

UNODC-ESCAP-UNCTAD

Kick-off meeting of pilot activities for measuring illicit financial flows in Asia-Pacific countries

As custodian agencies of SDG Indicator 16.4.1 on illicit financial flows¹, in 2020 UNODC and UNCTAD, together with ESCAP, inaugurated a new Development Account project called “*Statistics and data for measuring illicit financial flows in the Asia-Pacific region*”². The project is aimed at consolidating existing and testing new methodological guidelines for the measurement of this Indicator, as well as to build statistical capacity by providing technical assistance and guidance to pilot countries for the measurement of such indicator using the defined standards and concepts developed by UNCTAD and UNODC.

After launching a call for expression of interest in Asia-Pacific region, the Partner Agencies selected as six countries of Asia as pilot testing countries. These are Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The first four countries will start the activities by focusing on crime-related illicit financial flows, whereas Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan will be focusing on IFFs from illicit tax-related and commercial practices.

In order to present and discuss implementation of the project activities in this region, a kick-off meeting with all pilot countries is organised. In particular, the meeting will gather experts and stakeholders from institutions and agencies of the pilot countries to:

- Introduce the participating countries to the concepts and definition of illicit financial flows as included in the UNCTAD-UNODC *Conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows*³
- Introduce the methodologies and guidelines developed so far by UNODC and UNCTAD, and present practical examples and good practices from previous pilot activities
- Present the project implementation strategy, discuss the workplan of implementation activities and proposing possible coordination solutions.

The meeting will be structured around two sessions:

¹ Indicator 16.4.1: *Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows, in current United States dollars*

² https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/iff_Asia.html

³ English version: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/IFF/IFF_Conceptual_Framework_FINAL.pdf
Russian version: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/IFF/Conceptual_framework_for_the_statistical_measurement_of_IFFs_Russian.pdf

- (1) A first general session will introduce the general features and concepts of the *UNCTAD-UNODC Conceptual framework* and the general workplan of activities. All meeting participants will be invited to attend this session.
- (2) The second session will be organized in two breakout rooms – one room will focus on methodological guidelines and practical examples on measuring IFFs from crime and illegal market activities, with examples taken from the pilot conducted in Latin America. The other breakout room will focus on illicit financial flows from illicit-tax related commercial practices.

Country focal points from Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Maldives and Nepal are encouraged to participate in the breakout session for crime and illegal market activities, whereas country focal points from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are encouraged to participate in the breakout session for illicit tax-related commercial practices. However, country representatives can indicate if they wish to participate in the breakout session for the other focus area.

The general session will be conducted in English. Interpretation to Russian in general session as well as in the breakout session dedicated to illicit tax-related and commercial practices IFFs is provided.