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REPORTS ON VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES

**The Proposal of Developing Model Questionnaires (MQ) for Coordinated Household
International Migration Surveys in the Mediterranean Countries
(MED-HIMS)**

Document based on the reports prepared under MEDSTAT II and jointly submitted by
EUROSTAT, the World Bank and UNHCR

BACKGROUND

1. In a regional workshop organized by the MEDSTAT II Programme in Wiesbaden in March 2008, a number of participating countries⁽¹⁾ called for the implementation of a household migration survey to overcome the lack of data on international migration from the MED region by collecting reliable and representative data on the characteristics and behaviour of migrants. The workshop also requested MEDSTAT II to develop Model Questionnaires (MQ) that could be used for coordinated '*Mediterranean Household International Migration Surveys*' to be undertaken under a new project (MED-HIMS).
2. Following these recommendations, 'Project Documents' for conducting such surveys were prepared by the NSIs in Egypt, Jordan, the occupied Palestinian territory and Syria with direct assistance by MEDSTAT II experts. These project documents included a request for technical assistance and external funding from the EC and/or other donors. The four countries also agreed that these migration surveys should be implemented within a regional coordinated survey programme. Interest in the proposed MED-HIMS was expressed later by Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.
3. The development of the framework and the first draft of the MQ for MED-HIMS was discussed in three regional workshops held in Brussels, Cairo and Marrakech from February to September 2009, the latter in parallel with the XXVI IUSSP International Population Conference. The work was undertaken by MEDSTAT II in collaboration with the MED NSIs, EUROSTAT and

¹ MEDSTAT II (2006-2009) covered Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria and Tunisia.

the World Bank and in consultation with other European Commission services dealing with migration, UNHCR, ESCWA, ISTAT-Italy, INE-Spain and some research and academic centres in the Euro-Mediterranean Region including HCP/CERED and CARIM.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS OF MQ

4. The proposed MQ for MED-HIMS aim to collect data in the Mediterranean countries on the determinants and consequences of international migration, concentrating in particular on out-migration, return migration, and intentions to migrate, as well as on circular migration, migration of highly-skilled persons, irregular migration, type and use of remittances, behaviours, attitudes, perceptions and cultural values of people with regard to international migration. Information on socio-economic status of the household and on characteristics of local communities in sample areas will also be gathered. In addition, upon the suggestion of UNHCR, the MQ will also include a module covering mixed migration (migration asylum nexus) and secondary movement of refugees. The MED-HIMS project will thus aim to overcome the lack of data on international migration from the MED-region by collecting reliable and representative multi-topic, multi-level, retrospective and comparative data on the characteristics and behaviour of migrants.
5. The MQ will be designed to meet a number of objectives which may be summarized as follows:
 - To collect data in order to understand the nature of MED-migration and the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrants;
 - To collect data on migration histories and the migration experiences and practices;
 - To collect data on migration intentions and potential destination;
 - To assess the impact of migration on household socio-economic behaviour and practices;
 - To assess the impact of remittances and their utilization and their impact on socio-economic development in the MED-region;
 - To assess the impact of migration on unemployment and labour dynamics;
 - To assess the impact of migration on the skill-level of return migrants;
 - To assess the overall awareness of migration issues and practices;
 - To assess migrants' future plans;
 - To elucidate the processes leading to the decision to migrate;
 - To evaluate the effectiveness of governmental interventions aiming at preventing illegal migration;
 - To develop specific methodologies for collecting and analyzing international migration data; and
 - To improve data utilization by promoting and encouraging their use by planners, policy makers, and managers of international migration and development programmes.
6. The MQ being developed include the following six questionnaires:
 - MQ-1: The Household Questionnaire
 - MQ-2: Individual Questionnaire for Out-migrant
 - MQ-3: Individual Questionnaire for Return Migrant
 - MQ-4: Individual Questionnaire for Non-migrant
 - MQ-5: The Household Socio-economic and Environmental Conditions Questionnaire

MQ-6: The Community-level Questionnaire

7. The experts participating in the workshops and development of MQ had to come back several times to some fundamental issues, including responding to both national and international data requirements, the criteria for eligibility for the various survey interviews, the concept of ‘multi-level eligibility’, the formulation of specific questions, the classifications and coding of variables to be applied, and the proposed sampling and data collection procedures.
8. According to the Marrakech meeting, a next step foresees the integration of further questions and modules to the existing draft MQ. This is based on a proposal for further measurements suggested by UNHCR for covering topics such as the mixed migration, including the migration asylum nexus, secondary movements, conditions in host countries, returns and intentions of people in need of international protection. The proposed contents were specified in a draft questionnaire on forced migration, prepared by UNHCR, which includes the following three modules: (1) the migration process, (2) the situation in host country, and (3) the returns and prospects. It was suggested to integrate these three modules in the MQ in the following way:
 - Integration of UNHCR modules 1 and 2 in the MQ-4;
 - Adaptation of UNHCR module 3 within the MQ-3; and
 - Modification to the structure of the MQ-1, including the possibility of adding a new section on ‘foreign-born individuals’.

CURRENT PLANS

9. Apart from the changes linked to the UNHCR proposal presented above, current plans foresee the developments of following survey documents and manuals:
 - M1 - Survey Organization Manual
 - M2 - Guidelines on Sample Design
 - M3 - Training Manual
 - M4 - Supervisors’ Instructions
 - M5 - Interviewers’ Instructions
 - M6 - Coding / Editing Manual
 - M7 - Recode Specifications Manual
 - M8 - Guidelines for Statistical Tabulations and Data Analysis
10. The work on both the revision and finalization of MQ and the development of survey manuals is being launched based on funding already made available by UNHCR and the World Bank. The implementation of this phase will include the establishment of a ‘Manuals Panel’ for supervising the work, and regular panel and experts meetings. This will be followed by a Regional Workshop that will aim to discuss the complete set of survey instruments with representatives of the NSIs of the eight MED countries, and their national priorities and possible slightly different formulations of MQ, in particular with reference to ‘core’ and ‘optional’ modules and questions. The Workshop would also discuss the framework and a possible timetable for the implementation of the coordinated surveys. The following step will be the organisation and implementation of small pilot surveys to test the MQ and the manuals.
11. As far as the organisation and implementation in the different countries is concerned, MED-HIMS may eventually be implemented in two phases, first in the Middle-East countries,

followed by the Maghreb countries. This proposal takes into account the possible different degree of readiness of the NSIs of MED countries and their workload with ongoing and future operations.

12. The opportunity and challenges of developing MQ and manuals for the proposed MED-HIMS project have found good response from international and national institutions, with the EC (through MEDSTAT II), the World Bank and UNHCR providing direct support. Further, international specialists in this sector have been recruited, and the proposed project has gained momentum.
13. In fact, at this stage it is fundamental to secure funding for the implementation of MED-HIMS in the eight MED countries and for the establishment of a 'MED-HIMS Central Unit' responsible for managing such a regional survey programme and providing technical assistance. This funding has necessarily to go beyond what has been already set by the World Bank and UNHCR for the development of the survey instruments and beyond what can be further provided by the European Commission through the upcoming MEDSTAT III Programme.
14. EUROSTAT, the World Bank and UNHCR may consider calling jointly for a donors and stakeholders meeting involving other institutions such as UNECE, ESCWA, the UN Population Division, UNFPA, ILO, the League of Arab States, the Arab Labour Organization, AGFUND (Arab Gulf Fund for the United Nations Development Organizations), AFSED (Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development) and the institutions in the EU countries having supported so far the MQ initiative.
15. The upcoming discussion has also to consider possible scenarios for maximising the usefulness of the MED-HIMS project and making data collection sustainable over time by, for instance, conducting such a specialized household survey every 5 years (and attaching a short module on international migration to other household surveys such as the Labour Force Survey in other years), as well as expanding data collection operations to cover migrant-receiving countries.
