

Recommendations for Addressing Socioeconomic Data Gaps & Needs for Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Perspective of Information Providers

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Who are the target users of existing socioeconomic information?

- Various **Govt. entities** (e.g. health, finance, envt ministries) SHOULD be using this info to take decision
- However, the market for much of the avail info is the **research / academic community**
- As such, much of existing socioeconomic information is in format not necessarily be **targeted to decision-makers** (e.g. available GIS information)
- **Disconnect** between **scientific information** for decision makers and wider cadre of stakeholders; challenge is making information “less elitist”; information needs to be **framed** properly
- Govts also generate much socioeconomic info, much of this info is / was collected for **specific government uses**; for instance, census information for political / taxing purposes – affects how info can be used outside Govt.

Is the info needed optimized for vulnerability / adaptation assessments?

- Generally, info is **NOT optimized**, for variety of reasons which need to be addressed:
- **Non-availability** of needed info (e.g. data on elderly popn’s, certain vital statistics and other public health data **not collected** because it is not relevant to current policy concerns); much data unavailable b/c of lack of **sharing**
- **Form** of data (data should be digital, time-series, spatial); while UN Statistics Division provides guidance on collection, not all countries follow
- Data should be properly **documented w/ metadata**, which explains limitations, quality, how to use data properly
- **Dialogue** between users and data providers is important; will therefore influence whether data impacts decision-making or not; users determine optimality
- **Qualitative data** often ignored but plays important role in vulnerability assessment (e.g. community coping strategies)
- **Data dynamism** - data optimized for today’s uses may not be optimized for tomorrow’s uses

Which of these data face challenges in their generation and access?

- Essentially, **all socioeconomic and related information faces such challenges**; priorities can nonetheless be set:
- Any **data that have political implications** and whose generation requires large national institutions – census included – is usually difficult to generate and / or to access
- While **Govt is major info generator**, **private sector** also generates much info, so issue is access (e.g. water companies, insurance sector)
- Issues in **quality** between private and public data providers
- Poverty data, census data, commodity studies, migration, availability of agricultural products, water resources (some countries)
- **Integration** of the geophysical and socioeconomic data is key; we need cross sector integration
- **Technology** assists in fusing different types of information
- **Geophysical data** also poses a problem in terms of its generation / access (e.g. private companies developing data)

How can these challenges be addressed?

- Need to (i) **collect info not being collected**, (ii) **increase access** to info that is inaccessible
- Challenge: getting **disinterested parties** to collect certain data
- Only **demand for access from WITHIN** countries will provide incentives Governments will respond to (“*The first priority of a politician is to get elected. The second priority of a politician is to get re-elected.*” – Anon.)
- Info also needs to be provided in forms relevant to Governments for Governments to have **vested interest** in info generation / access
- Must address legal frameworks for **mandating collection** of / access to relevant information (more than mere obligations under various international Conventions)
- Should encourage (i.e. **provide incentives**) private sector to be more socially responsible in assisting in the collection of data; info as a ‘public good’

What recommendations can be made in terms of priority gaps that exist / how can we address these?

1. GAPS / ISSUES:

- Basic data **unavailable** (e.g. vital registration data, health statistics, migration data, poverty metrics, water resources) – **not collected / not accessible**
- Data in **inappropriate form for decision-making**
- Data generators not provided w/ **incentives for generation** of data or making accessible
- Cross-sector **analysis / integration** of available info
- **Lack of dialogue** between data providers and users

What recommendations can be made in terms of priority gaps that exist / how can we address these?

2. Recommendations:

- We need to **collect the basic data** that is necessary
- Information must be properly **packaged for decision-making**
- Provide data generators w/ **incentives** for generation of data / making accessible
- Encourage use of newer technologies that allow **integrated analysis** of data (e.g. GIS)
- **Dialogue** needed between data providers and users

