address, Dr. Savaş Alpay, the Director-General of SESRIC delivered a speech in which he stressed the importance that SESRIC gives to the development of national strategies for development of statistics (NSDS) in OIC countries. He stated that only 48 OIC member countries have NSDS, out of which 30 countries are at implementation stage; 4 countries are either designing one or awaiting adoption while 13 countries have expired strategies or without strategy but currently planning one, and only 1 country is without a strategy and not planning one. He proposed the development of a specific statistical capacity index for OIC member countries, as well as convening the future meetings of the OIC-SWG side-by-side with the sessions of the OIC Statistical

Commission in order to have higher participation rate from the National Statistics Organizations (NSOs) of the OIC member countries.

After the inaugural session, the OIC-SWG-3 participants presented a number of technical papers followed by discussions on these themes: (i) *Scorecard on OIC-SWG activities: Where do we stand on coordination, harmonization, and standardization?*; (ii) *Institutional Progress Report on OIC-SWG Activities and New Statistical Initiatives*; (iii) *OIC Statistical Commission: Issues and preparation*, (iv) *Joint Statistical Publications for the OIC-Summit* and (v) *Review of draft communiqué of OIC-SWG-3*.

At the end of the technical sessions, the OIC-SWG-3 agreed as follows: -

1. Recognize the unprecedented challenges posed by the economic and financial crisis, which requires high quality data to gauge its impact on the economies of OIC member countries and the need for new statistical indicators to address the development challenges facing member countries in the post-crisis world.
2. Underscore the vital role played by statistics in socio-economic development of OIC member countries and call on governments of the OIC countries to provide more resources and create enabling environment for National Statistics Organizations (NSOs) to discharge their responsibilities effectively and efficiently.
3. Reaffirm the commitment to the guiding pillars of the SWG which focus on strengthening coordination, harmonization, and standardization of statistical activities among member countries in close relationship with NSOs.
4. Determined to work together to advance and strengthen partnership through coordination, collaboration, and cooperation in all areas of statistical activities needed to support various initiatives of OIC, its subsidiaries, and member countries including the OIC Ten-year Programme of Action.
5. Acknowledge the progress made by SWG members in implementing statistical activities assigned to them from all previous SWG meetings and recognizing that much more work needs to be done to complete the activities that need urgent attention and therefore, calling on members to expedite actions on their remaining activities. IDB volunteers to follow-up with members on the deadlines to complete the assignments.
6. Urge NSOs of OIC countries to treat SWG members as partners and to provide timely data to enable them report accurate, reliable, and consistent data in their publications.
7. Take note of the outcome of the meeting of NSOs of the OIC member countries, which was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 22-23 March 2010 as well as the Islamic

Statistics Experts' Committee Meeting held in Jordan on 21-22 December 2010 and call on all NSOs and SWG members to adopt and implement the resolutions of these two meetings.

8. Welcome the proposal of SESRIC to organize both OIC Statistical Commission and the 4th Meeting of the SWG (OIC-SWG-4) together in 2011 at a date to be determined in consultation with the SWG members. ICDT will study the proposal and convey its position as soon as possible.
9. Express thanks and appreciation to IDB for organizing the OIC-SWG-3 and to SESRIC for hosting the OIC-SWG-2 as well as the two meetings mentioned in para 7 above.

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