



ECA Poverty Team's Quarterly Newsletter with highlights from recent activities and analytical work on poverty/gender issues in the ECA countries.

Regional Conference on Social Inclusion in ECA

A regional conference on *Social Inclusion in ECA*, co-sponsored with the Hungarian government, was held in Budapest on September 24-25. The conference was attended by high-level policymakers from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Kyrgyz Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Ukraine, as well as World Bank sector staff from Washington and the country offices. The conference's introductory section included keynote speeches from the Minister of Labor of Hungary and the World Bank's ECA region Chief Economist, following which five main sessions were held covering the main social protection areas: (i) employment: activation policies, (ii) social assistance: new frontiers, (iii) pensions: social and farmers pensions to reach excluded groups, (iv) community level projects as a way to deliver services to the excluded, and (v) social care and deinstitutionalization.

Over the course of the two-day conference, participants engaged enthusiastically in debating and learning about new tools and approaches to social inclusion. Conditional policies in general, and conditional cash transfers (CCTs) in particular, elicited the most curiosity and interest, including approaches to promote employment among the socially excluded through activation policies. In terms of impact evaluation, the CCT discussions showed the power of rigorously demonstrating the contribution of projects and policies in determining outcomes.

Six conclusions emerged from the discussion: (i) social inclusion is especially important for ECA; (ii) many of the approaches work best when applied across sectors; (iii) new approaches, such as CCTs, are not "panaceas" and are most effective when used as part of broad social policy; (iv) many of the new approaches to social inclusion have to be inter-generational, and education is key; (v) some policy initiatives are costly, but the money is there in most ECA countries; and (vi) good quality evaluations are still lacking.

For more information contact Arun Banerji.

External Partnerships at Work for Poverty Monitoring and Analysis

In **Tajikistan**, the World Bank and UNICEF are jointly supporting Goskomstat to conduct A Tajikistan Living Standards Survey (TLSS) 2007. The survey seeks to provide updated data on living standards and many key indicators that could be used in tracking progress of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), 2007-2009. The new survey would allow analysis of such important areas as food security, labor markets, migration, health and education. The new survey would also allow the establishment of baselines for many development indicators and will be representative at both the national and regional level. The TLSS data collection will be undertaken in Fall 2007. This survey follows past donor-coordinated support to Goskomstat by UNICEF and DfID in the conduct of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2000 and 2005 that provided a clearer picture of the status of children and women in Tajikistan. **For more information contact Oleksiy Ivaschenko.**

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the World Bank, DfID and WBI collaborated to bring a Poverty Analysis Workshop for about 25 participants from the statistics agencies, the PRSP unit, as well as academics and students. This training course was a follow-up activity to the Western Balkans Regional Training of Trainers course on Poverty Analysis, which was held in Washington D.C in January 2007 and was also supported through a DfID Trust Fund for Poverty Analysis in the western Balkans. The topics covered in this subsequent course included development of welfare aggregates, poverty lines and measurement, inequality measurement, development of poverty profiles, analysis of the determinants of poverty, use of Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS) & Household Budget Surveys (HBS) for poverty and gender analysis. The course also involved a series of computer training and exercises using SPSS software. The materials are available on-line: [Poverty Analysis Workshop](#). **For more information contact Erwin Tiongson.**

Analytic Tools-You-Can-Use

IHSN Tools & Guidelines

Thanks to efforts underway under the aegis of the International Household Survey Network (IHSN), a number of tools have been developed recently to overcome the technical constraints and legal obstacles limiting user access to microdata. The IHSN, an informal network established in 2004 under the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics, seeks to improve the availability, accessibility and quality of data in developing countries through concerted efforts on several fronts. From the end user's perspective, a "good" dataset is one that is easy to use; its documentation is clear and easy to understand, the data contain no surprises, and users are able to access the dataset with relatively little start-up time. The IHSN has developed several tools designed to help data producers achieve these objectives.

The World Bank Data Group has developed a **Microdata Management Toolkit** which aims to promote the adoption of international standards (mainly the Data Documentation Initiative – DDI) and best practices for microdata documentation, dissemination and preservation. The toolkit will facilitate import, export and viewing of data from various formats as well as generate user-friendly outputs for dissemination and archiving. The IHSN is also producing guidelines, tools, and recommendations to help with microdata confidentiality as well as for the design of formal microdata dissemination policies and procedures. The IHSN has also helped develop the National Data Archive (NADA) as a user-friendly open-source application which provides a recommended formulation of a dissemination policy, pre-designed data access request forms, and DDI-based cataloguing system. All components can easily be customized and integrated in existing data producers' websites. **For more information, visit www.surveynetwork.org or contact Olivier Dupriez.**

Expanded ADePT Toolkit

In June 2007, DEC launched **ADePT** (Automated DEC Poverty Tables), a software that allows users to use household survey data to produce print-ready tables and graphs on poverty, inequality, decompositions of poverty changes, poverty profiles by socio-demographic categories, consumption regressions, poverty simulations and sensitivity analysis.

Since then, DEC has expanded the functionality of the tool in two main areas:

- o **ADePT MAPS.** This software can output any indicator on the geographical country map. For example, users can create a map of a country with regional Gini, regional map of any FGT poverty measures, wages, health indicators, etc. The main difference of this program from other available specialized mapping programs is that the ADePT map module runs in Stata, is very simple, and allows users with very limited experience to produce print-quality maps.
- o **ADePT LABOR.** This is designed to allow for the automated analysis of the Labor Market Issues. The program enables users to produce a set of tables and graphs with labor market indicators that can help assessing current labor market conditions in low- and middle-income countries and understanding of how labor market conditions have evolved over time. These graphs and tables were identified in "A guide for Assessing Labor Market Conditions in Developing Countries" developed by HDNSP, PREMPR and HDNED.

DEC is now working to update ADePT POVERTY to include new features to the program to improve its speed and reliability as well as introduce a module on GENDER (designed jointly with the Gender Anchor). **For more information contact Misha Lokshin.**

Growth Drives Poverty Reduction in Romania

The recently completed Poverty Assessment shows that the period of rapid growth in Romania since 2000 has caused a big decline in absolute poverty, from 35.9 percent in 2000 to 13.8 percent in 2006. Throughout the process, Romania has maintained a moderate level of inequality by international standards. However, despite this overall successful picture, deep pockets of poverty still remain. Rural areas remain at high risk of poverty and are the most affected by increases in regional disparities. Furthermore, the analyses presented in this report show that specific groups such as children, youth, the Roma population, the less educated, the unemployed and those in the informal sector continue having a significantly higher poverty risk than the rest. Economic growth is likely to continue to be the main overall engine of absolute poverty reduction in Romania in the near future, but special attention will need to be paid to the pockets of poverty to continue the steep pace of poverty decline. **For more information contact Maria Laura Sanchez Puerta.**

For future issues, please send your submission to jwiltshire@worldbank.org.