

**Rapid surveys in pandemic times**

# **Perspectives from Asia and the Pacific**

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# Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific



- 58 countries in the region
- Heterogeneous
- Two thirds of world population
- All but three countries are 'developing'
- Disaster-prone

Select a country or territory to view more information and a link to a summary of policy responses.

[Read the related Policy Brief](#)

Summary

Containment

Fiscal policies

Monetary policies

SMEs

Trade measures

Transport

Social protection

Statistics



Asia-Pacific subregions

East and North-East Asia

North and Central Asia

Pacific

South and South-West Asia

South-East Asia



Summary

## National Statistics responses to COVID-19 in Asia-Pacific

Containment

COVID-19 related content on NSO website

Socio-economic response survey (Businesses)

Socio-economic response survey (Households)

Fiscal policies

Armenia [Link](#)

Australia [Link](#)

Bangladesh [Link](#)

Monetary policies

Bhutan [Link](#)

France [Link](#)

Malaysia [Link](#)

SMEs

Maldives [Link](#)

Netherlands [Link](#)

New Zealand [Link](#)

Trade measures

Philippines [Link](#)

Republic of Korea [Link](#)

Russian Federation [Link](#)

Transport

Thailand [Link](#)

United Kingdom [Link](#)

United States [Link](#)

Social protection

Statistics

### Survey resources from around the globe

#### Office for National Statistics of the UK

Questionnaires of the fortnightly Business Impact of Coronavirus survey

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/surveys/informationforbusinesses/businesses>

#### UNESCAP Stats Café series

Series of moderated discussions where experts share their experiences on the impact of COVID-19 on the National Statistical Systems.

<https://www.unescap.org/announcement/asia-pacific-stats-cafe-series>

#### UN Women

Mobile and phone survey to monitor gendered COVID-19 effects in Asia and the Pacific

<https://data.unwomen.org/resources/surveys-show-covid-19-has-gendered-effects-asia-and-pacific>

#### World Bank

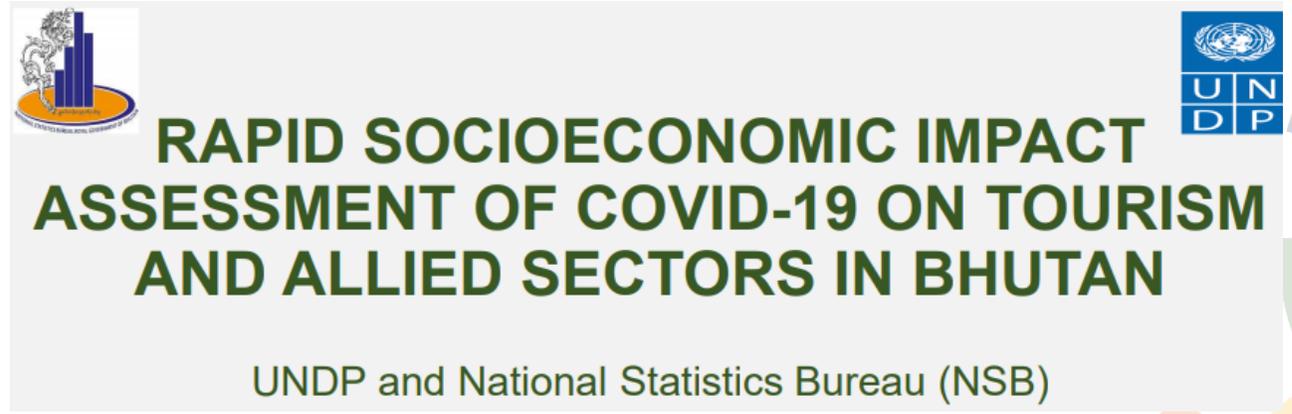
High-frequency monitoring of COVID-19 impacts

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/high-frequency-monitoring-covid-19-impacts>



# Bhutan

- Small country in the Himalayas
- Least Developed Country
- Around 750,000 people



- Tourism an important growth sector for Bhutan
- 16% of workforce employed in tourism
- Total ban on foreign tourists since March 2020, and likely to continue
- Survey conducted 2-15 April 2020

# Bhutan

- Understand the impact of Covid-19 on tourism on businesses and individuals
- Understand vulnerability and coping capacity of affected individuals



## RAPID SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF COVID-19 ON TOURISM AND ALLIED SECTORS IN BHUTAN

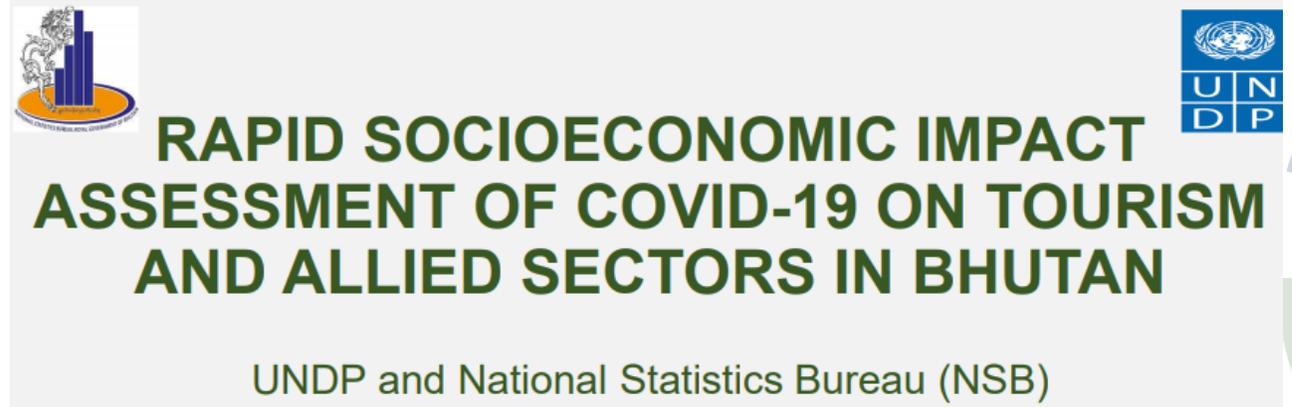
UNDP and National Statistics Bureau (NSB)

- 5 districts covered
- 9 subsectors covered
- Sample size: 1320
- High response rate: 97.3% (1285)
- Phone interviews



# Bhutan

- 32% of employees had lost their job or were on leave without pay
- 17% of affected households had no savings or other means of subsistence
- 87% of business owners had debt and 44% of them were not able to pay the next monthly installment



- Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for Tourism (MVI-T)  
Income Loss, Coping Strategy, Loss of Livelihood, Food Security, Limited Savings, Indebtedness, Vulnerable Household Members and Tourism Dependent
- Over 80 per cent of respondents were found to be deprived in at least three vulnerability indicators simultaneously

# How COVID-19 is transforming statistics in Asia-Pacific

Regional  
dialogue and  
knowledge  
exchange



# Voices of statisticians in Asia-Pacific

## Asia-Pacific Committee on Statistics

- Chief Statisticians
- Met 26-28 August 2020
- 39 countries and 22 international organizations
- 245 participants

## Regional Programme on Economic Statistics

- Heads of economic statistics departments of 24 countries in the Steering Group
- Met 19 June 2020

Relevance, timeliness and frequency at the cost of accuracy?

Increased demand for economic and financial statistics, trade, tourism, prices, employment, ...

Changes in data collection mechanisms

Increased demand for training to ensure business continuity

Momentum for big data usage for more timely statistics

Momentum for modernizing data dissemination

Opportunity for new partnerships

Opportunity to get new customers

# Asia-Pacific Stats Café series



ESCAP Statistics Division is pleased to welcome you to the Asia-Pacific Stats Café. The Stats Café series responds to country requests for advice, assistance and an opportunity to share experiences related to the impact of COVID-19 on National Statistical Systems. The Stats Café will be virtual only, in English and open to you all. Numbers are not

limited and travel is not required. Each Stats Café session will comprise a webinar and minimum of 15 minutes questions and answer.

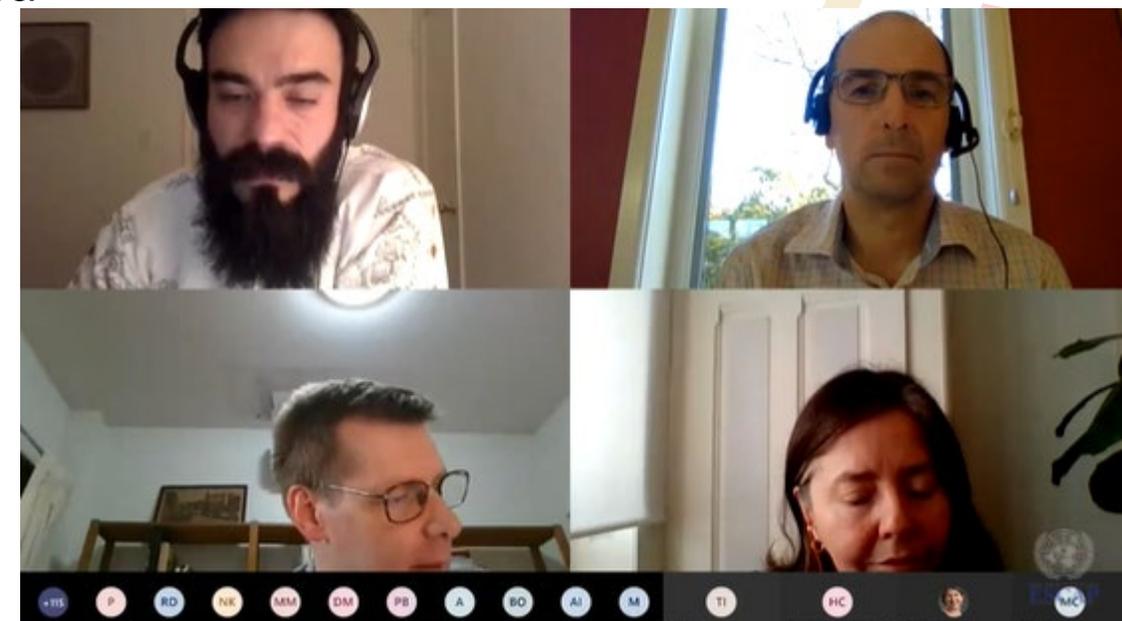
1. Household surveys and COVID-19
2. Rapid assessment surveys
3. CRVS and COVID-19
4. Census and COVID-19
5. COVID-19 Data Portal
6. COVID-19 and death registrations
7. Subnational population estimates
8. Land cover change
9. Human resources in NSOs
10. Accounting for integrated statistics
11. Big Data
12. 50 years of SIAP
13. Data Integration

# Rapid assessment surveys, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020

- Exchanging experiences and lessons from conducting rapid assessment surveys of both households and businesses
- Hosted by ESCAP, ILO and UNICEF
- Speakers: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Thailand National Statistics Office, International Labour Organisation, World Bank



**Participants: 132**  
**Countries: 34**



What were  
people  
asking  
about? -  
design issues

- How to ensure **coverage** of businesses? How to include informal sector like hawkers etc.?
- For countries **without a good statistical business register** what's the advice on conducting rapid surveys of businesses?
- What **modes of collection** are being used?



# What were people asking about? - phone surveys

- What are the **major challenges** in doing the surveys by phone?
- How to ensure **data accuracy** in phone surveys? How to **validate** the phone survey?
- Have there been any issues with **accessing phone numbers** for establishments?
- How can **private firms** get access to telephone records (if outsourced)?
- What kind of **phone register number** do you have? Mobile phone or fixed line phone?
- Do phone-based surveys require amendments to **legal frameworks of NSOs**?

What were people asking about? - sample sizes and response rates

- Optimum sample sizes
- What is an acceptable sub-sample size for already very small sampling frames like those found in Pacific Island Countries?
- What is the non-response strategy? How to deal with low expected response rate
- The smaller the sample the greater the challenge in addressing confidentiality issues. How can small countries overcome this?
- What is an acceptable response rate for rapid-assessment surveys?

And an appeal:  
“Partner with NSOs when doing rapid assessment surveys”



## **Engaging with development partners to stand-up COVID-19 rapid assessment surveys**

### Five tips for National Statistics Offices

The COVID-19 crisis has generated a lot of interest from development partners and donors around the world assisting developing economies with understanding the impacts of the pandemic to assist in the recovery process. But what happens when all this best-intentioned support is not well coordinated and nationally led? Are development partners helping to build back better? In this Stats Brief, five tips are presented to empower and enable National Statistics Offices to lead the development of and deliver innovative statistical products and services such as rapid assessment surveys of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

Thank you.... 😊

