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**Towards an action plan for the development of economic statistics in the region:  
the perspective of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific**

*Corrigendum*

The dates of the session *should read* as above.

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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First session  
15-17 December 2008  
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**Towards an action plan for the development of economic statistics in the region:  
the perspective of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific<sup>1</sup>**

**Introduction**

1. This paper attempts to discuss issues relating to the preparation of an action plan for the development of Integrated Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific region from the perspective of Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), a subsidiary body of ESCAP, which has the responsibility of providing training on official statistics to the statisticians at various levels from the developing countries of region and thus helping in capacity building of the National Statistical Offices (NSO) in delivering timely, reliable and relevant socio-economic statistics and indicators to the users.

2. The paper first likes to clarify what exactly we understand by Integrated Economic Statistics. What would be the basic issues if a country wishes to adopt an integrated approach for the development of its economic statistics? Would the *System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA)*, more importantly the Updated *1993 SNA Rev.1*, 2008 implementation process help in achieving the real development of Integrated Economic Statistics or *vice versa*? Then talk of an action plan as a strategic plan at two levels, at country level in some form of a National Statistical Development Plan in respect of Integrated Economic Statistics and at international level a plan that addresses international agencies to help countries in the region towards achieving their plans. In the international level plan special attention is focused on the role of SIAP in extending training assistance to the NSOs of countries in the region to move towards producing timely, consistent, coherent and quality economic statistics.

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<sup>1</sup> This document was contributed by Mr. A.C. Kulshreshtha, of the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). It has been reproduced without formal editing.

### **Integrated Economic Statistics**

3. Friends of Chair on Integrated Economic Statistics have deliberated at length the scope of the topic and role of important international macroeconomic statistical standards, namely, *System of National Accounts 1993* (1993 SNA), *Balance of Payments Manual*, fifth edition (BPM5), *Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001* (GFSM 2001), and *Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual 2000* (MFSM 2000) in that context. Besides, more importantly the experts in that forum strongly opined that implementation of 1993 SNA, Rev.1, 2008 basically calls for a balanced development of integrated economic statistics by the countries. This would eventually take care of the main constraints faced by the countries in implementing the important international standard, 1993 SNA, Rev.1.

4. Integrating economic statistics is about statistical reconciliation that ensures the messages statistics deliver are consistent and coherent. The members of the Friends of Chair on Integrated Economic Statistics also clarified that the integration has to be a three-dimensional integration: horizontal, vertical and temporal. As horizontal integration the various primary statistics on production, trade, labour and consumption need to be reconciled before they enter macroeconomic accounts (national accounts and balance of payments). Vertical integration is about reconciling primary statistics and macroeconomic accounts as well as national and international economic statistics. Temporal is about reconciling short-term and structural economic statistics produced at different points in time but referring to the same phase in the business cycle.

5. The integrated approach to economic statistics basically involves three issues

- (i) Conceptual issues
- (ii) Statistical production issues and
- (iii) Institutional issues

6. The 1993 SNA (including Rev.1) is fortunately the common conceptual framework for coordinating economic statistics to ensure not only numerical consistency but also conceptual consistency. The 1993 SNA is based on a set of internationally agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and accounting rules. International macroeconomic statistical standards in specific sectors, such as BPM5, GFSM 2001 and MFSM 2000 are now harmonized with the 1993 SNA. That means that they share a number of common features with the 1993 SNA as regards institutional units and sectors, residence, stocks (assets and liabilities)/economic flows and their integration, accounting and valuation rules.

7. Major statistical production issue is the incoherence among economic statistics from surveys and statistics for different industries or activities designed independently of each other. Application of consistent classifications to appropriately defined statistical units is essential for the coherence of

economic statistics. One way to ensure consistency of units and classifications is to use a comprehensive business register as the vehicle for structuring units and assigning their classifications.

8. To integrate economic statistics focusing on five principles, namely (i) Frame, Sampling and Coverage; (ii) Content and Collection; (iii) Processing and Post-collection; (iv) Output; and (v) Feedback from National Accounts may be helpful. Finally for supporting the role of the lead statistical agency, the institutional arrangements namely Council/ Coordination Board/ Commission/ or Advisory committees, Interdepartmental relationship meetings, Memorandums of Understanding and Service Level Agreements are essential for managing integrated economic statistics. Besides, the role of statistical advocacy for obtaining sustainable national support for reliable economic statistics and national accounts should not be undermined.

9. For the balanced development of integrated economic statistics therefore a three prong approach need to be considered. First the basic one is the use of *1993 SNA (including Update)* as the framework for the development of economic statistics and implementing its recommendations. Second one is the coherent production of economic statistics on production, consumption and accumulation from various surveys conducted independently but using consistent definitions, concepts, units, classifications and methodologies in collection/ organizing the economic statistics of the economy. And finally the third one is the institutional arrangement ensuring full coordination mechanism in the statistical system.

10. Thus for addressing the first basic issue involved in the development of integrated economic statistics in an action plan which should be based on strategic planning concept, we need to concentrate first on the strategy of implementing the Updated System of National Accounts in the region.

### **Strategy for the implementation of the updated System of National Accounts**

11. The situation in Asia and the Pacific region regarding implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (*1993 SNA*) and challenges faced by the countries has been discussed at various forums in the recent past. The 1993 SNA Revision Project was commissioned by the March 2003 UN Statistical Commission, *with a view to maintaining the fundamentals of the current system* and ensuring the continuing consistency with the related manuals (*Balance of Payments Manual, Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001, Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual*). The volume 1 of the Updated SNA has already been adopted by the thirty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission held on 26-29 February 2008 and the volume 2 is scheduled to be placed for adoption in the next session of the Commission. As the *1993 SNA, Rev.1* maintains the fundamentals of the current system; countries are encouraged to continue development of their national accounts in accordance with the *1993 SNA*. The *1993 SNA, Rev.1* is the latest international standard providing recommendations for compiling and reporting on national accounts. The Commission has underscored the role of *1993 SNA, Rev.1* as a coordinating framework for economic statistics on Production,

Consumption and Accumulation. The Commission expressed need for strengthening statistical capacity in developing countries for national accounts and related economic statistics

12. The Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) submitted a strategy for implementing the updated SNA to the thirty ninth session of Statistical Commission for its consideration in February 2008. The strategy was based on regional consultations undertaken in the previous two years and reflected user and producer perspectives. The strategy took into account the assessment of the different levels of implementation of the 1993 SNA in countries. It recognized that while many developed countries already had some plans for implementation, most developing countries did not yet make any firm plans.

13. An assessment undertaken by UNSD showed that the level of implementation of the 1993 SNA by developing countries had risen sharply in recent years. About 90 per cent of the countries in Asia and the Pacific region report national accounts statistics to the Statistics Division. In terms of coverage of the national accounts statistics reported, the benchmark of milestone 2 is observed for 80 per cent and higher for developing countries in Western Asia. With this milestone, a reporting country provides at least value added by economic activities and gross domestic product by expenditures, either in current and constant prices, and gross national income. In terms of the conceptual compliance with the 1993 SNA, the observed rate as average percentage masks the range of around 60 per cent for reporting countries in Asia, which appears to be low.

14. In addition to the assessment of implementation by the Statistics Division, IMF has been using the Data Quality Assessment Framework to assess countries' statistical practices in national accounts and disseminating the results as data modules of the Reports on Observance of Standards and Codes. As of the last quarter of 2007, data module Reports on Observance of Standards and Codes had been published for 78 countries (see <http://dsbb.imf.org/Applications/web/dqrs/dqrsroscs/>). The 1993 SNA is the imbedded standard of the national accounts Data Quality Assessment Framework, and thus the data module Reports on Observance of Standards and Codes give an indication of the quality of 1993 SNA implementation. The practices in many of the assessed countries are not in full observance of best practice regarding source data, statistical techniques and resources to support the national accounts work.

#### **Factors impeding the implementation of 1993 SNA**

15. It would be important to flag the factors impeding the implementation of national accounts in various developing countries. In a study the ISWGNA identified five main impeding factors that can be summarized as follows:

(a) Staff resources: number of employees and training are insufficient, staff turnover is too high, and recruitment efforts are insufficient;

(b) Lack of reliable source data, Source data need strengthening;

- (c) Coordination among technical assistance and training providers could be better;
- (d) Training could be more pragmatic;
- (e) The promotion of good quality national statistics needs strengthening.

16. In some developing countries of the region the NSOs have not yet come out with a coordinated development plan on integrated economic statistics due to lack of resources and low priority attached to statistics by their governments. The international donor agencies support is mostly neither sufficient nor sustainable.

### **Modalities for Action Plan**

17. The modalities adopted by the ISWGNA for implementing SNA recommendations in the past were the following:

- (a) The organization of meetings, training seminars and workshops in national accounts
- (b) The provision of technical cooperation for advancing the use of the 1993 SNA integration framework in countries' systems of economic statistics through conducting advisory missions and working directly with the staffs of national offices;
- (c) Bringing out series of manuals and handbooks as methodological guides that mainly elucidate the integration framework of the national accounts and include price statistics guides that addressed data source issues as well as the SNA integration framework;
- (d) Sponsorship of research in support of the implementation of SNA concepts and its satellite accounts, and the related methodological guidelines.

To these we could add one more that is (e) Statistical advocacy for sustainable national support for generating additional resources for reliable economic statistics and national accounts programme.

18. In fact in past what we followed were the modalities of SNA implementation in terms of the building blocks of the statistical production process. The starting block comprised of the institutional and legal framework, staff, technology and financial resources. The second block represented the registers and frames from which the units are selected for the collection of administrative and survey data; the third block consisted of the various data-collection instruments, the sample designs and source data collected; and the fourth block constituted the integration frameworks for organizing and consolidating the source data. The fifth, and last, block represented the dissemination of statistics. For the development of integrated economic statistics in general and national accounts in particular, the SNA is itself an integration framework, and so in short we should view the implementation of the updated SNA as putting the integration framework (that is, the fourth block) into place in the countries.

19. Modern modalities for a good action plan should be based on strategic planning approach for managing the results. The main principles may include the strategic planning, coordination,

monitoring and reporting, and improving the statistical systems. Possible resources need to be identified and good governance structure put in place.

### **Objectives**

20. For the proposed strategic planning at the international level the objectives could be kept as promoting international coordination among development partners, implementing regional programmes, guidelines, procedures for implementation, and strengthening national statistical capacity in national accounts and related basic statistics making use of SIAP training framework and other training opportunities available in the region. For the strategic planning at the national level the objectives could be the desired milestone of the implementation of Updated SNA, coherent production of various economic statistics and improved coordination mechanism of statistics in the national statistical system.

### **Stakeholders**

21. For a strategic planning at the international (regional) level the possible stakeholders would be the National governments and National Statistical Offices in the region; Central Banks of the countries in the region, Regional Agencies, Regional Commission- the ESCAP, Asian Development Bank, Other regional institutions, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, Other statistical training institutions in the region and country training institutions, International Agencies, International Community of Donors, and Users of national accounts data for policy purposes. For the national level planning possible stakeholders would be the producers and users of economic statistics and macro-economic aggregates besides the international agencies as the donor or user of official statistics.

### **Strategic Planning Framework**

22. EUROSTAT and the United Nations Statistics Division hosted a conference on 6 to 8 May 2008 in Luxembourg to address the coordination of capacity-building work at the national and international levels as a first priority in carrying forward implementation of the updated SNA. The aim of the meeting was to reach an agreed set of elements for a common planning, monitoring, and evaluation framework for technical cooperation among the providers and recipients. This will help mainstream strategic planning for national accounting in developing countries and build capacity within the five main building blocks of the statistical production process. The Luxembourg recommendations given in Annex could be adopted for the strategic planning at international level.

23. The Strategic Planning Framework at the country level need to be made by the NSOs in the region for their countries and strategies for the development of statistics should be regularly updated and kept abreast with the SDDS/ GDDS or other reference frameworks, country is following for maintaining the quality of official economic statistics produced.

24. The NSO itself or other institutional arrangement (may be a national commission on statistics or a High national level Coordination Board or a Committee) has to play a coordinating role for the



national statistical system to enhance the effectiveness of coordination, monitoring and reporting activities of the strategic planning. Regional partners could play a pivotal role in the coordination, monitoring and reporting to enhance efficiency of technical cooperation programmes and alignment with national commitments for development of official statistics. National donor groups on statistics, if in position, could also play a role in improving coordination, monitoring and reporting in statistical capacity building.

### **National Statistical Capacity Building: training and technical cooperation**

25. Training and technical cooperation activities for the implementation of the updated SNA are of particular relevance to developing countries. These activities are to be viewed with due consideration of the fact that for developing countries in Asia and the Pacific, implementing the update of the 1993 SNA still is, in large measure, implementing the 1993 SNA. In order to meet the challenges of the next decade of national accounts development, training and technical cooperation activities need to take into account all the elements of the statistical production process. In taking a holistic view of that process, training and technical cooperation need to take into consideration not only the integration framework but also other elements related to production of economic statistics and institutional, such as reflecting the creation and maintenance of statistical business registers and other frames, the design of surveys and use of administrative information systems to generate relevant source data, the dissemination of statistics and institution building. The last element of the process is relevant to arranging inter-agency service agreements, creating advisory committees and strengthening the legislative and regulatory framework, and managing and retaining a professional statistical staff. Moreover, technical assistance should focus on changes embodied in the updated SNA that are likely to affect developing countries' implementation of national accounts standards in the years ahead.

### **SIAP's Role**

26. With regard to capacity building of the NSOs for implementing the SNA update in the Asia and the Pacific region, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) has a prominent role in providing training to the official statisticians at various levels on important topics and now it is developing a training framework on integrated economic statistics. An ideal training framework on integrated economic statistics including SNA for the region should provide opportunity to all official statisticians functioning at various levels (Junior level, Intermediate/ Middle level, and Higher/ Managerial level) for the production of coherent economic statistics and thus the important macro-economic aggregates in the region.

27. SIAP's mission is to improve the national capability in official statistics for the developing countries of the ESCAP region through practically oriented training for economic and social development planning. It addresses building up the official statisticians' capacities in the ESCAP

region, as a process of continuous learning and that raises many challenges. The ESCAP region, which spans across a vast geographical area across the globe, is made up of more than 50 countries which are much differentiated in the level of statistical development. In most cases, infrastructures and systems are inadequate and contain large gaps in the coverage of economic and social descriptions, while published data lack accuracy and timeliness. Since the responsibility for the production of official statistics rests with the government, the development of the statistical infrastructure remains to be its key responsibility. Moreover, the total number of official statisticians in the region is not small. There is strong need for conducting training with a multiplier effect so that training impact is faster in the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to meet the demand. Thus SIAP attaches appropriate attention to mix in the training courses the presentation and training skills with a view of producing trainers for training and not just trained officers. All Tokyo Metropolitan Area (TMA) based courses have inputs of ICT, presentation and training techniques provision built in. The SIAP is and will continue to play an important role in building capacity of the NSOs in the region through its training activities including technical advice.

28. SIAP has developed strong partnerships with other organizations both inside and outside the United Nations System, including UNDESA, UNDP, UNECE, UNESCO, UNCTAD, ILO, ADB, IMF, WB, and SPC in organizing various training programmes. These partnerships are critical for strengthening national capacity.

### **Training Programmes of SIAP**

29. The SIAP has mainly two categories of courses, one conducted at SIAP's premises in TMA based and other in the Outreach (conducted outside of Japan) programme. Participants are selected from nominations received from their governments upon invitation by SIAP. For regular *TMA based* training courses, listed below, fellowships for attending courses are normally funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency.

#### *(a) Group Training Course in Modules on Fundamental Official Statistics*

Out of three Modules of the Course, one full Module (II) of two months duration is devoted to National Accounts and Economic Statistics. The Course is for junior level officers working in the NSOs of the countries in the region and aims at introducing the concepts, principles, and macroeconomic accounting framework of the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA) and satellite accounts. It also familiarizes with the various economic data sources required for the compilation of national accounts and other economic statistics. Topics covered include basics of macro-economic, building blocks of SNA, supply and use tables and input-output accounts, GDP estimates by three approaches, GDP estimates at constant prices, current and accumulation accounts, balance sheets and satellite accounts. The course also includes enterprise and establishment surveys for familiarizing with the data sources required for the compilation of national accounts. The approach adopted for training is a mix of lectures and workshops

The Institute proposes to move from the current practice of conducting training activities following the multiyear activity based programme to the new approach of result based managed strategic plan as per its proposed future long term programme. Scope of the training will be enlarged to address the subject of integrated economic statistics including system of national accounts.

Another Module (I) of the Group Training Course in Modules on Fundamental Official Statistics includes topics related to Production of statistics. The Course is for junior level officers working in the NSOs of the countries in the region and aims at introducing the survey methodologies- Censuses, Sample Surveys and Administrative Records, Planning and Design of Statistical Surveys, Questionnaire Design, Data Collection Methods, Statistical Classifications, Editing, Data Processing, Sampling Frames, Business register, Sampling Techniques, Estimation and Weighing, Variance Estimation and Small Area Estimation.

*(b) Group Training Course in Analysis, Interpretation and Dissemination of Official Statistics*

This two months course is for junior and intermediate/ middle level officers working in the NSOs, and in the alternate year focus is on economic statistics. The Course aims at acquiring practical up-to-date knowledge and techniques of statistical analysis, interpretation and dissemination of economic statistics. Topics covered in the course include analytical framework, main SNA aggregates, real sector, rest of the world sector, government sector, financial sector, and sectoral statistics. The approach adopted for training is a mix of lectures and workshops. Besides, the participants of this course are also required to do a project work using their country data on economic statistics including national accounts to demonstrate their analytical capability. Here again as per SIAP's proposed future long term programme, scope of the training will be enlarged to address the subject of integrated economic statistics including system of national accounts.

*(c) Group Training Course in Application of Information and Communications Technology to Production and Dissemination of Official Statistics*

This two months course is for junior and intermediate/ middle level officers working in the NSOs. The course aims at acquiring practical knowledge of making integrated data base using various softwares besides other important topics of ICT.

*(d) Area-focused Training Course in Collection and Analysis of Official Economic Statistics for Central Asian Countries*

This two months course is specifically designed for the participants from Central Asian countries and is conducted in Russian language. Participants learn from this course first how economic statistics is collected through enterprise and establishments surveys and survey methodology, and followed by the 1993 SNA framework at length elaborating the topics such as overview of the SNA, classification systems in SNA, supply and use tables and input output tables, current and accumulation accounts, GDP estimates- three approaches, GDP estimates at constant prices, and quarterly GDP estimates. Emphasis is also made on measurement of informal activities which is a challenging task to the countries represented in the course.

30. The courses under *outreach programme* that complements the courses conducted in the TMA based are carried out with the collaboration of NSOs, related training institutes, international organizations, and donor agencies. The courses, normally conducted at country, sub-regional and regional levels, are of short-term duration and cover a wide range of topics, those in demand by some or a group of developing countries. Since the ESCAP region comprises of heterogeneous groups of developing countries at different stages of statistical development, statistical training in the region requires a mix of modalities to address the diverse capability building needs. Courses related to integrated economic statistics and conducted under this programme are listed below:

*(e) Regional Course on System of National Accounts and Integrated Economic Statistics*

Under SIAP outreach programmes, regional courses have been very effective and useful. Officials at intermediate/ middle level in the NSOs from 20 countries are invited and the host country is free to add around five of its officials at its cost. Regional course on National Accounts has been in great demand in the region. This three weeks course includes basics of macro-economics, building blocks of SNA, input-output accounts, current and accumulation accounts, balance sheets, GDP estimates by three approaches, treatment of special transactions, GDP estimates at constant prices, quarterly national accounts and satellite accounts. The courses conducted in recent past also touched upon 1993 SNA Updates, the task undertaken at the aegis of Inter Secretariat Working Group on national Accounts (ISWGNA) under the direction of Advisory Expert Group and now available in 1993 SNA, Rev.1. The last two courses also included topics of Monetary and Financial Statistics, Government Financial Statistics and Balance of Payments beside details of SNA.

In future as per SIAP's proposed strategic plan for the next five years the course would be modified to deliberate on *Integrated Economic Statistics* rather than the presently done on just SNA or integrated economic accounts. Besides there would be more of sub-regional courses rather than the regional courses in order to meet the requirements of the countries that are at similar stages of development in terms of implementing the 1993 SNA recommendations. For example the Pacific Islands may be considered in one sub-regional course, and likewise.

*(f) Subregional/Regional Course on Production of Industrial Statistics and other economic statistics*

Depending upon the demand of the courtiers in the region courses on production of economic statistics are organized at regional/ sub-regional level. A sub-regional course on Industrial Statistics conducted for SAARC region included topics of International Recommendations on Industrial Statistics (IRIS), Requirements of Industrial data for SNA and I/O Table, Index of Industrial Production and Small Area Estimation

*(g) Country Courses on National Accounts*

In the outreach programmes of SIAP such courses play a vital role for a country as these are tailor-made to the requirements of the country. Twenty to thirty officials of the NSO can take

advantage of the training in their own country. Besides normal lectures and workshop exercises on the desired subject, countries can also take advantage of getting advice/ consultancy on their specific problems and issues from the assigned expert Lecturer.

*(h) Research based Regional Course*

In this six weeks course the participants are provided some lectures and workshop training on analysis, report preparation, and presentation techniques. Participants basically do a research study (which includes topics of national accounts compilation challenges such as in-coherence in economic statistics) under the guidance of an expert at the course venue, but have a month's time to revise and improve their report back home.

*(i) Distance Learning Course on Introduction to SNA*

In Distance Learning Course the lecturer makes his presentation in Tokyo while participants in groups listen as well as watch sitting in their own countries in JICA office. The course is conducted for more than one country at a time. Among others a short Distance Learning Course on Introduction to SNA has been initiated for the benefit of prospective candidates to SIAP TMA based courses to bring them at some comparable level of knowledge on macro-economic aggregates. More such courses are to be introduced as it is found to be very cost efficient. Self e-learning courses without tutor are also in the plan

*(j) Management Seminar for Senior Officials of NSOs*

For addressing issues of management and institutional arrangements for producing meaningful statistics, SIAP conducts Management Seminars for the heads of NSOs or their deputies. This gives a platform for identifying best practices. It also helps to acquire knowledge on important and emerging issues relevant to the management of NSOs.

31. As a training framework, one will find that the various SIAP courses described above demonstrate clearly that different courses address to the needs of a category of official statisticians on economic statistics including SNA in the region. Thus basic training for the beginners is addressed in the Group Training Course in Modules on Fundamental Official Statistics. A preliminary training to the basic training courses is addressed in the Distance Learning Courses. Middle level official statistician's need on economic statistics including SNA is addressed in the Regional/ Sub-regional courses on SNA, and some production of economic statistics in the Group Training Course in Analysis, Interpretation and Dissemination of Official Statistics. Needs of official statisticians on economic statistics including SNA in the Central Asian Countries is met altogether in the specific course meant for them. Typical needs of countries at developing stage are met by the country courses that are tailor made. The training/ knowledge sharing on important management and institutional issues are addressed in the management Seminar for senior officials/ Heads of the NSOs. The training technique adopted generally is a mix of lectures, workshops, assignments. In country courses

generally some time is devoted to practical aspects of compilation of aggregates with the available data sources including technical advice to the national accounts section/ division of the NSO whenever sought.

32. The participants of TMA based courses are also required to make an Action Plan which invariably includes delivering seminars back home country in their offices to impart knowledge they receive at the Institute to their colleagues. The monitoring of the process is done by taking feed back from the participants and their offices periodically.

33. As indicated earlier SIAP has now prepared a strategic plan for next five years and under the proposed strategy SIAP will intensify its training activities by expanding the scope, range and modalities of training in order to increase its responsiveness to the needs of countries and will focus on three areas: (a) Contributing to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs, in the region, (b) Strengthening capability in Integrated Economic Statistics, including implementation of updated 1993 SNA, (c) Strengthening national capability in application of ICT for NSS. The training programme will focus on the 1993 SNA as it provides a conceptual framework for coordinating economic statistics to ensure not only numerical consistency but also the conceptual consistency. Further under ICT courses will focus will on statistical databases, including management and development of integrated databases for micro- and macro-data, data mining, use of appropriate hardware with associated software for data processing, analysis and dissemination.

#### **Training Programmes other than SIAP Training Courses**

34. The training programmes other than SIAP's training courses will be mainly through organization of meetings, seminars, workshops and Technical Assistance (TA) in national accounts as a concerted effort of the Statistics Division of the ESCAP, ADB, IMF Institute, Singapore and other organizations in the region. Also, actively pursuing those initiatives at the regional and sub-regional levels should enable countries that have had similar SNA implementation experiences to help one another.

35. It may be mentioned that technical cooperation does help in establishing the SNA as the overarching framework for economic statistics systems in the recipient countries; the implementation programme needs to take into account the complete statistical production process. This refocused programme should build on national initiatives. The World Bank is now viewing statistics as a infrastructure and thus prepared to support countries to elaborate national strategies for development of statistics within the framework of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century, as well as under its Statistical Capacity-building Programme providing financing for building statistical capacity. Country needs other than training needs for implementation of 1993 SNA will have to be met from TA's from international organizations, Development Banks, mutual/ bi-lateral cooperation or more importantly from the own resources of the country, which may need advocacy seminars for the policy makers.

### **Manuals and handbooks**

36. The publication of a series of revised manuals and handbooks by the UNSD and other members of the ISWGNA will support the implementation of the updated SNA across the full range of countries. Such methodological guides will provide practical compilation guidance and will address the more fundamental issues of data source and quality. Further updates of existing manuals will be needed, both those on national accounts and on other fields of economic statistics.

### **Research**

37. Applied research will be undertaken under the leadership of the member organizations of the ISWGNA in support of the implementation of concepts from the updated SNA and its satellite accounts. Research needs to be pursued as a continuous activity to ensure robust and rapid implementation of existing and newly agreed statistical guidelines as a first priority, given the rapid pace of technological change and financial innovation. The related City Groups and international research associations like IARNIW as well as national research associations will continue to promote research. SIAP's Research based Training Programme can also be of use for the purpose by countries.

### **Advocacy**

38. Promoting good quality national accounts statistics is essential in establishing sound macroeconomic policy with a coherent medium-term budgetary framework. Moreover, this promotion will advance the integration of trade, income and financial flows between the domestic economy and the rest of the world and the link between the real and financial sectors. The member organizations of the ISWGNA have been asked to develop a communication strategy demonstrating the System of National Accounts as the overarching statistical framework, advocating its usefulness for policy purposes and promoting its use to link the economy with the environment and society. SIAP's Management Seminars may also contribute towards promoting good quality national accounts statistics for the countries in the region.

### **Expected Outcomes**

39. The expected outcome of the strategic planning would be improved national statistical capacity to produce quality integrated economic statistics. Enhanced quality would be through better conceptual compliance, harmonization, improved comparability of data and strengthened coordination in the statistical system. More intensive and appropriate use of National Accounts will take place. Moreover there would be improved capability and expansion over all developing countries on integrated economic statistics including national accounts.

## *Annex*

### **Luxembourg Recommendations**

EUROSTAT and the United Nations Statistics Division hosted a conference on 6 to 8 May 2008 in Luxembourg to address the coordination of capacity-building work at the national and international levels as a first priority in carrying forward implementation of the updated SNA. The main *Luxembourg Recommendations* are as under:

#### **1 – Strategic Planning Frameworks**

*1.1 Strategic planning framework to be formulated for national statistical capacity in national accounts and other economic statistics integrated with balance of payments, government finance statistics and environmental accounting and statistics, etc.*

*1.2 National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) to be regularly updated and to be consistent with GDDS and other reference framework.*

*1.3 National, regional and international strategies on economic statistics to be synchronized.*

*1.4 International, regional and country actions to be determined by information obtained from the global strategic planning framework.*

#### **2 – Coordination, monitoring and reporting**

*2.1 Regional partners to play a pivotal role in the coordination, monitoring and reporting to enhance efficiency of technical cooperation programmes and alignment with national commitments for development of official statistics.*

*2.2 National donor groups on statistics (to be created, if necessary) to play a role in improving coordination, monitoring and reporting in statistical capacity building.*

*2.3 National statistical institutes to play a coordinating role for national statistical system to enhance effectiveness.*

#### **3 – Global coordination, monitoring and reporting**

*3.1 Global governance structure to be created to develop coordination, monitoring and reporting procedures to assess performance of the implementation programme itself as well as progress of countries/regions against set benchmarks.*

*3.2 Global governance structure to be established taking the structure of the latest ICP round as a possible model (coordination by a global office, regional implementation offices, technical advisory groups, etc.)*



*3.3 Establish agreed modular structures and classifications for international , regional and national statistical capacity programmes including quality assessments*

#### **4 – National Statistical Capacity Building**

*4.1 National statistical capacity building in national accounts and related economic statistics to be achieved through a unified international, regional and national implementation programme including sustainable donor activities, technical assistance, training and application of common software tools e.g. SDMX, Eretes, etc.*

*4.2 Common training modules in national accounts and related basic statistics to be developed for training and retraining of statisticians in collaboration with regional training and academic institutions applying advanced media such as those for distance learning*

*4.3 Promotion of the use of national accounts data for policy purposes should underpin strategic planning frameworks and included in statistical capacity building and training programmes*

#### **5 – SNA Knowledge platform: statistics, information technology and management**

*5.1 Knowledge platform to be established on statistical standards, training programmes and best practices, information technology tools and management for national statistical systems based on an agreed framework.*

*5.2 International network for economic statistics to be established through recognized "Centres of Competence" that provide and maintain the quality content of the building blocks of the framework and their specialized modules.*

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