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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Committee on Statistics

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**Regional initiatives: Economic statistics: Regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific**

**Draft regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific, February 2010**

**Note by the secretariat**

*Summary*

The present document contains the draft regional programme which has been used to formulate the Proposed Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific as contained in document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/5.

The draft regional programme outlined below in the current document was developed on the basis of: the results of a comprehensive review of the current state of economic statistics in individual countries in the region, identifying specific country needs for capacity-building; a core set of economic statistics (as defined by the TAG) required for decision-making that all countries in the region should aspire to produce over the longer term; and the recommendations and conclusions from an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Development of Economic Statistics in the Asian and Pacific Region which took place in Bangkok on 17-18 September 2009, and the Workshop to Develop a Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific held in Bangkok on 9-11 December 2009.

As the present document was drafted in February 2010 it does not include any revisions made since then to related documents, standards and frameworks including the core set of economic statistics.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. INTRODUCTION .....	4
1.1. Background and need for the Regional Programme .....	4
1.2. Relationship to 2008 SNA implementation .....	6
1.3. Main elements of the Regional Programme .....	6
1.4. Implementation of the Regional Programme .....	7
1.5. Links to relevant existing initiatives at the global, regional, sub- regional and national levels .....	10
2.. CURRENT SITUATION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC .....	10
2.1. Availability of core economic statistics .....	11
2.2. Adequacy of existing skills .....	16
2.3. Adequacy of key statistical infrastructures .....	17
2.3.1. Quality assessment frameworks .....	17
2.3.2. Appropriate strategic planning process (at least for) economic statistics .....	18
2.3.3. Use of appropriate metadata repository for storing and disseminating methodological information (metadata) for core set of economic statistics .....	19
2.3.4. Use of appropriate business register for conducting economic censuses and surveys .....	19
2.3.5. Use of either an appropriate business register or area frame for conducting household surveys, in particular, employment / unemployment surveys .....	19
2.4. Methodological transparency .....	20
2.5. Statistical advocacy and use of official statistics by government .....	20
2.6. Co-ordination of activities of global, regional and sub-regional bodies .....	21
3. AIM OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME .....	22
4. TARGET AREAS OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME, 2010 – 2020 .....	23
4.1. Develop selected human resource skills .....	24
4.2. Develop key statistical infrastructures .....	26
4.2.1. Use of quality assessment frameworks .....	28
4.2.2. Use of appropriate metadata repository for storing and disseminating methodological information (metadata) for the core economic statistics .....	29
4.2.3. Use of appropriate business register and area frame for conducting economic censuses and surveys and household surveys .....	30
4.3. Mechanisms to improve methodological transparency .....	30
4.3.1. Data documentation initiative for micro-data .....	31
4.3.2. Tool for sharing of national experiences and recommended practices .....	32

4.4.	Mechanisms and processes to improve statistical advocacy within countries .....	33
4.4.1.	Use of an effective strategic planning process (at least for) economic statistics .....	33
4.5.	Processes to improve co-ordination of capacity building activities of agencies operating in Asia and the Pacific .....	35
4.5.1	ESCAP role in co-ordinating capacity-building activities in Asia and the Pacific .....	36
4.5.2.	Mechanisms for co-ordinating capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region.....	37
5.	REVIEW AND MONITORING OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME.....	38
5.1.	Benchmarking progress at the national level.....	38
5.2.	Annual review of the agency deliverables programmes .....	38
5.3.	Review of Assessment Framework .....	39
5.4.	Activities to be carried out by ESCAP Secretariat for implementation and review of the Regional Programme over the period 2010 – 2020 .....	40
6.	FUNDING IMPLICATIONS .....	41
7.	REFERENCES... ..	41
Annex I.	DRAFT CORE SET OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS, February 2010.....	48
Annex II.	ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK .....	63
Annex III.	RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION OF METADATA.....	70
Annex IV.	ELEMENTS OF THE DATA DOCUMENTATION INITIATIVE (DDI) SPECIFICATION .....	74
Annex V.	MECHANISMS TO IMPROVE STATISTICAL ADVOCACY AND USE OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS BY GOVERNMENT .....	75
Annex VI.	SUMMARY OF CURRENT CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES BY ORGANISATIONS OPERATING IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION .....	77

## 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1. Background and need for the Regional Programme

1. The need for a regional programme for economic statistics stems from a set of unique circumstances faced by the 58 ESCAP Member and Associate Members that comprise the Asia and Pacific region, namely the:

a. sheer diversity of the size and complexity of the economies in the region, ranging from small Pacific island nations to those the size of China and Japan. This variation is reflected in the volume of resources currently allocated by national governments to the collection, compilation and dissemination of official statistics and the ability of the national statistical system to meet the demand for such statistics;

b. enormous variation across the region in the physical, cultural and political environments; and

c. the variation in the level of development of national statistical systems, and the reliance of many NSSs in the region on technical assistance and funding provided by global, regional and sub-regional bodies and national agencies located both in and outside the region.

2. All of these circumstances are taking place when the total contribution of the economies of the region is rapidly expanding in relation to other regions of the world, both in absolute and relative terms. It is therefore important to enhance the capacity of the region to influence the work programmes of global agencies in areas such as the development of statistical guidelines and recommendations to help ensure they address the disparate needs of countries across the Asia-Pacific region.

3. Within this context, at the inaugural session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics<sup>2</sup> held in Bangkok on 4-6 February 2009, Member States recognized an urgent need to improve economic statistics in developing economies of the Asia-Pacific region. The ESCAP Secretariat was requested to take action, and the Committee:

a. Adopted a coordinating governance structure to guide the development, implementation and monitoring of an action plan (Programme) for the development of economic statistics in the Asia and Pacific region, as proposed in E/ESCAP/CST/5, para. 52.

b. Established a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide guidance to the Committee's Bureau and the ESCAP Secretariat on the initial development and periodic revision in subsequent years of a Regional Programme for the development of economic statistics.

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<sup>1</sup> This document was drafted by Mr Denis Ward, a consultant for Statistics Division, ESCAP.

<sup>2</sup> The report of the first session of the Committee on Statistics and other documents may be accessed from the ESCAP website at <http://www.unescap.org/stat/cst/1/CST1-10E.pdf>

4. In response, the ESCAP Statistics Division in close cooperation with key global, regional and sub-regional development partners and through direct consultation with member states initiated work aimed at developing a *Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific* (hereunder referred to as the “Regional Programme”). The Regional Programme aims to increase the capacity of national statistical systems (NSSs) within the region to produce basic economic statistics in accordance with international standards and good practices.

5. The draft Regional Programme outlined below in the current document was developed on the basis of: the results of a comprehensive review of the current state of economic statistics in individual countries in the region, identifying specific country needs for capacity-building; a *core set of economic statistics* (as defined by the TAG) required for decision-making that all countries in the region should aspire to produce over the longer term; and the recommendations and conclusions from an *Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Development of Economic Statistics in the Asian and Pacific Region* which took place in Bangkok on 17-18 September 2009, and the *Workshop to Develop a Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific* held in Bangkok on 9-11 December 2009<sup>3</sup>.

6. This document reviews the current situation with regard to economic statistics in the region, outlines the aim of the Regional Programme and formulates a set of target areas and specific activities and actions from January 2010 and their annual review over the following ten years to 2020.

7. Issues to be addressed in the Regional Programme are:

a. What economic indicators are required now or in the near future for decision-making and for SNA implementation?

b. What components of the SNA and related standards do these core statistics represent?

c. What specific country methodologies (methods) and basic statistics will provide indicators for decision-making and inputs to SNA implementation?

d. What are the resource requirements for each country to support these sources and methods?

e. How do countries secure and retain these resources?

f. How do countries demonstrate progress?

8. Addressing these issues in the context of the Regional Programme for the Asia and Pacific region requires the creation of a strong sense of

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<sup>3</sup> The reports of the EGM and the Workshop and other documents may be accessed from the ESCAP website at <http://www.unescap.org/stat/meet/egm2009/index.asp> and <http://www.unescap.org/Stat/meet/econ-dec09/index.asp> respectively.

ownership of the programme by national statistical agencies (and support by government) and global, regional and sub-regional development bodies actively involved in capacity building in the region through the creation of long-term collaborative partnerships to implement the specific activities / tasks envisaged (refer Section 4). Such partnerships entail the establishment of clear links into current and future international initiatives undertaken by the bodies referred to previously [ASEAN 2009a, pp.12-15].

9. The Statistics Committee will play a pivotal role in driving implementation of the Regional Programme by providing a forum where the above stakeholders can meet, determine priorities, provide high level direction in the area of co-ordination and peer review progress over the duration of the programme. The ESCAP Secretariat will perform essential support functions to enable the Committee to carry out these functions.

## **1.2. Relationship to 2008 SNA implementation**

10. As mentioned in Section 1.1 above, the development of the Regional Programme outlined in the current document stems from the ESCAP Committee on Statistics decision to develop a programme to strengthen statistical infrastructure and capacity of economies in the Asia and Pacific region to compile economic statistics of appropriate quality. During the Committee's discussion, countries in the region emphasized the need to improve basic economic statistics as a precondition for the compilation of national accounts of appropriate quality, and implementation of the 2008 SNA.

11. It was envisaged that the Regional Programme would encompass a *core set of economic statistics* that could be used in the compilation of key indicators required by countries to monitor their economies which could also be used as input series for SNA implementation.

12. Although one of the outputs of the Regional Programme will be an Asia-Pacific input to the global 2008 SNA implementation plan / strategy, the focus of the Programme is on the development of national capacities within a fixed timeframe on a number of related elements which can be seen as necessary preconditions for the compilation of basic economic statistics of appropriate quality and methodological transparency.

## **1.3. Main elements of the Regional Programme**

13. The compilation of any of the *core set of economic statistics* referred to above requires three broad sets of inputs – input [raw] data, human resources and statistical infrastructure(s). The priority elements of the Regional Programme to build national statistical capacities to compile these statistics which encompass these inputs are summarized in Table 1 below, together with other key issues covered in the current document such as co-ordination mechanisms, mechanisms to improve statistical advocacy and methodological transparency, implementing the programme and reviewing progress in subsequent years. These items also reflect the outcomes of the September 2009 EGM [ESCAP 2009e] and December 2009 Workshop.

14. An important element of the Regional Programme is the process to benchmark progress at the national level (for discussion and review by the Committee on Statistics) on a regular basis following initial implementation of the programme. The Assessment Framework (refer Annex 2 below)

developed by the ESCAP Secretariat is the main instrument for assessing progress.

**Table 1: Summary of elements in the Regional Programme**

Issue	Item	Section in current document
<b>Regional Programme Priority Elements</b>		
Priority economic statistic domains	Core set of economic statistics	Annex 1
Building national statistical capacity	Human resource skills	4.1
	Key statistical infrastructures	4.2
	Mechanisms to improve methodological transparency	4.3
	Mechanisms and processes to improve statistical advocacy and use of official statistics by government within countries	4.4
Benchmarking and assessing change	Assessment Framework tool	Annex 2
Co-ordination mechanisms	Co-ordination of capacity building activities by agencies operating in the Asia-Pacific region	4.5
<b>Review and Links to Other Initiatives</b>		
Review and monitoring of the Regional Programme	Benchmarking progress at the national level	5.1
	Biannual review of the agency deliverables programmes	5.2
	Review of Assessment Framework	5.3
Links to existing international initiatives	References	7

#### **1.4. Implementation of the Regional Programme**

15. The six steps involved in the implementation of the Regional Programme aimed at addressing the issues outlined above in para. 7 are summarized in the following table. Their relationship to the elements of the programme described above is illustrated in Diagram 1 below.

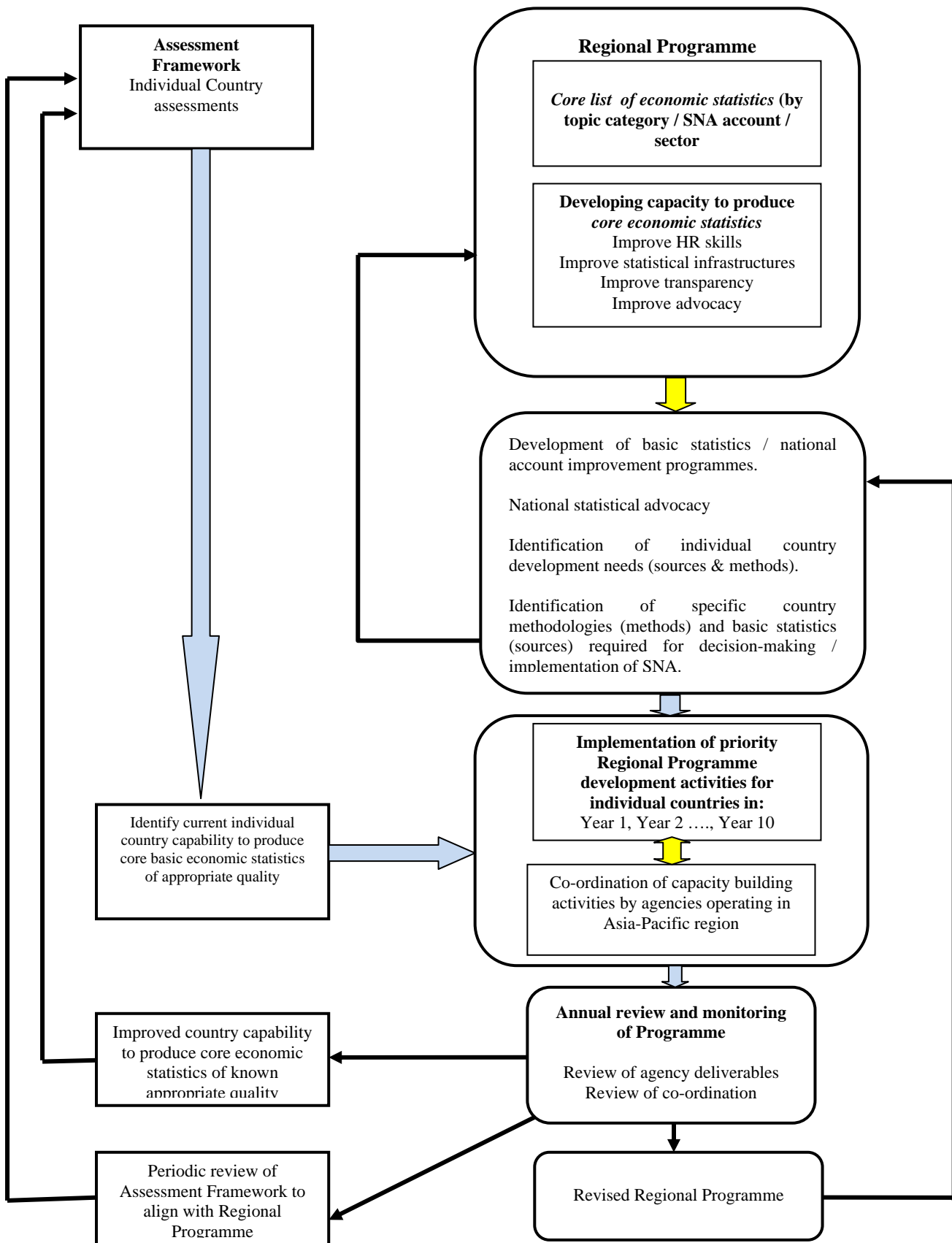
**Table 2: Steps involved in the implementation of the Regional Programme**

Step	Regional Programme implementation	Responsibility
1	Preparation of <i>core list of economic statistics</i> organized by user topic category.	ESCAP / TAG with country input.
2	Preparation of <i>core list of economic statistics</i> organized by SNA account / sector.	ESCAP / TAG with country input.
3	Preparation of individual country basic statistics and national accounts improvement programmes with staffing and funding estimates (e.g. from planning documents such as NSDSs).  This may include identification of the need for additional staff as well as training to develop skill sets in some agencies, notably the NSO. In some instances the process may also staff retention issues exacerbated by civil service compensation policy for job classes / professional staff required for macro-statistics.	Programmes prepared by countries with ESCAP facilitation. Sustainable capacity requires national rather than donor funding of core resources such as staff.
4	Country by country advocacy within national government budgeting processes to support core statistical functions in relevant agencies of the NSS, and advocacy within the international community for specific seed capital projects.	Undertaken by countries with facilitation by ESCAP, other international organizations, and bilateral technical co-operation providers.
5	Preparation of country by country statement of sources and methods used for the collection and compilation of their basic economic statistics.	Statements compiled by countries with ESCAP facilitation and technical advice provided by other agencies.
6	Review and assessment of progress	Countries to provide information on progress via Assessment Framework; reports / assessments prepared by ESCAP; peer review, discussion and direction provided by Committee on Statistics.

Source: Mr Kim Zieschang, IMF



**Diagram 1: Implementation and review of Regional Programme**



### **1.5. Links to relevant existing initiatives at the global, regional, sub-regional and national levels**

16. Implementation of the Regional Programme outlined above involves identification of key target areas and undertaking a number of related specific tasks over the period 2010 – 2020 by national statistical agencies in the region, together with global, regional and sub-regional development bodies active in the region. This will be assisted through the use of existing tools and programmes by agencies at the global, regional, sub-regional and national levels and the use of international statistical guidelines and recommendations that have been developed over the years. These include the IMF's *Data Quality Assessment Framework* (DQAF), UNSD's *Knowledge Base*, SIAP's *Core Skills Framework*, the Paris21 *National Strategy for the Development of Statistics* (NSDS), etc. These and other programmes and standards are cited throughout this document and referenced below in Section 7

## **2. CURRENT SITUATION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

17. This Section outlines the current situation in the Asia and Pacific region with respect to the current availability of the *core set of economic statistics*, areas where capacity building at the national level is required (such as development / enhancement of core skills required to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate economic statistics of known and appropriate quality, and those required to develop, implement and maintain key statistical infrastructures); methodological transparency; and statistical advocacy. It also discusses the issue of co-ordination between global, regional and sub-regional bodies involved in capacity building activities.

18. Section 4 below outlines target areas, objectives for the period 2010 – 2020 and specific tasks to be undertaken by national statistical agencies in Asia and the Pacific, together with global, regional and sub-regional development bodies active in the region. It also highlights the key role of the Committee on Statistics as a key driver of the Regional Programme, and the co-ordination functions of the ESCAP Secretariat.

19. Information on the current situation in the Asia and Pacific region was derived from:

a. an analysis of the individual Assessment Framework for each of the 58 ESCAP Members and Associate Members in the region compiled by the ESCAP Secretariat over the period July to October 2009. Information initially included in the framework was sent to countries for validation and the insertion of correct or missing data at the end of October<sup>4</sup>. The analysis below focuses on priority areas of need, and those wishing more detailed information should refer to the more detailed report prepared by the Secretariat<sup>5</sup> presented at the *Workshop to Develop a Programme for the*

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<sup>4</sup> Countries that validated preliminary information in the frameworks were: Armenia; Australia; Bhutan; China; Fiji; Hong Kong; India; Japan, Kazakhstan; Korea, Macao, Malaysia; Mongolia; New Zealand; Samoa; Singapore; Thailand; Timor Leste; Tonga; Vietnam

<sup>5</sup> ESCAP, 2009g, *Preliminary Report on ESCAP Region-Wide Assessment of the Capacity of National Statistical Systems in Asia and the Pacific to Produce Basic Economic Statistics*, prepared by Marco Corsi for the *Workshop to Develop a*

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*Improvement of Economic Statistics in the Asian and Pacific Region*, held in Bangkok in December 2009;

b. discussions with national delegates and partners from global, regional and sub-regional bodies at recent forums and meetings, namely: the February 2009 meeting of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics; the September 2009 EGM; and December 2009 Workshop;

c. input from members of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) referred to above (in Section 1.1).

As the current version of the Assessment Framework did not fully cover all of the issues outlined above, other cited sources of information were also used.

## **2.1. Availability of core economic statistics**

20. The availability of core economic statistics in individual ESCAP Members and Associate Members presented in the following tables is derived from the *Preliminary Report on ESCAP Region-Wide Assessment of the Capacity of National Statistical Systems in Asia and the Pacific to Produce Basic Economic Statistics* [ESCAP 2009g] prepared for the December 2009 Workshop. The Assessment Framework (refer Annex 2) used in the preparation of the preliminary report did not cover all of the domains and economic statistics covered in the *core list of economic statistics* and work will be undertaken by the ESCAP Secretariat in early 2010 to further align it with the Regional Programme (see Section 5.3 below).

21. Nonetheless, the following tables do present the current situation with respect to both SNA implementation and the availability of basic economic statistics (employment / unemployment, wages / earnings, consumer price index, producers price index, retail trade turnover, industrial production index, volume / turnover in services, merchandise trade, and balance of payments) for economies in the region which form a major part of the core list.

**Table 3: SNA implementation**

	East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
-Total countries	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>Framework used</b>						
- SNA 68	0	5	0	0	8	13
- SNA 68 / 93	0	2	2	0	2	6
- SNA 93	6	3	8	9	6	32
- SNA 08	0	0	0	0	1	1
- Count empty	1	1	0	0	4	6
<b>Plans to implement SNA 2008?</b>						
- Yes	4	2	1	1	3	11
- No	0	1	0	0	1	2
- Count empty	3	8	9	8	17	45

Source: ESCAP 2009

**Table 4: MRDS and milestones<sup>6</sup>**

	East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
-Total countries	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>MRDS</b>						
-Table 2.1	6	11	9	9	16	51
-Table 2.2	4	11	10	9	13	47
-Table 1.1	6	10	9	9	12	46
-Table 1.2	5	10	8	6	7	36
-Table 2.3	5	4	6	5	8	28
-Tables 1.3/4.1	6	7	9	7	11	40
-Table 4.2	5	3	3	5	6	22
<b>Milestones</b>						
-Level 1	5	10	10	9	10	43
-Level 2	6	6	8	7	7	34
-Level 3	4	3	1	6	3	14
-Level 4	3	1	0	6	1	7
-Level 5	2	0	0	1	1	4
-Level 6	1	0	0	0	1	2

Source: ESCAP 2009g

<sup>6</sup> Tables: Table 2.1: Value added and GDP in current prices by industry; Table 2.2: Value added and GDP in constant prices by industry; Table 1.1: Expenditures of the GDP in current prices; Table 1.2: Expenditures of the GDP in constant prices; Table 2.3: Value added components by industry, current prices; Table 1.3/4.1: Accounts for the total economy; Table 4.2: Rest of the world accounts (until net lending)

Milestones: Phase 1: Basic indicators of GDP; Phase 2: Gross national income and other primary indicators; Phase 3: Institution sector accounts, first step; Phase 4: Institutional sector accounts, intermediate step; Phase 5: Institutional sector accounts, last of the transaction accounts; Phase 6: Other flow accounts and balance sheet

Table 5: Availability of other economic statistics

	East & North-East Asia (ENEA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
<i>-Total countries</i>	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>Employment / Unemployment</b>						
- Yes	7	11	10	9	21	57
- No	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Wages / Earnings</b>						
- Yes	6	8	6	9	20	48
- No	1	3	4	0	1	10
<b>Consumer price index</b>						
- Yes	6	11	10	9	21	56
- No	1	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Producer price index</b>						
- Yes	5	8	8	7	7	35
- No	2	3	2	2	14	23
<b>Retail trade turnover</b>						
- Yes	6	5	2	9	5	26
- No	1	6	8	0	16	32
<b>Industrial production index</b>						
- Yes	5	8	8	9	7	36
- No	2	3	2	0	14	22
<b>Volume / turnover in services</b>						
- Yes	2	3	2	7	1	15
- No	5	8	8	2	20	33
<b>Merchandise trade</b>						
- Yes	7	11	10	9	21	58
- No	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Balance of payments</b>						
- Yes	6	9	10	9	14	48
- No	1	2	0	0	7	10

Table 6: Availability of censuses and surveys

	East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
<i>-Total countries</i>	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>Censuses</b>						
-Population census	7	10	9	9	21	56
-Economic census	4	7	6	2	7	26
-Agricultural census	3	7	8	3	12	33
<b>Surveys</b>						
-Household Income and Expenditure survey	6	10	9	8	20	53
-Labour Force survey	6	11	8	7	11	43
-CPI survey	5	10	5	6	14	40
-PPI survey	4	7	4	5	3	23
-Establishment/enterprise survey	5	10	8	6	10	37

	East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
<i>-Total countries</i>	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>Censuses</b>						
-Population census	7	10	9	9	21	56
-Economic census	4	7	6	0	7	26
-Agricultural census	3	7	8	5	12	33
<b>Surveys</b>						
-Household Income and Expenditure survey	6	10	9	9	20	53
-Labour Force survey	6	11	8	7	11	43
-CPI survey	5	10	5	9	14	40

Table 7: Frequencies by economic indicator

	East & North-East Asia (ENEA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
<i>-Total countries</i>	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>National Accounts</b>						
-Annual	7	11	10	9	19	56
-Quarterly	6	8	4	9	4	30
-Monthly	0	0	0	3	0	3
-Other	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Employment / Unemployment</b>						
-Annual	6	8	8	9	12	41
-Quarterly	6	5	3	7	6	27
-Monthly	4	2	2	6	2	14
-Other	1	3	1	0	11	16
<b>Wages / Earnings</b>						
-Annual	4	6	1	9	17	36
-Quarterly	6	4	2	7	6	25
-Monthly	1	1	2	6	1	11
-Other	0	2	3	0	1	6
<b>Consumer price index</b>						
-Annual	6	10	8	9	20	51
-Quarterly	6	10	7	9	20	50
-Monthly	6	11	8	8	9	41
-Other	0	0	1	1	0	2
<b>Producer price index</b>						
-Annual	5	6	6	7	3	27
-Quarterly	5	6	5	7	3	26
-Monthly	3	5	5	7	0	20
-Other	0	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Retail trade turnover</b>						
-Annual	6	4	2	9	3	23
-Quarterly	4	2	1	9	3	15
-Monthly	3	2	1	7	2	12
-Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Industrial production index</b>						
-Annual	4	7	5	7	6	29
-Quarterly	4	7	5	7	5	28
-Monthly	3	6	5	6	0	20
-Other	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Volume / turnover in services</b>						
-Annual	2	2	2	6	1	13
-Quarterly	2	3	2	3	1	11
-Monthly	2	1	0	4	0	6
-Other	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Merchandise trade</b>						
-Annual	6	11	10	9	20	55
-Quarterly	5	7	7	9	14	40
-Monthly	6	10	8	7	7	38
-Other	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Balance of payments</b>						
-Annual	6	10	10	9	14	47
-Quarterly	5	7	8	7	6	33
-Monthly	2	0	4	0	1	7
-Other	1	0	0	0	0	1

## 2.2. Adequacy of existing skills

22. The current situation on human resource training in the region summarized in an ESCAP report to the 2009 UNSC was that “Basic statistical training and the updating of statistical skills continue to be in large demand in many developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region. Currently, few developing countries in the region have established regular national statistical training programmes. Most basic statistical training continues to be funded and organised by international and regional organizations, which are not always able to respond adequately and in a timely manner to the specific needs in a country” [ESCAP 2009d].

23. In April 2009 SIAP conducted a Training Needs Survey (TNS) [SIAP 2009, SIAP 2009g] across 54 economies in the Asia and Pacific region to obtain the views of NSO heads on:

- a. their priorities for skills development in their organization;
- b. priorities for existing courses offered by SIAP;
- c. how SIAP’s work could be improved;
- d. opportunities for SIAP to work in partnership with NSOs in the region in building statistical capacity in the region.

24. The skill needs specific to economic statistics for the 41 individual economies in the region that responded to the TNS are also included in the *Preliminary Report on ESCAP Region-Wide Assessment of the Capacity of National Statistical Systems in Asia and the Pacific to Produce Basic Economic Statistic* [ESCAP2009g] are shown below in the following tables.

**Table 8: Priority skills development (No. of countries)**

Training course	Least developed countries*	LLDC*	Small island developing states*	Other countries	All
Implementation of 2008 SNA	6	9	6	15	32
Integrated economic statistics	8	7	8	12	30
Analytical skills and knowledge	9	8	7	12	29
Information management and related ICT	7	8	5	10	25
MDGs and sustainable development	5	6	3	6	17
Research methods and data modeling	5	4	4	6	17
No. of ESCAP members in group that responded to survey	13	11	9	18	43
Total no. of ESCAP members in group	15	12	21	18	58

\* Note that country groupings are not mutually exclusive; LLDC: Landlocked developing countries; Source: SIAP 2009d



**Table 9: Priorities for subject matter training (No. of countries)**

Training course	Least developed countries*	LLDC*	Small island developing states*	Other countries	All
National accounts	8	7	9	15	34
Analysis and interpretation of statistics	9	8	6	10	27
Analysis of survey data	8	7	5	10	25
Statistics on the informal sector	5	8	4	9	22
Labour force statistics	6	7	7	6	21
MDG goal related indicators	8	8	4	6	21
Sample design and survey organisation	9	7	4	6	20
No. of ESCAP members in group that responded to survey	13	11	9	18	43
Total no. of ESCAP members in group	15	12	21	18	58

\* Note that country groupings are not mutually exclusive; LLDC: Landlocked developing countries; Source: SIAP 2009d

### 2.3. Adequacy of key statistical infrastructures

25. As mentioned in Section 1.3 above, statistical infrastructures are one of the three broad sets of inputs essential for the compilation of any of the *core set of economic statistics*. Statistical infrastructures include a mix of institutions, institutional relationships, methods, practices and processes and systems [Cook 2007]. Such infrastructures may be relevant to only a specific economic statistic, to a number of economic statistics or to all statistics produced by national statistical agencies. The absence of a key infrastructure can either have an adverse impact on one or more dimensions of data quality (such as accuracy and reliability, accessibility as well as comparability and coherence) or on the efficiency of the collection, compilation or dissemination of data and metadata.

26. National delegations at recent ESCAP meetings, in particular, the September 2009 EGM and the December 2009 Workshop, pointed to the need for extensive infrastructure development in most countries in the region, including business registers, quality assessment frameworks, strategic planning, etc. The range of possibilities was so extensive that prioritization is essential – refer Section 4.2 below.

#### 2.3.1. Quality assessment frameworks

27. Over half the countries in the Asia and Pacific region already utilize an internationally recognized quality assessment framework to systematically assess and report on the quality of their key economic statistics. Currently, 33 economies in the region subscribe to either the IMF *Special Data Dissemination Standard* (SDDS) [IMF 2003e] or the *General Data Dissemination System* (GDDS) [IMF 2004] and use the Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) to assess key economic statistics. Of the 25 economies that do not subscribe to either, 16 are (mostly) Pacific small island states. Some of the NSOs in developed countries in the region (such

as the ABS in Australia) also utilize nationally developed quality frameworks and processes.

a. GDDS: Afghanistan; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Fiji; Georgia; Kiribati; Macao, China; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Tonga; Vanuatu; Vietnam

b. SDDS: Armenia; Australia; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Philippines; Russian Federation; Singapore; Thailand; Turkey

c. Economies not subscribing to either SDDS or GDDS: DPR Korea; Lao PDR; Myanmar; Timor Leste; Bhutan; Islamic Republic of Iran; Maldives; Turkmenistan; Uzbekistan; American Samoa; Cook Islands; French Polynesia; Guam; Marshall Islands; F.S. Micronesia; Nauru; New Caledonia; New Zealand; Niue; Northern Mariana Is, Palau; Papua New Guinea; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Tuvalu

28. While the GDDS / SDDS do not cover all of the *core set of economic statistics* outlined in Annex 1 they do cover most of the domains in the core list and therefore provide a very useful starting point for countries in the region that currently subscribe to the IMF initiatives.

29. Many of the countries that do not subscribe to either the SDDS or GDDS do not have a quality assessment framework and related processes and practices for the systematic and on-going assessment of the quality of their economic statistics outputs.

### **2.3.2. Appropriate strategic planning process (at least for) economic statistics**

30. The current National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) status of individual economies in the Asia and the Pacific is also available on the Paris21 website [Paris21 2009a]. Of the 58 economies in the Asia and Pacific region, 23<sup>7</sup> have completed an NSDS, or have initiated preparation of the strategy (refer Table 1 in Annex 2 below). A further 12 economies<sup>8</sup> have plans for the development of an NSDS. Four high income countries<sup>9</sup> have nationally developed planning processes. The remaining 20 stated that they do currently have any plans for the preparation of an NSDS or their status is unknown. Of these 12 are located in the Pacific and five in East and North-East Asia.

31. Currently, nine developing and transition economies<sup>10</sup> in the region publish their statistical development strategies on their websites, though

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<sup>7</sup> Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDB, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Vanuatu, Vietnam [Paris21 2009a and national websites]

<sup>8</sup> Bangladesh, Fiji, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Kiribati, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan [Paris21 2009a and national websites]

<sup>9</sup> Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand

<sup>10</sup> Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, New Caledonia, Philippines, Tajikistan

with varying detail with respect to strategic objectives, implementation strategies, timelines and in particular, firm links to the government budget process.

### **2.3.3. Use of appropriate metadata repository for storing and disseminating methodological information (metadata) for core set of economic statistics**

32. National practices and tools with respect to the storage of metadata for storing and disseminating metadata vary significantly across the Asia and Pacific region. Very few countries have fully developed metadata repositories that are used across all or most statistical domains and linked to the organisation's production and dissemination systems. The reality is that very few statistical agencies in developed countries around the globe have such metadata repositories in place.

33. National practices also vary significantly with respect to the visibility of metadata they disseminate, in particular, for metadata located on websites. In some instances metadata is easily located by users unfamiliar with the site and in others considerable time and effort is required to navigate through the website to obtain the required information, particularly where metadata for a number of different statistical domains are sought.

34. Almost all countries in the Asia and Pacific region store their metadata in text files which vary significantly with respect to the amount of detail provided, their proximity to the statistics they describe, structure and organisation and the use of standard metadata items (or prompt points).

### **2.3.4. Use of appropriate business register for conducting economic censuses and surveys**

35. The *Preliminary Report on ESCAP Region-Wide Assessment of the Capacity of National Statistical Systems in Asia and the Pacific to Produce Basic Economic Statistics* [ESCAP 2009g] based on information derived from the Assessment Framework stated that while censuses, surveys and administrative data are widely used as source data for economic statistics, business registers are still underdeveloped, if not absent in almost a third of the countries in the region, in particular, in the Pacific, South-East Asia and the South and South-West sub-regions. Unfortunately, there is very little information available on the quality (in terms of the quality of information sources (such as tax data) used to update the register, frequency of update, etc) of the business registers in those countries where they exist.

### **2.3.5. Use of either an appropriate business register or area frame for conducting household surveys, in particular, employment / unemployment surveys**

36. Given the importance of labour force statistics in the analysis of short-term and structural changes in the economy, and for measurement of informal activities, the availability of an accurate business register or area frame of appropriate quality for the collection and compilation of such statistics is essential. Just over 40 countries in the region state that their labour force statistics are based on labour force surveys [ESCAP 2009g]. 17 countries state that their statistics are register based (12 of these are located in Pacific states).

## 2.4. Methodological transparency

37. The provision of methodological information or metadata<sup>11</sup> with statistics outlining concepts, definitions, classifications and describing methods used in collection, compilation, transformation, revision practices and dissemination of statistics is an essential function of all statistical agencies. The need for such methodological information arises from a desire to lend transparency to the statistics so that the typical end-user can make an informed assessment of their usefulness and relevance to his or her purpose. In recognition of this, methodological transparency is embodied as one of the UN *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics* [UNSC 1994].

38. The need for provision of more extensive methodological information, and its accessibility to users through dissemination on the web, is now receiving greater recognition. However, practices in this area vary considerably in the statistical systems of both developed and developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region with regard to the amount of methodological detail provided on their websites and in other dissemination media (even in the national language), frequency of updating, its proximity to the statistics it describes and ease of access by users (in particular, via national websites), the absence of a consistent content structure across all statistical domains. The absence of such metadata reduces the ability to compare national practices across the region and to relate current national practice to existing international standards.

39. The major exceptions to this situation are the 33 countries in the region that subscribe to either the SDDS or GDDS (refer Section 2.3.1 above). These standards and systems specify the preparation of metadata on the basis of specified prompt points / metadata items and the dissemination of such metadata on the IMF website. A small number of countries in the region, e.g. Australia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Turkey, publish detailed metadata (not necessarily on the basis of the IMF GDDS / SDDS prompt points) on their NSO websites, which is accessed either through online databases or via static text, guides and publications. Interestingly, most of the metadata disseminated on NSO websites in countries that subscribe to the IMF SDDS / GDDS is not structured on the basis of the prompt points outlined in the IMF standards

## 2.5. Statistical advocacy and use of official statistics by government

40. A common feature of the national statistical systems of many developing countries is that statistical agencies are trapped in a cycle of statistical

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<sup>11</sup> The International Standards Organisation (ISO) definition of metadata is “data that defines and describes other data” (ISO/IEC FCD 11179-1 “Information technology – Metadata Registers – Part 1: Framework”, May 2003). A distinction can be made between “structural” metadata – those concepts used in the description, identification and retrieval of statistical data – and “reference” metadata – that describe statistical concepts, methodologies for the collection and generation of data and information on data quality.

Reference metadata, sometimes generated, collected or disseminated separately from the statistics to which they refer can be relevant to all instances of statistics described: entire collections of data, data sets from a given country, or for a data item concerning one country and one year. For this reason, some overlap may exist between “reference” metadata – which are often disseminated separately from the statistics to which they refer – and “structural” metadata used to identify statistics.

under-development. These agencies operate in an environment where there is little or no appreciation at the political or policy level of statistics as a strategic resource for planning, decision-making, good governance, accountability and management. This results in low priority being given to statistical production and domestic under-funding of statistical production, which in turn leads to limited organizational and institutional development leading to limited quantity and quality of statistical data and services which in turn, has led to lower demand for data and further under-funding of statistical production [Kiregyera 2005].

41. Although the paper quoted above was written in the context of statistical agencies in Africa, much of what is described is relevant for some countries in the Asia and Pacific region and is therefore quoted extensively in the current document. The author states that as a result of this situation many statistical agencies in African countries are characterised by: low status of the NSO; donor rather than country-driven systems; weak relationships between users and producers of statistics; poor statistical infrastructure; absence of key statistical data; and poor quality data.

42. The long-term sustainability of the statistical activities of national agencies producing official statistics is largely dependent on their ability to persuade politicians including ministers and parliamentarians, and senior policy and decision-makers in the public service to use statistics for evidence-based policy and decision-making and to initiate actions to develop the NSS by establishing appropriate institutional and regulatory frameworks, create co-ordination arrangements between different agencies in the administration and most important, provide adequate funding. These processes are summarized by the term “statistical advocacy”.

43. The need to improve statistical advocacy at the national level in the Asia and Pacific region has been highlighted by both national agencies and global, regional and sub-regional development bodies at the February 2009 meeting of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics; the September 2009 EGM; and the December 2009 Workshop.

## **2.6. Co-ordination of activities of global, regional and sub-regional bodies**

44. Capacity building in the area of economic statistics in the Asia – Pacific region involving the development of human resource skills, statistical infrastructures, IT and other systems is undertaken through the organization of workshops / meetings and direct funding, etc. As the list of key players operating in the region outlined below in Annex 6 shows, capacity building is undertaken by a large number of global, regional and sub-regional bodies, by numerous national funding agencies as well as NSOs that provide training for other countries in the region.

45. The need to improve co-ordination of the activities of these bodies active in the Asia and Pacific region has been strongly emphasized at several meetings and forums in recent years by national statistical agencies as well as some of the capacity building agencies themselves. Such co-ordination was seen as essential to avoid duplication and to optimize use of the limited resources available to meet the needs of countries in the region.

46. During the preparation of the current Regional Programme document the ESCAP Secretariat attempted to bring together available information on the current capacity building activities of agencies operating in the Asia and

Pacific region. This information is provided below in a table in Annex 6. Sources used in the preparation of the table included papers presented by a number of the agencies at the February 2009 meeting of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics and the September 2009 ESCAP EGM. Information was also extracted from the websites of the agencies concerned. The information sources used in preparing the table have to a large extent been prepared to meet internal planning and reporting needs of the agency concerned.

47. It should be emphasized that whilst the information in Annex 6 gives a flavour of the range and complexity of capacity building activity taking place across the Asia and Pacific region, it significantly understates the current level such activity, some of which may not be formally recorded in existing sources, e.g. the work of regional advisors located within national agencies, research-based programmes, secondments, etc.

48. The information in Annex 6 shows that there is considerable overlap in economic statistic topics covered by capacity building activities in the Asia and Pacific region, though the target countries involved appear to differ. One of the target areas of the Regional Programme outlined in Section 4.5 below is to collect sufficient information on current and future activities of bodies active in this area in order to identify specific areas / issues where improved co-ordination between the agencies would yield any significant benefits / synergies.

49. The process of preparing the summary illustrated the difficulty in obtaining comparable information that provides an accurate feel of the range of capacity building activities in the region, the objectives of each activity, modalities of delivery, timelines, countries concerned and partner organization(s) involved. It also highlighted the need for such information if improvement in the co-ordination of such activities in the region is to be taken seriously. In order to minimize the reporting burden imposed on development agencies it is recommended that in future, use be made of the Paris 21 Partner Report on Progress to Statistics (PRESS) system. Whilst information available in this system is not perfect, any additional information gathering exercise conducted by ESCAP would experience the same limitations.

### **3. AIM OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME**

50. The primary aim of the programme is to develop the capacity<sup>12</sup> of ESCAP Members and Associate Members to produce a *core set of economic statistics* (refer Annex 1) by 2020 of appropriate quality required for short and long term economic analyses and decision making by both government and non-government agencies / organisations.

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<sup>12</sup> Statistical capacity-building is defined as activities that strengthen the pillars of statistical capacity. Statistical capacity refers to the ability of statistical producers to serve the needs of users with quality statistics that meet the *United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*. Quality includes timeliness, reliability, accessibility and relevance, and can be measured by the *Data Quality Assessment Framework*. [Mary Strobe, Ian MacAuslan, Christine Spanneut, Matthew Powell, Christopher Willoughby, Philippe Ngango Gafishi and Thomas Thomsen, "Evaluation framework for statistical capacity building", First Draft, Synthesis Report, Part 1, United Kingdom Department for International Development Ref:EVD:051 (Oxford Policy Management, May 2008, p. v)].

51. The Regional Programme is not envisaged primarily as an ESCAP instrument. The delivery of most aspects of the programme will be via the work programmes of national statistical agencies as well as global, regional and sub-regional bodies funding and providing technical assistance and other initiatives across the region. In this context, all players active in the region will need to sign on to the programme, be willing to share information on their activities, and if necessary modify the nature of the training or technical assistance and/or the timing of what they planned to deliver [Cope 2009]. Therefore, the adoption of strategies to improve such co-ordination and the monitoring of progress in this area are essential aspects of the Regional Programme. It is envisaged that the ESCAP Committee on Statistics will provide a key forum for discussion and decisions on these issues.

52. The development of statistical capacity at the national level involves a range of capacity building activities by national and international agencies on a number of related fronts, some of which extend beyond the economic statistics programmes of national statistical agencies, for example, human resource development, improvements in statistical advocacy and the development of key infrastructures such as information technology (IT), metadata repositories, etc. Obviously, the absence of development in these areas, even though they can be used for all statistical activities, would also constrain the capacity of national agencies to develop / improve their basic economic statistics.

53. The approach adopted in the development of the draft Regional Programme has therefore been to cast a broader net and to include a very limited number of key elements which have wider implications for the NSS. Whilst the focus of the Regional Programme is on capacity building for economic statistics, many of the human resource skills and some of the key statistical infrastructures envisaged for development by the programme can also be applied to social and environmental statistics compiled within national statistical systems (NSS).

#### **4. TARGET AREAS OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME, 2010 – 2020**

54. Flowing from the review of the current situation in the Asia and Pacific region provided in Section 2 above, this Section outlines target areas, strategic objectives for the period 2010 – 2020 and specific tasks to be undertaken by national statistical agencies in the region, together with global, regional and sub-regional bodies active in the region. The Section also outlines a set of intermediate targets and milestones that will enable progress to be gauged in 2014 and 2017.

55. Many of the tasks discussed in this Section require the commitment of national statistical agencies with the support of their government to carry out the tasks envisaged over the ten years to 2020. Without such commitment and government support many of the changes deemed necessary to improve on the current situation outlined in Section 2 above will not occur. A key area of such commitment is the provision of additional information in the Assessment Framework which will be used by the ESCAP Secretariat to review the Regional Programme, monitor progress at the national level and prepare reports for consideration by the Statistics Committee.

56. The Statistics Committee therefore has a key role in obtaining this commitment and is seen as a key driver for both the implementation of the Regional Programme in 2010 and subsequent annual reviews of the programme to 2020, particular, progress against the milestones established for 2014 and 2017. The Statistics Committee also provides the forum for the review of strategic issues related to the co-ordination of the capacity building activities of bodies working in the Asia and Pacific region, with the ESCAP Statistics Division providing essential secretariat functions in the collection and analysis of information about those activities.

57. Activities in the Regional Programme encompass the four target areas summarized in Table 1 above, namely:

a. develop selected core human skills required to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate economic statistics of appropriate and known quality;

b. improve the capacity of countries to develop, implement and maintain key statistical infrastructures - quality assessment framework; metadata repositories; business register; area frame for household surveys;

c. improve methodological transparency through national compilation and dissemination of appropriate methodological information (metadata);

d. enhance the long-term sustainability of the national statistical system through improvements in statistical advocacy within the country.

58. Further details for each of these target areas and processes for implementation are outlined in a series of boxes below. The text for each goal outlines an objective and a set of specific activities / actions to be undertaken by countries working with global, regional or sub-regional bodies. The aim is to ensure that either the objective or its component activities are measurable with respect achievement. Section 5.4 below outlines a set of specific tasks to be carried out by the ESCAP Secretariat associated with the implementation and review of the Regional Programme over the period 2010 to 2020.

59. Implementation of many of the tasks / activities outlined below will entail the establishment of a series of strategic alliances between the ESCAP Secretariat and other bodies active in the region, notably SIAP, ASEAN, SPC and the IMF.

#### **4.1. Develop selected human resource skills<sup>13</sup>**

60. **Objective:** To develop priority human resource skills in a small number of key areas which staff in national agencies can then apply to the development of the *core set of economic statistics* required by national users.

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<sup>13</sup> Much of the material on the development of human resource skills outlined in this Section of the Regional programme has been taken directly from the paper, *Improving the Co-ordination of Statistical Training in the Asia-Pacific Region to Enhance the Impact of Official Statistics*, prepared by Ms. Nancy McBeth (SIAP Consultant) presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, held at Phuket, Thailand, in November 2009.



61. Many of the skills envisaged for development can be applied to a number of different economic statistics. Skills specifically required for the *core set of economic statistics* outlined in Annex 1 below include core and specialist as well as statistical management skills. The development of human resources within national agencies in the Asia and Pacific region involves training and other modalities of skill development by:

- a. the national agencies themselves (including in-house training institutions); and / or
- b. global international agencies / organizations and regional and sub-regional bodies.

Most of the latter group, including national agencies whose role is restricted to funding and national agencies that provide training to other countries in the region, are listed below in Annex 6.

62. The identification of the skill needs of individual countries is more appropriately undertaken within a development framework such as the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) *Core Skills Framework for NSOs in Developing Countries* [SIAP 2009a], a tool used: by individuals to manage their own development and identify the skills they need to progress their career; managers to identify which additional skills their staff need and what skills they need to be looking for in new appointees; and trainers to identify what skills they should provide training for [SIAP 2009].

63. An ESCAP Secretariat paper [ESCAP 2009f] prepared for the February 2009 meeting of the Committee on Statistics advocated an integrated approach to maximize the impact of technical co-operation projects. The paper advocated combining advocacy and awareness-raising activities with the development of standard measurements and regional guidelines, targeted training, advisory services and the development of knowledge management tools. In particular, the projects should aim to maximize the potential to establish regional networks of national experts (regional resource pools) in given areas of statistics and, through them, facilitate triangular and South-South co-operation among economies in the region.

64. In addition to the adoption of an integrated approach, consideration also needs to be given to the use of different modalities of delivery commensurate with available funding and the long-term development needs of the national agency. The different modalities include face-to-face-training, research based training, distance-learning and e-learning programmes, staff secondments, placement of regional advisors, advisory services, and networks of national experts (regional resource pools).

65. Priority skills identified from the SIAP TNS (refer Section 2.2 above) are listed below.

Priority human resource development areas	By who / whom	By
<b>Skills based</b>		
Implementation of 2008 SNA		
Integrated economic statistics		
Analytical skills and knowledge		
Information management and related ICT		
MDGs and sustainable development		
Implementation of 2008 SNA		
<b>Subject matter based</b>		
National accounts		
Analysis and interpretation of statistics		
Analysis of survey data		
Statistics on the informal sector		
Labour force statistics		
MDG goal related indicators		
Sample design and survey organisation		
Analysis and interpretation of statistics		

66. It should be emphasized that these priorities will need to be modified in the light of skills training required for the implementation of most of the activities / tasks envisaged in the Regional Programme which are outlined below in the remaining parts of this Section. Identification of the additional skills required will be undertaken by the ESCAP Secretariat working closely with other key players in the Asia and Pacific region such as SIAP, IMF, SPC, ASEAN Secretariat, ADB and Paris21. This task will need to be completed by end October 2010.

67. In addition to the development of skills in countries specific to the compilation, analyses and dissemination of economic statistics envisaged in the *core set of economic statistics*, countries in the region also pointed to the need to improve a number of more generic human resource practices covering issues such as staff recruitment, staff management and staff retention. Whilst these issues obviously have an impact on staff involved in the collection, compilation and dissemination of economic statistics they are not specifically covered in the Regional Programme.

#### **4.2. Develop key statistical infrastructures**

68. In order to restrict the range of statistical infrastructures to those that can realistically be included in the Regional Programme clear distinction is drawn between those systems /assets that support the production of all [or most] statistics and those that are inputs designed for specific outputs. The former include quality assessment frameworks, business registers, area frames, metadata repositories, strategic planning and institutional and regulatory environments, whilst the latter include IT systems, administrative data, classifications, and census / survey programmes.

69. Whilst the latter should be included in the Regional Programme they are perhaps more appropriately considered under the umbrella of human resource skills development which provide the capability for countries to then develop the IT systems and data collection systems, etc., needed to produce a specific core economic statistic. Any assistance provided via the Regional Programme for IT and data collection would build on these core capabilities and would be output specific.

70. Having said all this, some degree of arbitrary selection was still required to narrow the range of infrastructures to be included in the Regional Programme which fall into the former category. For example, metadata repositories, strategic planning and quality assessment frameworks can be used for almost all statistical domains, though they have been listed in the following table as they are deemed essential to key objectives of the programme, namely statistical transparency and assessment of data quality.

**Table 10: Key infrastructures included in the Regional Programme**

Infrastructure	Comment	Relevant international standard / guideline
Quality assessment frameworks	National or the IMF <i>Data Quality Assessment Framework</i> (DQAF). Includes integration of basic economic statistics with national accounts to provide a coherent set of statistics and indicators	IMF <i>Data Quality Assessment Framework</i> (DQAF) [IMF 2003]
Strategic planning	Includes <i>National Strategy for the Development of Statistics</i> (NSDS), including economic statistics. Of equal importance to the development of NSDS is the relationship between the strategy and the national government's budget and funding process.	<i>National Strategy for the Development of Statistics</i> (NSDS) [Paris21 2004]
Metadata repositories		<i>SDMX Content-Oriented Guidelines</i> [SDMX 2009]
Business registers and area frames	Business registers and area frames provide a central sampling frame for a range of business surveys and household surveys conducted by NSOs.  The development of a business register is essential for the full coordination between surveys that use the same basic information about business units [UNSD 2007]. Similarly, the development and regular on-going maintenance of an area frame is essential for the compilation of accurate labour force survey statistics	

#### 4.2.1. Use of quality assessment frameworks

71. **Objective:** For each NSO in the Asia and Pacific region by 2020 to use either a nationally developed quality assessment framework, or an internationally recognized framework, such as the IMF's *Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF)* [IMF 2003], to systematically and periodically assess the quality of their basic economic statistics.

72. As mentioned in Section 2.3.1 above, 33 economies in the region subscribe to either the IMF *Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS)* [IMF 2003e] or the *General Data Dissemination System (GDDS)* [IMF 2004] which provides structure to the metadata required for DQAF to systematically assess the quality of many of the key economic statistics listed in the *core set of economic statistics*. Such structure also enables current national practices used across the region to be compared both with each other and with international statistical guidelines and recommendations.

73. The priority for the Regional Programme will be on the 25 remaining countries in the region that do not subscribe to either the SDDS or GDDS and which are listed below. Of the 25 countries, 16 are located in the Pacific.

East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific
DPR Korea	Lao PDR	Bhutan	Turkmenistan*	American Samoa
	Myanmar	Iran (Islamic Rep.)	Uzbekistan	Cook Islands
	Timor-Leste	Maldives		French Polynesia
				Guam
				Marshall Islands
				Micronesia (F.S.)
				Nauru
				New Caledonia
				New Zealand
				Niue
				N. Mariana Is.
				Palau
				Papua New Guinea
				Samoa
				Solomon Islands
				Tuvalu

\*Website only in national language and Russian

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
1. Develop a training module for GDSS / DQAF specifically aimed at smaller states that would enable them to compile <u>and maintain</u> the required metadata, etc.	PFTAC, SPC, ESCAP Secretariat, SIAP	End October 2010
2. Create support mechanisms for use by small states in the implementation and support of GDSS / DQAF. Such mechanisms	PFTAC, SPC, ESCAP Secretariat, SIAP	End October 2010

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
could include network of national experts (regional resource pool), e-learning programmes.		
3. Deliver training on GDDS / DQAF to smaller states	PFTAC, SPC, ESCAP Secretaria, SIAP	By end 2012
4. Provide support as required to smaller states in their implementation of GDDS / DQAF		

#### 4.2.2. Use of appropriate metadata repository for storing and disseminating methodological information (metadata) for the core economic statistics

74. **Objective:** For NSOs to identify and develop a metadata repository by 2020 appropriate to their resource and skill capacity on which methodological information (metadata) for each of the *core set of economic statistics* they currently compile can be stored and made readily available to internal and external users. Such metadata should also be placed on their websites.

75. It is not the intention of the Regional Programme to recommend the development of complex metadata repositories. The programme instead recommends that each national statistical agency, in particular, the NSO, develop and use a platform (repository) for storing their metadata commensurate with their existing resources and skill capacity which will achieve the objective of making their metadata accessible to internal and external users. The focus will therefore be on the implementation of the metadata “content” recommendations listed in the table in Annex 3 below. As discussed in that Annex, these cover: the need for metadata; providing access to metadata; adoption of a set of common metadata items; and the use of a common set of terminology for metadata preparation.

76. The adoption of these recommendations entails the use of any one of a range platforms (repositories) for storing the metadata – these cover: fully developed metadata repositories that are used across all or most statistical domains and linked to the organisation’s production and dissemination systems, down to storage of metadata in simple text files

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
1. Prepare an outline of options for the storing of metadata which allow methodological information to be accessed by internal and external users and placed on national websites.	ESCAP Secretariat in collaboration with SPC and the IMF	By end June 2010
2. Identify the most suitable option in relation to resources currently available at the national level and skills required to develop and implement a metadata repository.	NSOs	End October 2010
3. Develop metadata repository	NSOs in collaboration with SPC and .....	End 2014

### 4.2.3. Use of appropriate business register and area frame for conducting economic censuses and surveys and household surveys

77. **Objective:** Develop business registers and / or household survey frames by 2020 appropriate to the needs and requirements of the NSS commensurate with on-going resources available for maintenance.

78. The development and maintenance of appropriate frames for the conduct of business surveys and census and household surveys is a key function / activity of the NSO. Processes envisaged in the Regional Programme in this area entails the identification of appropriate quality measures for the assessment of existing frames (based on UN guidelines and standards and the work of the Roundtable on Business Registers), the assessment of existing frames in developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region to identify priority areas where skill development is required, and working with regional partners, such as the SPC, to identify the needs of small Pacific island states in order to identify options that are sustainable over the longer term with existing national resources.

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
Identify quality measures for the assessment of business register and household survey frames.	ESCAP Secretariat, UNSD	End June 2011
Assess quality of existing frames	NSOs, ESCAP Secretariat	End 2011
Identify skill needs from assessment for the development of quality frames	SIAP, ESCAP Secretariat	End June 2012
Identify the needs of small Pacific island states in order to identify options that are sustainable over the longer term with existing national resources.	ESCAP Secretariat, SPC	End 2011
Undertake skill development	SPC, PFTAC, SIAP	End 2014

### 4.3. Mechanisms to improve methodological transparency

79. **Objective:** To improve the transparency of methodologies used by statistical agencies in the Asia and Pacific region in the compilation of the *core set of economic statistics* through the compilation and dissemination of appropriate metadata. This entails the adoption of the metadata content guidelines and recommendations outlined in Annex 3 below.

80. A further objective is to identify and share information and experiences on best practice between countries in the region (refer Section 4.3.3 below). A platform for sharing such information would be the *UNSD Knowledge Base*.

81. The provision of metadata is an inescapable responsibility of all statistical agencies compiling official statistics in the NSS in both developed and developing countries and one that requires adequate planning and resources. Many statistical agencies have embodied their

corporate policy on the provision of metadata in their dissemination standards and author guides<sup>14</sup>.

82. Users of metadata are generally depicted as falling into two broad groups: producers of statistics responsible for designing statistical collections, collection, processing and evaluation of statistics, and data dissemination; and end-users of statistics comprising policy analysts, media, academics, students, etc [UNSC and UNECE 2000]. International organizations also use metadata in evaluations and assessments of the comparability of statistics between countries.

83. The mechanisms envisaged by the Regional Programme to improve transparency entail the implementation by statistical agencies of the metadata content guidelines outlined in Annex 3 below. These relate to:

- a. the need for the compilation of up-to-date metadata by national agencies;
- b. providing access to metadata; the methodological items (or metadata elements) that should be incorporated in metadata disseminated. The guidelines recommend the adoption of the metadata prompt points used in the IMF's GDDS / SDDS initiatives; and
- c. the use of a common set of terminology.

84. The guidelines are drawn primarily from the OECD publication, *Data and Metadata Reporting and Presentation Handbook* endorsed by the Organisation's Committee on Statistics in 2006. Almost all the guidelines, etc., in the Handbook were derived from previously existing standards compiled by the IMF, Eurostat, UNSD and some UN regional commissions and the SDMX initiative<sup>15</sup>. These guidelines provide standards against which the practices of national agencies in the region can be assessed and compared both with each other and against international statistical standards.

#### **4.3.1. Data documentation initiative for micro-data**

85. Data producers are increasingly expected to provide the research community with access to micro-level data (*e.g.* survey datasets). The availability of detailed documentation for those datasets is crucial to provide secondary users with a full understanding of these data to enable them to use them effectively, efficiently, and accurately. However, experience shows that metadata provided with micro-datasets is often inadequate, making their exchange and use complex and problematic.

86. The Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) was set up to respond to the need for a common system to describe and catalogue survey datasets that underlie much social science research. It has established a consensus for the

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<sup>14</sup> An example of such standards are metadata requirements embodied in the UK Office for National Statistics, *National Statistics Code of Practice: Protocol on Data Management, Documentation and Preservation* [ONS 2004, p. 10]

<sup>15</sup> Many of the content of the SDMX metadata standards outlined in the SDMX 2009 *Content Oriented Guidelines* was derived from earlier metadata standards designed by the initiatives sponsors (especially the IMF, Eurostat, OECD, UNSD) – refer [www.sdmx.org](http://www.sdmx.org)

content, presentation, transport, and preservation of micro-data documentation. The DDI metadata specification originated in the Inter-university Consortium for

87. Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and is now the project of an alliance of about 25 institutions in North America and Europe. The elements of the DDI specification are outlined in Annex 4 below.

#### 4.3.2. Tool for sharing of national experiences and recommended practices

88. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) recently launched their *Knowledge Base*<sup>16</sup> which provides a readily accessible platform for the free dissemination of international statistical guidelines and recommendations developed by UN bodies [and other international agencies / bodies]. The *Knowledge Base* also has a facility which can be used by countries to insert and disseminate recommended national practices on the implementation of those standards on the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics. This facility offers a very useful mechanism for south-south co-operation by economies in the Asia and Pacific region.

89. However, there is a need for leadership in the region to ensure that recommended national practices are inserted into the *Knowledge Base*. The ESCAP Secretariat should undertake this function.

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
1. Compile information on current national metadata practices in relation to the metadata content standards outlined in Annex 3 below and the requirements of the IMF SDDS / GDDS (with regard to metadata). This would be undertaken for all ESCAP Members and Associate Members. Propose use of an expanded Assessment Framework to gather the required information -	NSO's, ESCAP Secretariat, IMF	End October 2011
2. Based on above information identify skill needs in developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region.	ESCAP Secretariat, IMF, SIAP, SPC	End October 2012
3. Undertake training	SPC, PFTAC, SPC, SIAP	End 2014
4. Identify recommended national practice(s) used by countries in the Asia and Pacific region with respect to both metadata content and metadata dissemination for inclusion on the UNSD <i>Knowledge Base</i> .	ESCAP Secretariat, SPC, IMF	Annual (from 2011) at end October
5. Identify recommended national practice(s) used by countries in the Asia and Pacific region with respect to the collection, compilation and dissemination of their core economic statistics for inclusion on the UNSD <i>Knowledge Base</i> .	NSOs, ESCAP Secretariat	Annual (from 2011) at end October

<sup>16</sup> Available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/econstatkb/>



#### 4.4. Mechanisms and processes to improve statistical advocacy within countries

90. **Objective:** Identify and implement a small number of mechanisms and processes for use by national governments and data producers, training institutes and the international community to improve statistical advocacy in countries in the Asia and Pacific region. Such processes should be embodied in an effective strategic planning process.

91. Mechanisms to improve statistical advocacy are outlined below in Annex 5. These mechanisms entail specific actions by government, data producers (primarily the NSO, training institutions, and the international community). The mechanisms outlined in this annex are general in nature and further refinement is required to reformulate them into a small set of key qualitative indicators that can be used to assess progress at the national level in the annual review process described below in Section 5.

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
1. Countries and global, regional and sub-regional partners to review and revise the advocacy mechanisms outlined in Annex 5 to reformulate them into a small set of key qualitative indicators that can be used to assess progress at the national level in the annual review of the Regional Programme over the period 2010 – 2020.	ESCAP Secretariat with NSOs, global, regional and sub-regional organisations (in particular, Paris21)  This work would be undertaken with activities associated with the use of an effective strategic planning process outlined below in Section 4.4.1.	End June 2010
2. Use revised set of qualitative indicators to assess to the current state of statistical advocacy in individual countries in the Asia and Pacific region. [Consider incorporation into the revised Assessment Framework – refer Section 5.3 below.]	ESCAP Secretariat, NSOs	End October 2010
3. See Task 3, Section 4.2.2 above on the implementation of an effective strategic planning process.	Paris21, SIAP, ESCAP Secretariat	End 2011

##### 4.4.1. Use of an effective strategic planning process (at least for) economic statistics

92. **Objective:** For each country in the Asia and Pacific region by 2020 to use either an “effective”<sup>17</sup> nationally developed strategic planning process (which includes statistical advocacy) or to use the tools developed by Paris21 for the *National Strategy for the development of Statistics* (NSDS).

<sup>17</sup> An “effective” planning strategy is one that includes: consultation mechanisms with all main stakeholders and users; agreed statements of what government and other stakeholders want from the NSS; processes to improve statistical advocacy; timetables and a financing plan to put specific actions into effect. In other words the plan is clearly linked to the agency and government budget cycle; mechanisms for reviewing and monitoring progress [Paris21 2004, p.7].

A further objective is to ensure that the strategic plan is made publicly available, ideally on the website(s) of the statistical agency<sup>18</sup>.

93. The 20 Asia and Pacific region countries that currently do not have any plans to develop an NSDS are listed below. Twelve of these are located in the Pacific region.

94. useful input to the development of a set of key qualitative indicators to assess the effective of current or proposed strategic planning processes at the national level is the Paris21 *NSDS Essentials – Checklist*<sup>19</sup>. Although the context of the checklist is slightly different a subset of the items it includes could be reframed into a small set of qualitative indicators against which activities at the national level could be assessed in the annual review of the Regional Programme described below in Section 5.

East & North-East Asia (ENEAs)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific
DPR Korea	Brunei Darussalam	Iran (Islamic Rep.)	Turkmenistan	American Samoa
Hong Kong, China	Singapore			Cook Islands
Macao, China	Timor-Leste			French Polynesia
				Guam
				Micronesia (F.S.)
				Nauru
				New Caledonia
				Niue
				N. Mariana Is.
				Palau
				Solomon Islands
				Tonga

Source: Paris21 2009a and national websites

<sup>18</sup> Almost all ESCAP member and associate member NSOs have websites, the exceptions appearing to be DPR Korea, Lao PDR?, and Turkmenistan. [There are also a number of broken links (as at 26 November 2009) to the websites (or the English language segment of the websites) for Bhutan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kyrgyzstan, and Papua New Guinea.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) maintains an Internet-based socio-economic information system for the Pacific islands, the Pacific Regional Information System (PRISM). PRISM (Pacific Regional Information System) provides Pacific island NSOs the tools and the skills to develop, publish and maintain their own Internet websites containing key statistical indicators, statistical summaries, reports, concepts definitions and other documentation for the statistical indicators. The system will be redeveloped in the near future [SPC website].

<sup>19</sup> Available on the Paris21 website at <http://www.paris21.org/documents/2567.pdf>

Specific activities / actions	By who / whom	By
1. NSOs to place existing strategic plans for the development of their statistics on national websites.	NSOs	End June 2010
2. Assess the effectiveness of existing strategic plans of all ESCAP Members and Associate Members with respect to provision of: consultation with users, objectives, specific implementation activities, timelines, linkage to government budget processes.	ESCAP Secretariat, Paris21	End 2010
3. Revise existing NSDS tools to identify a small set of key qualitative indicators to assess the effectiveness of national strategic planning process, including processes for improving statistical advocacy.	Paris21, SIAP, ESCAP Secretariat  Possible use could be made of the <i>NSDS Essentials – Checklist</i> available on the Paris21 website	End 2011
4. Develop an NSDS module and support tools (including training) specifically aimed for implementation / use by small states.	Paris21, SIAP, SPC	End 2011
5. Undertake training in small states on the implementation of a “light” NSDS.	Paris21, SIAP, SPC	End 2013
6. Undertake training for other countries in the Asia and Pacific region on the design and implementation of an effective strategic planning process – flows from activity 2 above.	Paris21, SIAP, ESCAP Secretariat	End 2014

#### 4.5. Processes to improve co-ordination of capacity building activities of agencies operating in Asia and the Pacific

95. **Objective:** To improve the co-ordination of capacity building activities of agencies operating in the Asia and Pacific region through the gathering and sharing of information on their current and near future (i.e. over the next 12 months) activities.

96. This information would be used to identify areas of potential duplication and possibilities for co-operation to maximize use of available resources and hopefully ensure that the activities of agencies in the region complement each other without compromising the agency’s original goals, etc.

97. These organizations have their own goals and priorities and the proposals outlined below would tap into their expertise and knowledge through non-burdensome mechanisms such as information sharing about future / planned activities, when they are more readily modified, to

maximize their benefits. In this context it is important for the each of the organizations listed in Annex 6 to endorse the processes and recommendations outlined below and as far as possible, align their assistance activities to the overall plan.

98. Suggested items for possible inclusion in future information gathering on capacity building activities are provided in the table in Section 4.5.3 below.

#### **4.5.1 ESCAP role in co-ordinating capacity-building activities in Asia and the Pacific**

99. At a side event on co-ordinating support for statistics development in the Asia-Pacific region, organized around the first meeting of the Committee on Statistics in February 2009, the issue of co-ordination among regional and international agencies active in the region was discussed extensively and specific mechanisms explored for improving co-ordination and co-operation for supporting statistical capacity building in the Asia-Pacific region [ESCAP 2009b]. The subsequent decision of the United Nations Statistical Commission [UNSC 2009a, p. 16] gives ESCAP the mandate to play an active co-ordination role<sup>20</sup> in the region.

100. In an ESCAP paper [ESCAP 2009] presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee for the Co-ordination of Statistical Activities held in Bangkok in September 2009 the following mechanisms were presented:

a. The ESCAP Committee on Statistics will play an important role in promoting the coordination among statistics development partners in the region. ESCAP Statistics Division would serve as the Secretariat of the informal mechanism.

b. ESCAP proposes that ESCAP Committee on Statistics becomes the main forum for the coordination of statistical capacity building activities among partners in the region. A meeting can be held regularly preceding each session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics, with participation of all key regional, international and/or bilateral partners, to review the on-going and planned programme/activities, identify opportunities for joint planning/implementation, and discuss particular strategic issues of common concern. A short report of each meeting could be submitted to the Committee for consideration and guidance.

c. ESCAP further proposes that in-between the sessions of the Committee on Statistics, the relevant organizations and partners hold an interim meeting to be held back to back with the Statistical Commission, to address follow-up to any decisions and propose issues to be addressed at the subsequent regular biannual meeting.

d. ESCAP is currently evaluating possible means of monitoring the capacity building activities in the Asia and Pacific region and platforms for exchange of information. In ESCAP's evaluation a strong importance will be placed on minimizing the respondent burden. ESCAP is considering

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<sup>20</sup> The UNSC "urged the [ESCAP] Secretariat to strengthen and co-ordinate the work on capacity-building to improve sharing of best practices and to increase advocacy activities to assist countries in securing political support from their Governments on statistical development" [UNSC 2009a, p. 16].

solutions from the ECE region as well as the possibility of utilizing the information from the Partner Report on Support on Statistics (PRESS)<sup>21</sup>. Use of existing data collection sources would be in lieu of an additional information gathering exercise by ESCAP from agencies active in the Asia and Pacific region.

#### 4.5.2. Mechanisms for co-ordinating capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region

101. The following table outlines a limited set of proposals for co-ordinating the capacity building activities of agencies active in the Asia and Pacific region.

**Table 11: Proposed mechanism for co-ordinating capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region**

Activity	Proposed co-ordination mechanism
1. Information gathering	ESCAP Statistics Division to provide secretariat functions with regard to information gathering on the capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region by agencies listed in Annex 6 below.
	ESCAP to assess information provided in the Paris 21 2009 PRESS report as a viable source of information on the capacity building activities of agencies active in the Asia and Pacific region. The following information items would be desirable: programme title; objective(s); subject content; modality of delivery; national and international partner organizations, relevant dates / timeline; target economies in the Asia-Pacific region; links (if any) to further information.
	Information would be required at the end of October each year and would be in respect to the following calendar year.
	ESCAP to identify areas / activities of potential duplication and discuss with the agency concerned.
2. Information sharing	Information would be collected online and placed on the Statistics Division Internet site [where it could be amended by the agency concerned?]
3. Discussion between key regional partners	ESCAP would prepare a summary report on capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region for presentation and discussion at a session:

<sup>21</sup> The Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) provides a tool for improved collaboration among donors supporting statistical development in developing countries. Paris21 designed and administers the PRESS exercise to provide a snapshot of ongoing statistical support, answering the questions of who, what, where, and how much. The latest report, released in December 2009, outlines the results of the 2009 round of the PRESS, covering ongoing activities during 2007–09, thus updating the PRESS 2008 report, which covered the period 2006–08. The report covers both current and future (2010 – 2011) donor activities. This report is available at <http://www.paris21.org/documents/3625.pdf> [Paris21 2009b]. The report also outlines areas of possible under and over reporting, the former as a result of possible duplication. Another document provides a detailed description of the questionnaires and processes used to obtain information from donors – available at <http://www.paris21.org/documents/3424.pdf>.

Activity	Proposed co-ordination mechanism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• convened prior to each biannual December session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics, with participation of all key regional, international and/or bilateral partners. The session would review the on-going and planned programme/activities, identify opportunities for joint planning/implementation, and discuss particular strategic issues of common concern. A short report of each meeting would be submitted to the Committee for consideration and guidance.</li> <li>• held back-to-back with the Statistical Commission in years between sessions of the Committee on Statistics. This session would address follow-up to any decisions and propose issues to be addressed at the subsequent regular biannual meeting.</li> </ul>

102. These ESCAP Secretariat co-ordination activities are also outlined below Section 5.4, together with other activities associated with implementation and future review of the Regional Programme.

## 5. REVIEW AND MONITORING OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME

103. The review mechanisms envisaged in the Regional Programme cover both developments in economic statistics at the national level and improvements in co-ordination of statistical capacity building activities by global, regional and sub-regional agencies and donor countries active in the Asia-Pacific region.

### 5.1. Benchmarking progress at the national level

104. The October 2009 version of the Assessment Framework presented at the December 2009 *Workshop to Develop a Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific* provides an initial benchmark against which progress over the ten years to 2020 will be gauged.

105. It is envisaged that the content of the Assessment Framework for each country will be updated annually around August. This would entail insertion of minimal country information by the ESCAP Secretariat. It would then be forwarded to each country for verification / amendment and insertion of any missing information. As changes within a year are not expected to be significant this should not be a burdensome exercise.

106. All of the individual country information in the Assessment Framework is already in the public domain and it is proposed to place nationally verified information on the ESCAP website.

### 5.2. Annual review of the agency deliverables programmes

107. The ESCAP Statistics Division will prepare an analysis of progress in the implementation of the Regional Programme for discussion by the Committee on Statistics every two years at its December meeting. The report would also include comment on the effectiveness of the co-ordination of capacity building activities by agencies working in the Asia and Pacific region as envisaged in Section 4.5.2 above.

108. It is also envisaged that the Regional Programme itself could be modified each year at this stage to take account of emerging needs and changes in priorities.

109. In the off-year the Secretariat would still prepare a report for consideration by the Statistics Committee Bureau at a meeting held back to back with the Statistical Commission. The timing and other processes would be the same.

### 5.3. Review of Assessment Framework

110. The Assessment Framework itself will be reviewed periodically to maintain relevance / usefulness as a tool for periodic review of the Regional Programme and to assess progress. Ideally, the content of the Assessment Framework should reflect the main issues embodied in the Regional programme. There is an obvious trade-off between ensuring alignment to the maximum extent possible and resources required within the ESCAP Secretariat and at the national level to provide the required information after initial implementation of the programme.

111. Following the December 2009 Workshop the elements included in the current version of the Assessment Framework will be revised in early 2010 to bring it more into line with the Regional Programme which will itself also be revised to include comments and suggestions provided by national participants at the Workshop together with those of global, regional and sub-regional bodies. Areas to be revised include additional:

a. economic statistics outlined in the *core set of economic statistics*. The core statistics currently included in the Assessment Framework are marked by an asterisk (\*) in the *Draft Core Set of Economic Statistics* provided below in Annex 1;

b. indicators to facilitate assessment of the quality of basic economic statistics currently being compiled by individual national agencies in the Asia and Pacific region, including those currently using the IMF's Data Quality Assessment Framework. Again, the inclusion of additional quality measures will need to be balanced against resources required to annually revise individual country assessments using the Assessment Framework. It is therefore unlikely that any additional quality information collected via the Assessment Framework will allow a full assessment of quality. In the longer term such an assessment would be made through use of metadata compiled by national agencies;

c. qualitative indicators on effective strategic planning processes including nationally developed strategies for countries not using the NSDS and information that will provide a feel of the effectiveness of the planning process – refer Section 4.4.1 above;

d. information to assess progress / change in the implementation of other key processes included in the programme to improve methodological transparency and statistical advocacy. These processes are currently not included in the Assessment Framework, though given their importance progress needs to be objectively monitored.

112. Revisions / changes to the Assessment Framework in subsequent years will be undertaken on an ad hoc basis depending of changes in need / use.

#### 5.4. Activities to be carried out by ESCAP Secretariat for implementation and review of the Regional Programme over the period 2010 – 2020

113. This sub-section summarizes a range of activities proposed for implementation by the ESCAP Secretariat with respect to co-ordination of statistical capacity activities in the Asia-Pacific region, future revision of the Assessment Framework and review of Regional Programme deliverables.

**Table 12: Proposed ESCAP Secretariat activities**

Task	When	Regional Programme reference (Section)
<b>Co-ordination of capacity building activities</b>		
Proactive role in inserting best practice implemented by countries in the region into UNSD's <i>Knowledge Base</i> ?	annual	5.5
Secretariat functions with regard to information gathering on the capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region by agencies listed in Annex 6 below.	annual	8.3
Assess the viability of using the Paris 21 PRESS system based on the 2009 PRESS report <sup>22</sup> as a source of information on capacity building activities by agencies operating in the Asia and Pacific region. Discuss information short-falls with Paris 21.	2010 (by June)	8.3
Analyze identify areas / activities of potential duplication in capacity building activities and discuss with the agency concerned.	annual (October)	8.3
Prepare a summary report on capacity building activities in the Asia-Pacific region for presentation and discussion at sessions convened prior to the Committee on Statistics meeting. Prepare summary report of outcomes for subsequent Committee meeting.	annual (December)	8.3
<b>Revision of the Assessment Framework</b>		
Initiate annual update of Assessment Framework for each of the 58 economies in the region. Entails insertion of minimal country information by the ESCAP Secretariat and forward to each country for verification / amendment and insertion of any missing information.	annual (August)	10.1
Develop website into which nationally verified country assessment information could be inserted.	2010 (by June)	10.1
Review of the Assessment Framework structure to ensure alignment with the Regional Programme	2010 (by June)* then annual (August)	10.3
<b>Review of Regional Programme deliverables</b>		
Prepare an analysis of progress in the implementation of the Regional Programme for discussion by the Committee on Statistics every two years at its December meeting. The report would also include comment on the effectiveness of the co-ordination of capacity building activities by	annual (November)	10.2

<sup>22</sup> Available at <http://www.paris21.org/documents/3625.pdf>



Task	When	Regional Programme reference (Section)
agencies working in the region.		
Review Regional Programme itself to take account of emerging needs and changes in priorities.	annual (November)	10.2
<b>Implementation of the Regional programme</b>		
In addition to the above tasks there are a large amount of work to be undertaken by the ESCAP Secretariat with global, regional and sub-regional partners in the implementation of the Regional Programme over the ten years to 2020. These tasks are outlined in Section 4 above.		

\* To incorporate suggested changes flowing out of the December 2009 Workshop

114. In addition to the activities outlined in Table 11, and the funded activities planned for 2010 as outlined in Annex 6. Subject to successful fundraising ESCAP secretariat will also conduct capacity building activities aimed at developing the capacity of ESCAP Members and Associate Members to produce a *core set of economic statistics* (as outlined in Section 3).

115. The focus of ESCAP capacity building programme under the Regional Programme will be the priority areas/countries which are currently not being covered by other organizations active in Asia and the Pacific.

## 6. FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

116. Costing at national and regional levels

117. ESCAP costs

[To be prepared after December 2009 Workshop]

## 7. REFERENCES

*Note: Some / many of the following references will not be used in the version of the Regional Programme forwarded to participants at ESCAP's December 2009 Workshop.*

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## ANNEXES

### ANNEX I. DRAFT CORE SET OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS, FEBRUARY 2010

The Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) of the IMF and the milestones of Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) were used as a starting point for the defining the scope of the Regional Programme in terms of economic statistic domains, i.e. the *core set of economic statistics*. In addition, the core set includes indicators measuring informal sector activities both to ensure the exhaustiveness of GDP estimates and for key indicators such as employment. Finally, it includes relevant household related indicators from the MDGs. The *core set of economic statistics* is provided below in two formats – category of statistic and in terms of indicative data needs of the SNA.

#### **Purpose of core set**

Whilst the focus of the Regional Programme is the enhancement of the capacities of economies in the Asia and Pacific region to compile basic economic statistics, the purpose of the *core set of economic statistics* is to define their scope in terms of the statistical domains they encompass. They are seen as a minimum set of statistics that countries should aspire to compile either for monitoring the economy or the compilation of national accounts. The core set has a short-term and longer-term element through the inclusion of short-term and structural economic statistics. The set does not focus on economic statistics required to measure the impact of the global financial crisis but at the same allows monitoring of such global developments.

It is not envisaged that the Regional Programme will attempt to improve national capacities of all core economic statistics in all economies in the Asia and Pacific region. Priorities as to which specific basic economic statistic within each of the broad categories of statistics listed below should be compiled by the national statistical system (NSS), and for which capacity development is required, is largely dependent on the identified needs of key users in government and non-government agencies / organisations. The core set also facilitates identification of economic statistics that are particularly relevant and of importance to individual economies.

[ESCAP 2009e].

#### **Main elements of the *core set of economic statistics***

The *core set of economic statistics* are defined as follows:

- priority economic statistic category or domain and key statistics within each domain;
- their frequency; and



- existing international standards / guidelines for each statistical domain / statistic accessed through tools such as UNSD Knowledge Base<sup>23</sup>.

[ESCAP 2009e]

### **Country groups**

Given the wide variation in the size and level of economic development in the 58 economies across the Asia and Pacific region, during Committee on Statistics discussion on the need to develop the Regional Programme delegates stressed that the capacity needs for the development of produce basic economic statistics varied from country to country. It was suggested that a typology of economies could be developed that reflected the respective economic structure and size of the economy. This view was also expressed by delegations during the *Expert Group Meeting on the Development of Economic Statistics in the Asia and Pacific Region* held in Bangkok in September 2009 [ESCAP 2009e]. It was suggested that such a typology could be based on the size and structure of the economy.

Since the September meeting further consideration has been given to possible grouping of homogeneous economies in the region and current thinking is that it would be more appropriate to group economies on the basis of their development needs with respect to Regional Programme implementation in the context of the elements outlined in Table 1 in Section 1 above.

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<sup>23</sup> Available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/EconStatKB/>

**Draft core set of economic statistics (\* denotes inclusion in the October 2009 ESCAP Assessment Framework),  
February 2010**

Category of statistic	Frequency	In GDDS / SDDS?	Comment	Relevant international standard / guideline (including classification(s))
<b>Prices and costs</b>				
Consumer price index*	Q	Y	Scope of the regimen may be country specific.	Consumer Price Index Manual: Theory and Practice (2004) [Knowledge Base]
Producer price index*	Q	Y	Covers input, output (incl. services) and fixed asset price indexes. Scope and purpose to be determined by country. Inclusion of residential and commercial property indexes to be discussed.	Producer Price Index Manual – 2004 [Knowledge Base]
External merchandise trade price indexes	M	Y	Commodity detail country specific.	
Commodity price index	M	N	Only required for key commodities and only if not already included in PPI and/or Trade index.	
Labour costs index / Wage index*	Q	Y	Scope and detail determined by country.	
Earnings*	Q	Y	Average hourly or weekly. Industry or occupation analyses determined by country.	
Terms of trade	M	N		
Exchange rates	D	Y	Spot and forward rates.	
Purchasing power parities	ad hoc	N	Not produced directly by NSS but joining ICP programme strongly recommended. Redesign CPI price groups to align with ICP needs.	International Comparison Program - Methodological Handbook 2005 [Knowledge Base]
<b>Demand and output</b>				
GDP (production)* nominal and real	Q	Y	Analysed by industry - detail country specific. Quarterly frequency desired.	System of National Accounts 1993 [Knowledge Base]

Category of statistic	Frequency	In GDDS / SDDS?	Comment	Relevant international standard / guideline (including classification(s))
			Will satisfy the MRDS (Minimum Required Data Set needed for SNA93 implementation) if VA components by industry are also produced.	System of National Accounts 2008
GDP (expenditure)" nominal and real (including implicit price indexes for GDE and components)	Q	Y	Analysed by major expenditure component. Quarterly frequency desired. Will satisfy the MRDS.	
External trade – merchandise*	M	Y	Values and volume indexes. Commodity detail country specific.	International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions, Revision 2 (1998) [Knowledge Base]
External trade - services	Q	N	Values. Only if relevant for the country and product detail country specific.	Manual on Statistics of international trade in services (2002) [Knowledge Base]
Short term indicator (STI) - industry output*  [STI complement GDP(E) by being more timely and less comprehensive in coverage. They serve as leading indicators of GDP.]	Q	Y	To cover key industries. More than one index may be needed. Country specific regarding the scope and choice of indicator, e.g. to include services such as tourism as required. Primary industry commodity sales may be included, e.g. agricultural commodity sales, minerals sales.	International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics 2008 (Statistical papers, Series M, No. 89) [Knowledge Base]  International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics (IRIS) 2008 [Knowledge Base]
Economy structure statistics	5 yearly	N	Regular or irregular census/surveys of the economy or major industries within it. Included in this category are non-financial censuses/surveys on key industries such as agriculture, forestry & fishing.	
STI - consumer demand*	Q	N	Commodity / population coverage country specific	
STI - fixed investment	Q	N	Coverage and nature of the STI country specific, but aim is to capture demand for major capex.	
STI - inventories	Q	N	Key commodities and only if relevant.	

Category of statistic	Frequency	In GDDS / SDDS?	Comment	Relevant international standard / guideline (including classification(s))
Productivity	A	N	National labour productivity measures. MFP measures desired but not included in the core set at this stage. Industry scope determined by country.	ICLS Resolution concerning the measurement of working time, 2008
<b>Income &amp; Wealth</b>				
Integrated national accounts for the total economy*	A	N	The IMF standards are restricted to GDP/GNI with some breakdowns. Included here are total economy accounts excluding the Financial A/cs and Balance sheets, but including a ROW a/c. Will provide an annual GDP(I) statistic to cross-check with the GDP(P) and GDP(E) measures. Will satisfy MRDS.	
Institutional sector accounts	A	N	As above for the total economy but for the key institutional sectors [minimum is a household, government and business enterprises split of the economy]. At sector level, balance sheets and supporting data to track net wealth changes are highly recommended.	
Balance of payments*	Q	Y	Comprehensive statistical framework producing goods & services, net income flows, net current transfers, capital and financial account items, reserves. [(Detail on services, income & transfers to be country specific)]	Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual - Sixth Edition (BPM6) [Knowledge Base]
International Investment Position	A	Y	As per SDDS prescribed coverage, e.g. separate identification of reserve assets, FDI, portfolio investment etc.	

Category of statistic	Frequency	In GDDS / SDDS?	Comment	Relevant international standard / guideline (including classification(s))
Income distribution	5 yearly	N	Periodic data on income distribution of individuals (or household?) distinguishing between key groups of households (i.e. urban/rural; formal/informal) depending on country needs. More frequent income distribution studies are recommended, but need to be tied in to frequency of source data, such Household Income & Expenditure Survey.	ICLS Resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics, 2003 ICLS Resolution concerning the measurement of employment-related income, 1998
<b>Money &amp; Banking</b>				
Assets/liabilities of banks	M	Y	As per the GDDS for depository corporations including the “encouraged” breakdown of claims (i.e. a sector breakdown). Includes Central Bank as a separate output.	Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual (MFSM) [Knowledge Base]
Broad money and credit aggregates	M	Y		
Interest rate statistics	M	Y	Short-term / long-term govt. security rates ; range of deposit & lending rates.	
<b>Government</b>				
General government operations	Q	Y	Quarterly for central govt. Local govt. annual but quarterly recommended. Annual Revenue and expenditure, balance and financing (transaction detail country specific). Disaggregated by levels of government (central, regional, local).	Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001 [Knowledge Base]

Category of statistic	Frequency	In GDDS / SDDS?	Comment	Relevant international standard / guideline (including classification(s))
			Inter-government and public corporation financing identified.	
General government debt	Q	Y	Quarterly for central govt. Local govt. annual but quarterly recommended. Domestic / foreign debt by instrument, currency, maturity as relevant. Disaggregated by levels of government (central, regional, local).	
<b>Labour Market</b>				
Labour supply	A	N	Labour force statistics analysed by age, gender, skill level etc Labour migration data, e.g. number of international migrant workers.	
Labour demand– employment / unemployment*	Q	Y (part)	Employment, unemployment, not in LF as per ILO definitions. Age, gender and industry breakdowns as required. (Underemployment?) Own account and family workers in employment. Employment analysed by the formal/informal and/or rural/non-rural sectors. Employment by economic activity will satisfy the MRDS.	ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, 1982
Hours worked	Q	N	Detail by type of worker, industry, distributional data etc. country specific. Required for labour productivity measures.	ICLS Resolution concerning the measurement of working time, 2008

Natural Assets and the Environment				
Natural assets	A	N	Discovery, depletion and degradation of the key natural assets such as fish, forestry and minerals included in GDP boundary. Volumes and estimated values.	

Source: Cope 2009

## Draft core set of economic statistics related to indicative data needs for the SNA

Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
<b>Prices and costs</b>								
Consumer price index	Output price deflators for selected service industries			Price deflators for HCE				Price deflators for exports of travel services
Producer price index [includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry input indexes</li> <li>• Industry output indexes</li> <li>• Fixed capital goods indexes</li> <li>• Specific industrial commodity price indexes where these are needed separate from industry PPIs]</li> </ul>	Price deflators for industry output.  Price deflators for intermediate consumption.			Price deflators for Government / NPISH intermediate consumption	Price deflators for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gross fixed capital expenditure</li> <li>• Inventories</li> </ul>			Price deflators for exports of goods & services
External merchandise trade price indexes			Calculate RGNDI		Price deflators for imported capital items			Price deflators for exports & imports of goods
Terms of trade [goods only or also goods & services]								



Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
Labour costs index / Wage index		Wage index for salaries & wages		Wage deflator for Government / NPISH salaries & wages				
Earnings (average hourly or weekly rates)		Earnings data for salaries & wages when combined with a volume measure.						
Exchange rates								
Purchasing power parities								
<b>Demand and output</b>								
GDP (production) nominal and real								
GDP (expenditure) nominal and real (including implicit price indexes for GDE and components)								
External trade – merchandise				Imports of household goods for HCE	Imports of capital goods for GFCF			Exports & imports of goods
External trade – services (only if significant to economy)								Exports of services

Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
<p>Short term indicator (STI) - industry output</p> <p>[STI complement GDP(E) by being more timely and less comprehensive in coverage. They serve as leading indicators of GDP.]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicators of industry output.</li> <li>Key industries to be covered including service industries.</li> <li>Can be sales or production.</li> <li>For some industries sales / volumes of key products may be all that can be obtained, eg agriculture, fishery and forestry products</li> </ul>							
<p>Economy structure statistics – industry/enterprise</p> <p>[From industry establishment or enterprise censuses / surveys collecting financial data. Also includes production censuses/surveys.]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmark statistics of gross output and intermediate consumption by industry.</li> <li>Provide product detail for SUT balancing and PPI (deflator) regimen weights.</li> </ul>	Benchmark statistics of VA by component by sector/industry.	Benchmark statistics for other income flows by sector	Benchmark data for industry sales to households (eg retail industry sales, accommodation & restaurant industry sales)	Benchmark statistics of gross fixed capital formation, inventories by industry.		Benchmark balance sheet data if collected.	

Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
STI - consumer demand	Retail sales surveys also serve as STI of industry output.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail sales survey for HCE</li> <li>• Short-term migration flows for imports / exports of travel.</li> <li>• Other admin. data such as vehicle registrations, alcohol duty, credit card turnover, GST (VAT) etc. may provide useful indicators.</li> </ul>				Short-term migration flows for imports / exports of travel.
STI - fixed investment	Construction surveys for industry output.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building construction surveys (permits, actual construction) for capital expenditure.</li> <li>• Capex surveys for key capital intensive industries</li> </ul>			
STI - inventories					Inventory surveys for change in inventories.			
Productivity								
<b>Income &amp; Wealth</b>								
Integrated national accounts for the total economy								

Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
Institutional sector accounts						Highly recommended.	Highly recommended.	
Balance of payments		ROW income components	ROW income components	Travel debits and credits for HCE				All ROW transactions.  [additional surveys and sources will be required to compile the BOP and are not listed here)
International Investment Position						Financial asset/liability data if national and sector accounts are produced.	Financial asset/liability data if national and sector balance sheets are produced.	
Income distribution statistics /poverty measures  [From regular household economic surveys which provide key source data for NA as shown.]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmark data on household production, including owner occupied dwelling services.</li> <li>Data on informal production.</li> </ul>	Data on mixed income	Data on other household income flows	Benchmark data for items in HCE.  Regimen weights for CPI.	Data on own account production of capital goods.		Data on household financial assets / liabilities (if collected)	
<b>Money &amp; Banking</b>								

Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
Assets/liabilities of banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banking industry indicators.</li> <li>FISIM measurement.</li> </ul>					Financial asset/liability data if national and sector accounts are produced.	Financial asset/liability data if national and sector balance sheets are produced.	Financial asset/liability data if resident / non resident split
Broad money and credit aggregates								
Interest rate statistics	FISIM measurement.							
<b>Government</b>								
General government operations	Gross output, intermediate consumption for government.	VA components for Government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government sector accounts income flows.</li> <li>Data source for Government related transactions in other sector accounts (ie counterparty entries).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government final consumption expenditure.</li> <li>Collective /individual consumption splits.</li> </ul>	Government gross fixed capital formation.	Government sector financial transactions.	Government sector balance sheet data, if compiled.	Government related overseas transactions
General government debt						Government sector financial transactions.	Government sector balance sheet data, if compiled	
<b>Labour Market</b>								
Labour supply								

Category of statistic	Production account	Distribution and use of income accounts			Accumulation accounts		Balance sheet	Rest of the world account
		Generation of income	Distribution of income	Use of income	Capital	Financial		
Labour demand – employment / unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment indicators for gross output.</li> <li>• Employment by industry.</li> </ul>	Employment indicators for income measures.						
Hours worked	Employment indicators for gross output.	Employment indicators for income measures.						
<b>Natural Assets and the Environment</b>								
Natural resource assets  • Economic assets only	Extended measure: include depletion as a cost against GDP.						Discovery and depletion in other volume changes	

Source: Cope 2009

## ANNEX II. ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

### Development and uses of the Assessment Framework

The ESCAP Statistics Division developed the Assessment Framework as the primary tool for conducting a region-wide assessment of the capacity of the 58 individual national statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific to produce basic economic statistics. Information collected in the Framework comprises statistical infrastructures, detailed information on national accounts compilation, and the compilation of a small number of other economic statistics. Limited information on the quality of each of the above was also collected. The Framework was developed on the basis of existing frameworks and reviewed by an expert group.

To reduce the reporting burden on national agencies in the insertion of information into the Framework extensive use was made of existing data gathered from other international organizations, national websites and other sources. Countries were then asked to verify the accuracy of the information included in the framework document for their country and to provide any missing information.

The information verified / provided was then used to assess individual country capacity to compile the *core set of economic statistics* described above in Annex 1. The summary results of the assessment were presented and discussed at the *Workshop to Develop a Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific* held in Bangkok on 9-11 December 2009.

In addition to being used for developing and monitoring the Regional Programme, the assessment results will also be used as an input to the global implementation strategy of the 2008 System of National Accounts by Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) and to raise the awareness among national policymakers in government and business, as well as the media of the importance of economic statistics and the need for increased funding for the NSS.

Finally, the results of the individual country assessments were used to identify a set of *Aggregated Capacity Building Needs for the Asia and Pacific Region* for implementation from January 2010 over a period of ten years with annual targets / objectives.

### Main elements of the Assessment Framework

The current version of the Assessment Framework is provided below in Annex 2. The main elements of the Framework are outlined in the following table.

Category	Detailed activity
A. Statistical capacity overview	Legal / institutional framework
	Data sources – censuses and surveys
	Data sources – administrative data
	Data sources – business registers
	Classifications
B. National accounts	Frequency, calculation and prices
	Compliance with SNA 93
	Compilation practices
	Accounting conventions
	Dissemination
	1993 SNA plans
C. Other indicators	Employment / unemployment
	Wages / earnings
	Consumer price index (CPI)
	Producer price index (PPI)
	Retail trade turnover
	Industrial production index
	Volume / turnover in services
	Merchandise trade
Balance of payments	
D. Seasonal adjustment	
E. Results of 2009 SIAP training needs survey	
Annex 1 – Assessment sources	



**Geographic country groupings used in analysis of Assessment Framework**

East & North-East Asia (ENEA)	South-East Asia(SEA)	South & SouthWest Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific
China	Brunei Darussalam	Afghanistan	Armenia	Australia
DPR Korea	Cambodia	Bangladesh	Azerbaijan	American Samoa
Hong Kong, China	Indonesia	Bhutan	Georgia	Cook Islands
Japan	Lao PDR	India	Kazakhstan	Fiji
Macao, China	Malaysia	Iran (Islamic Rep.)	Kyrgyzstan	French Polynesia
Mongolia	Myanmar	Maldives	Russian Federation	Guam
Republic of Korea	Philippines	Nepal	Tajikistan	Kiribati
	Singapore	Pakistan	Turkmenistan	Marshall Islands
	Thailand	Sri Lanka	Uzbekistan	Micronesia (F.S.)
	Timor-Leste	Turkey		Nauru
	Vietnam			New Caledonia
				New Zealand
				Niue
				N. Mariana Is.
				Palau
				Papua New Guinea
				Samoa
				Solomon Islands
				Tonga
				Tuvalu
				Vanuatu

**ANALYSIS OF COUNTRY INFORMATION PROVIDED IN  
OCTOBER 2009 ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**Table 1: National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)**

	East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
Completed	2	4	2	5	1	14
Process initiated	0	2	4	1	0	7
Preparation underway	0	2	2	2	3	9
Not started	1	1	1	1	2	6
Count empty	4	2	1	0	15	22
Total	7	11	10	9	21	58

The NSDS provides the overall framework for enhancing statistical capacity and coordination across the statistical system. Their regular update and consistency with the main reference frameworks (e.g. SNA) is called upon in the Luxembourg Recommendations.

**Table 2: Adequacy of resources**

	East & North-East Asia (ENEAA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
Financial (NSO)						
- Adequate	4	4	3	2	2	15
- Not adequate	1	0	2	3	2	8
- Count empty	2	7	5	4	17	35
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Computing (NSO)						
- Adequate	5	4	4	3	9	25
- Not adequate	0	0	1	3	1	5
- Count empty	2	7	5	3	11	28
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Staff – NSO						
- Adequate	3	4	5	2	4	18
- Not adequate	1	1	4	0	11	17
- Count empty	2	6	1	7	6	22
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Staff – Econ. Stats.						
- Adequate	3	3	2	0	4	12
- Not adequate	2	4	1	1	11	19
- Count empty	2	4	7	8	6	27
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Staff – Nat. Acc.						
- Adequate	3	4	3	2	2	14
- Not adequate	2	5	6	5	13	31
- Count empty	2	2	1	2	6	13
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58

Table 3: Survey frames

	East & North-East Asia (ENEA)	South-East Asia(SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
<b>Business registers</b>						
Existence						
- Yes	5	6	3	8	12	34
- No	1	4	6	0	9	20
- Count empty	1	1	1	1	0	4
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Used for Econ. Stats.						
- Yes	4	3	0	3	10	27
- No	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Count empty	3	8	10	6	11	38
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	
<b>Sources used for labour force surveys</b>						
Register based						
- Yes	0	1	1	3	12	17
- No	6	7	7	4	3	27
- Count empty	1	3	2	2	6	14
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
LFS based						
- Yes	6	9	8	6	10	39
- No	0	0	1	1	4	6
- Count empty	1	2	1	2	7	13
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58

Table 4: Training needs assessment

	East & North-East Asia (ENEA)	South-East Asia(SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
<b>Responded to the 2009 SIAP Training Needs Survey?</b>						
- Yes	5	11	10	8	7	41
- No	2	0	0	1	14	17
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
<b>Highest priority areas identified by the NSO as in need of improving the individual skills of the staff over the next 5 years – Core Statistical Skills</b>						
General statistical knowledge						
- High	1	0	0	1	2	4
- Medium	0	2	0	0	0	2
- Low	1	0	0	0	0	1
- Count empty	4	9	10	8	19	50
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Analytical skill and knowledge						
- High	1	2	0	0	2	5
- Medium	1	0	0	0	0	1
- Low	0	0	0	1	0	1
- Count empty	4	9	10	8	19	50
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Need phase of the statistical process						
- High	1	1	0	1	2	5
- Medium	1	0	0	0	0	1
- Low	0	1	0	0	0	1
- Count empty	5	9	10	8	19	51
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Develop and design phase of the statistical process						
- High	1	0	0	1	1	3
- Medium	0	1	0	0	1	2
- Low	1	1	0	0	0	2
- Count empty	5	9	10	8	19	51
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Build phase of the statistical process						
- High	1	0	0	1	0	2
- Medium	0	0	0	0	2	2
- Low	1	2	0	0	0	3
- Count empty	5	9	10	8	19	51
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Collect phase of the statistical process						
- High	1	0	0	1	1	3
- Medium	0	0	0	0	1	1
- Low	1	2	0	0	0	3
- Count empty	5	9	10	8	19	51
- Total	7	11	10	9	21	58
Process phase of the statistical process						
- High	1	0	0	1	2	4
- Medium	1	0	0	0	0	1
- Low	0	2	0	0	0	2
- Count empty	4	9	10	8	19	50
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Analysis phase of the statistical cycle						
- High	1	2	0	0	1	4
- Medium	1	0	0	0	1	2

	East & North-East Asia (ESEA)	South-East Asia (SEA)	South & South-West Asia (SSWA)	North & Central Asia (NCA)	Pacific	Total
Low	0	0	0	1	0	1
Count empty	4	9	10	8	19	50
Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Dissemination phase of the statistical process						
High	1	0	0	1	1	3
Medium	0	1	0	0	0	1
Low	2	1	0	0	0	3
Count empty	3	9	10	8	20	50
Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
<b>Highest priority areas identified by the NSO as in need of improving the individual skills of the staff over the next 5 years – Specialist Statistical Skills</b>						
Integrated economic statistics						
High	3	7	5	6	6	27
Medium	1	3	2	1	1	8
Low	0	0	2	0	0	2
High / medium	0	0	0	1	0	1
Medium / low	0	0	0	0	0	0
Count empty	2	1	1	1	14	19
Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Implementation of 2008 SNA						
- High	3	8	7	7	5	30
- Medium	1	0	3	0	1	5
- Low	0	1	0	1	1	3
- High / medium	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Medium / low	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Count empty	2	2	0	1	14	19
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Information management and related ICT						
- High	2	0	0	1	2	5
- Medium	0	2	0	0	0	2
- Low	1	0	0	0	0	1
- High / medium	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Medium / low	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Count empty	3	9	10	8	19	49
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Projections						
- High	3	0	0	0	0	3
- Medium	0	2	0	0	1	3
- Low	0	0	0	1	1	2
- High / medium	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Medium / low	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Count empty	3	9	10	8	19	49
- Total	6	11	10	9	21	57
Research methods and data modeling						
High	3	1	0	0	0	4
Medium	0	1	0	0	1	2
Low	0	0	0	1	1	2
High / medium	0	0	0	0	0	0
Low / Medium	0	0	0	0	0	0
Count empty	3	9	10	8	19	49
Total	6	11	10	9	21	57

Source: SIAP 2009 Training Needs Survey (TNS)

### **ANNEX III. RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION OF METADATA**

One of the key objectives of the Regional Programme is to improve the transparency of methodologies used by economies in the Asia and Pacific region to compile basic economic statistics. Such transparency is an essential function of all national agencies compiling official statistics within the national statistical system.

Users of metadata are generally depicted as falling into two broad groups: producers of statistics responsible for designing statistical collections, collection, processing and evaluation of statistics, and data dissemination; and end-users of statistics comprising policy analysts, media, academics, students, etc [UNSC and UNECE 2000]. International organizations also use metadata in evaluations and assessments of the comparability of statistics between countries.

#### **Existing metadata standards**

Over the last few years a number of initiatives and forums have been involved in the development of metadata standards. These include METANET, the Neufchatel Group, Eurostat, IMF, ISO, OECD, etc. The two key existing forums working in this area are the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) initiative and the UNECE-Eurostat-OECD Workshop on Statistical Metadata (METIS). SDMX work is related to the development of content-orientated guidelines for the exchange of metadata, in particular, for *common metadata concepts*.

The METIS forum has met around every 18 months since 1995. The major objectives of the forum, attended by delegates from around ten international organisations and 30 countries, are to exchange experiences on the development of corporate statistical metadata environments and to develop international standards in this area. Discussion at METIS covers a combination of information technology and metadata “content” issues, the latter comprising terminology, metadata models and corporate metadata governance.

Metadata guidelines and recommendations flowing from the work of METIS primarily touch on issues relating to best practices for disseminating metadata on the Internet, terminology on statistical metadata and guidelines for the modeling of statistical data and metadata. All of these standards may be downloaded from a Eurostat website<sup>24</sup>. Following the February 2004 meeting METIS undertook to draft and publish a framework that would provide links and context to current and previous metadata standards initiatives together with comparisons of selected examples of current best practice at the national and international levels [UNECE, Eurostat and OECD 2004, para. 7]. The framework and links to recommended practices would be developed along a number of key themes such as:

- processes for metadata collection;
- terminology;

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<sup>24</sup> Available at [http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/metadata/library?l=/standards\\_guidelines&vm=detailed&sb=Title](http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/metadata/library?l=/standards_guidelines&vm=detailed&sb=Title)

- metadata and data interchange entailing identification of common models between international organisations to which national agencies could map;
- migration strategy from existing fragmented metadata environments;
- metadata dissemination and its relation to dissemination of statistics;
- metadata governance and corporate management issues;
- incorporation of usability concerns in metadata management.

International guidelines and recommendations have also been developed for metadata required in the dissemination of micro-data – refer below.

### Metadata content recommendations

Key area	Recommended practice
The need for metadata	<p>All statistical agencies should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compile metadata required for users to understand the strengths and limitations of the economic statistics it describes; and</li> <li>• keep their metadata up-to-date, incorporating the latest changes in definitions, classifications and methodology, etc.</li> </ul>
Access to metadata	<p>Key recommendations in this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that users have ready access to such metadata through its dissemination via a range of different media – paper publications, CD-ROMs, etc. However, it is important for all metadata to be available to users on the internet, given that it provides the most accessible medium for obtaining the most up-to-date metadata. It is also recommended practice for metadata to be structured in such a way as to meet the needs of a range of users with different needs and/or statistical expertise. In this context a layered presentation of metadata is recommended, progressing from summary metadata to more detailed metadata;</li> <li>• dissemination of metadata free of charge on the internet. There is strong support for the notion that metadata describing statistics has a high public good component and should therefore be disseminated free of charge on the internet even if the actual economic and social statistics they describe and paper publication versions of the metadata are subject to an organisation's price regime;</li> <li>• active linkage of metadata to the statistical tables and graphs they describe and vice versa;</li> </ul>

Key area	Recommended practice
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• structuring the metadata for different statistical domains on the basis of some hierarchic classification. Consideration could be given to the adoption of the UN Administrative Co-ordination Committee's (ACC<sup>25</sup>) Classification of Statistics and Statistical Activities as the international standard for metadata. The classification is available at <a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/statact/acc-class.htm">http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/statact/acc-class.htm</a>;</li> <li>• provision of a local search engine based on free text search;</li> <li>• recommended practice for ensuring either the stability of URLs (Uniform Resource Locators) or providing links between the old and new URLs that will redirect users to the new address. This is a key issue given the importance of links between websites<sup>26</sup>.</li> <li>• providing the names of contact persons or email addresses where further information about concepts, definitions and statistical methodologies may be obtained. In some organisations the "contact" would be a generic corporate contact point or referral service for all client enquiries.</li> </ul>
Adoption of a set of common metadata items	<p>A comprehensive set of standard metadata items (or metadata "prompt points") is provided in both the IMF's SDDS [IMF 2003f] and GDDS [IMF 2004a, p. 113]. The SDDS primarily covers economic statistics (real, fiscal, financial and external statistics) though also includes population data. The GDDS covers the same domains in economic statistics but a broader range of socio-demographic data (population, health, education and poverty).</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that countries in the Asia and Pacific region adopt the prompt points outlined in the IMF's GDDS / SDDS initiative. This would also enable countries in the region to tap into the current and future IMF work in this area<sup>27</sup>.</p>

<sup>25</sup> Now known as the Committee for the Co-ordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) which is a body of representatives from all UN and non-UN international organisations involved in statistical activity. The CCSA normally meets once a year.

<sup>26</sup> The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) document "Cool URIs don't change" (available at <http://www.w3.org/Provider/Style/URI>) outlines the case for maintaining stable URLs and best practice for designing URLs.

<sup>27</sup> The SDMX initiative has developed of a set of common cross-domain metadata items or categories (referred to as "common metadata concepts") which form part of the SDMX content-oriented guidelines, designed to promote more efficient metadata interchange. Examples of such concepts are "data source used", "periodicity", "population coverage" and "seasonal adjustments". The common



Key area	Recommended practice
Adoption of a common set of terminology for metadata preparation	<p>Considerable resources are often expended by international organizations in verifying text, etc, to ensure that methodological descriptions are as consistent as possible between countries. Not only does the process of metadata verification entail a duplication of effort, it also results in dissemination of different methodological terminology, especially where translation of methodological text into another language is necessary. Ideally, methodological descriptions of the same national statistical collections published by different international organizations should be identical with regards to terminology. A mechanism for achieving this would be the rigorous use of terminology imbedded in the various international statistical guidelines and recommendations. This could be facilitated by the use of glossaries published by international organizations which contain definitions derived from those standards. Examples of such glossaries are those maintained by the OECD, Eurostat and UNSD.</p> <p>The Metadata Common Vocabulary (MCV) developed under the umbrella of the SDMX initiative is specifically aimed at identifying commonly used terms to describe the different types of metadata [SDMX 2004]. It is intended to be used by international organizations and national statistical agencies. The MCV contains a core set of metadata items (for both structural and reference metadata) and their related definitions and is designed to improve the standardization of metadata content for the purposes of data exchange and to promote the use of common nomenclatures that can foster international comparability of international data. The current version of the MCV (available on the SDMX website at <a href="http://www.sdmx.org">www.sdmx.org</a>) contains several fields – term title, definition, source, hyperlink to definition source where available, related terms and context.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that national agencies in the Asia and Pacific region use terminology in their metadata that is consistent with the SDMX MCV.</p>

Source: OECD, 2007, *Data and Metadata Reporting and Presentation Handbook*, OECD, Paris<sup>28</sup>

metadata concepts developed are based on existing template(s) such as those developed by the IMF for the detailed methodological summaries posted on the DSBB. The adoption by both the OECD and Eurostat of metadata items consistent with those used for the DSBB is a step in the direction of the use of consistent if not common metadata items. All three organizations have agreed to adopt the standard set of metadata terminology embodied in the SDMX Metadata Common Vocabulary - see following sub-section.

<sup>28</sup> Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/46/17/37671574.pdf>

## ANNEX IV. ELEMENTS OF THE DATA DOCUMENTATION INITIATIVE (DDI) SPECIFICATION

The DDI specification was designed to encompass various kinds of micro-datasets. It provides a comprehensive set of elements to be used to record and communicate in detail the characteristics of statistical data obtained from sample surveys, censuses, administrative records and other systematic methodologies for generating empirical measurements. These elements—some of them mandatory, most of them optional — are structured into five sections:

- Section 1.0 - *Document Description* consists of bibliographic information that can be considered as the header whose elements uniquely describe the full contents of the compliant DDI file.
- Section 2.0 - *Study Description* consists of information about the data collection. This section includes information about who collected and who distributes the data, about the scope and coverage, sampling (if relevant), data collection methods and processing, citation requirements, etc.
- Section 3.0 - *Data Files Description* provides information about the data file(s).
- Section 4.0 - *Variable Description* provides a detailed description of variables, including (when relevant) the variable type, variable and value labels, literal questions, computation or imputation methods, instructions to interviewers, universe, descriptive statistics, etc.
- Section 5.0 - *Other Study-Related Materials* allows for the inclusion of other materials related to the study such as questionnaires, user manuals, computer programs, interviewer manuals, maps, coding information, etc.

To maximize exchangeability and take advantage of Internet technology to share data and metadata, the DDI is expressed as an XML Document Type Definition, or DTD. In other words, the DDI encodes the metadata elements into a database following a standard structure and specification language. The DDI therefore facilitates interoperability as codebooks marked up using the DDI specification can be exchanged and transported seamlessly, and applications can be written to work with these homogeneous documents.

Version 1.0 of the DTD was published in March 2000. Since that time, several enhancements have been made. The most recent stable version of the DTD is Version 2.0, which is expressed as both a DTD and as an XML Schema.

The DDI is thus a relatively recent endeavour, which aims to be the foundation for the collection, distribution, use, and archiving of many future data collection projects in the social and behavioural sciences, across institutions, countries, and disciplines. Tools are being developed to assist data producers and archivists in fully exploiting it. Detailed information on the DDI and its associated tools are available at the DDI Alliance website: [www.icpsr.umich.edu/DDI](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/DDI)

**ANNEX V. MECHANISMS TO IMPROVE STATISTICAL  
ADVOCACY AND USE OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS BY  
GOVERNMENT**

Actions by	Mechanism
Government	Integrate statistics in national development policy through the promotion of evidence-based decision-making using sound and transparent statistics. One way of doing this is to regard statistics as a cross-cutting issue, very much like gender and environment, to be mainstreamed as part of national development policy, including for the design, monitoring and evaluation of national development plans and assessing progress toward the MDGs.
	Raising the profile and status of statistics in government and society by: using statistics extensively in policy analysis and design and in the national planning / budget cycle; giving the NSO special department status within the administration with appropriate autonomy; appointing the NSO head to key government committees and planning bodies.
	Providing more effective leadership by appointment of professional to head the NSO with strong skills in staff management; strategic planning; advocacy within the administration, etc. Government should support the head through reform of the NSS and ensuring that the Statistics Acts strengthen the NSO's coordinating and leadership role within government
Data producers	Developing effective leadership through training in leadership and management for all personnel in leadership and management positions.
	Mainstreaming users in national statistical processes through mechanisms of on-going dialogue between users and producers. These include the establishment of on-going data user-producer committees.
	Use of newsmakers and cultivation of champions who advocate the use of statistics. Such people include government Ministers and Department Secretaries who could be used to launch key statistical outputs, open strategic meetings which would be more likely to be reported in the media.
	Establish effective relations with the media. The media can be an effective partner in statistical advocacy as well as wider dissemination of statistical products. Relations with the media can be enhanced in a variety of ways including NSOs holding periodic workshops for media practitioners, NSOs employing former journalists to conduct their media relations, making the NSOs and their staff accessible and approachable to journalists and NSOs issuing appropriate news releases and holding periodic press conferences. The media can also teach NSOs how to prepare appropriate news releases. Also crucial to news media relations is the advance publication of release dates and timing of releases and who answers questions – there should be prompt response and ease of contact with NSOs.
	Improved data analysis, presentation and reporting through

Actions by	Mechanism
	<p>more detailed data analysis and especially policy-related analysis to establish relationships among various variables and to illuminate policy issues. Data analysis can also be improved by using more innovative methods of data presentation, particularly on the Internet, use of effective graphical presentation of statistics and the production of specialized and thematic reports.</p> <p>Use of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). The design of the NSDS uses a participatory, inclusive and consensus-building approach to produce country-specific strategies that are both country and stakeholder-owned. The process which is highly consultative and empowering, broadens and deepens both intra-institutional and inter-institutional communication, and is a golden opportunity for across-the-board statistical advocacy. PARIS21 has produced NSDS documentation and materials that will advance the statistical advocacy agenda.</p>
Training institutions	<p>Training institutions have a special role in taking forward the statistical advocacy agenda through their role in developing both technical skills and by producing statistical personnel to manage the NSSs. Training centres should begin to turn out more and more statisticians who appreciate better and talk more about development issues. Training programmes should also take care of the need for more training in data analysis, interpretation and reporting; communication and other soft skills such as report writing; etc. Statistical advocacy should be part of the new curricular in these centres and the already available advocacy materials should be customized for use in the region.</p>
The international community	<p>In recent years, the international community has increasingly focused on managing for development results and on evidence-based policy-making as a way of improving human development. The results agenda is data intensive and availability and use of better statistics have been identified by the international community as a priority of the results agenda.</p>

Source: Kiregyera, Ben, 2005, *A Case and Some Actions for Improving Statistical Advocacy in Poor Developing Countries*, African Development Bank, Tunis, Tunisia<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Available at [http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/African.Statistical.Journal\\_Vol1\\_3.Articles\\_5.Case.SomeActions.pdf](http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/African.Statistical.Journal_Vol1_3.Articles_5.Case.SomeActions.pdf)

**ANNEX VI. SUMMARY OF CURRENT CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES BY ORGANISATIONS OPERATING IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION**

**Capacity building agencies operating in the Asia and Pacific region**

Global	Regional	Sub-regional	National funding agencies	National agencies that provide training for other countries in region
UNSD IMF World Bank Eurostat European Commission FAO ILO OECD Paris21 UNIDO	ESCAP (incl.SIAP) ADB	ASEAN CIS-stat ECO SAARC SPC PFTAC UNDP Pacific Centre	AusAID (Australia) NZ Aid JICA (Japan) France DFID (UK) Netherlands SIDA (Sweden) GTZ (Germany) USAID	Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Education Centre of National Bureau of Statistics (China) India Central Statistical Organisation, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation BPS-Statistics Indonesia Islamic Republic of Iran Statistical Centre Korean National Statistical Office Training Centre Malaysia Department of Statistics Statistics New Zealand Statistical Research and Training Centre (Philippines) US Bureau of Labour Statistics Centre

Sources: SIAP 2009b; ESCAP Statistics Division; Paris21 Draft Inventory of Agencies involved in Statistical Training; Paris 21 Global Directory of Partners in Statistical Capacity Building

**Summary of current capacity building activities**

Agency / Organisation	Content description	Countries covered	Information source used
UNSD			
Paris21	Pursuing NSDS country based activities. In 2010 this will focus on country-level activities for countries to share experiences in statistical development. Implementing advocacy strategies using the START (Statistical Advocacy Resource Toolkit) to help countries develop advocacy strategies and better communicate on statistics. Further work will be undertaken on developing and improving available	Bangladesh, Lao PDR, Papua New Guinea, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Mongolia,	Paris21 2009

Agency / Organisation	Content description	Countries covered	Information source used
	booklets, summaries of available NSDSs. In 2010 it is planned to organize a workshop in South-East Asia.		
International Monetary Fund <sup>1</sup>	National accounts	QNA course offered in 2010 in Singapore	IMF 2009
	Price statistics		
	Government finance statistics	Course offered in 2010 in Pune, India	
	Monetary and financial statistics	Course offered in 2010 in Singapore Course offered in 2010 Dalian China	
	Financial soundness indicators	Course offered in 2010 in Singapore	
	Balance of payments	Course offered in 2010 Dalian China Course offered in 2010 in Washington DC Course offered in 2010 in Pune, India Course offered in 2010 in Singapore	
	International investment position	Course offered in 2010 in Washington DC Course offered in 2010 in Pune, India Course offered in 2010 in Singapore	
	External debt statistics		
	International trade in services statistics	Course offered in 2010 in Singapore	
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Supply-and-use table programme		
	Informal sector measurement		
	SNA		
	Financial savings		
	Financial soundness indicators		
	Survey methodology for economic statistics		
	International comparison programme		
ASEAN <sup>2</sup>	Development of ASEAN Common Industrial Classification at 3-digit level		ASEAN Secretariat 2009
	Development of ASEAN Common Industrial Classification for Manufacturing at 4-digit level		
	Harmonisation of international		

Agency / Organisation	Content description	Countries covered	Information source used
	merchandise trade statistics Harmonisation of international trade in services statistics Harmonisation of FDI statistics SNA implementation Non-observed economy ICT statistics Forestry statistics Labour statistics in co-operation with ILO Transport and logistics statistics in co-operation with Japan East Asia Manufacturing Statistics Comparative Matrix Table (ECMAT).	Pilot studies in Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam in co-operation with ERIA	
International Labour Office <sup>3</sup>	Informal sector LFS questionnaires / LFS Labour market monitoring tools and capacity building Wage statistics Establishment surveys	Mongolia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Palestine Afghanistan, Cambodia and Nepal Pakistan, Vietnam and Timor Leste Bangladesh and Sri Lanka Bangladesh, China, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Korea and Sri Lanka	ILO 2009
Secretariat of the Pacific Community <sup>4</sup>	National accounts in collaboration with IMF PFTAC through the establishment of a Pacific Islands National Accounts Compilers Association (PINACLE) Development of statistics strategic plans for several countries in co-operation with the ABS under Australia's Pacific Governance Support Programme. Similar programme with Statistics New Zealand for Niue, Cook Islands, Tokelau. Further joint programme in this area planned with Paris21 Assist countries to implement a comprehensive and regular programme of censuses including agriculture and specialised household and establishment surveys.		SPC 2009  SPC 2008
UNESCAP <sup>6</sup>	Measuring the informal sector and informal employment. Implemented by ESCAP (as the lead agency), ECLAC, Social Commission for Western Asia, the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics, Economic Commission for Africa, UNECE, ILO, UNDP, Women in Informal Employment: Globalising	The initiative supports pilot data collection in Mongolia, the occupied Palestine territories, Philippines, Sri Lanka and St Lucia.	ESCAP 2009

Agency / Organisation	Content description	Countries covered	Information source used
	and Organising and a number of NSOs.		
	Providing regional advisory services including in the area of economic statistics		
	Developing the statistical capacity in Myanmar including economic statistics	Myanmar	
	Developing the statistical capacity in Democratic People's Republic of Korea including economic statistics	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	
Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP)	Strengthening capability in producing and disseminating integrated economic statistics, including implementation of the 2008 SNA.		SIAP 2009
	Micro-data dissemination		
	ICP 2011		
	Statistical quality management		

1. The technical assistance activities of the IMF's Statistics Department (STA) provide comprehensive support to member countries in improving the range and quality of macroeconomic statistics to meet user needs. Technical assistance (TA) is planned and prioritized through diagnostic missions as well as the development of country and regional strategies in co-ordination with other IMF departments and the Regional Technical Assistance Centres (RTACs). RTACs located in the Asia and Pacific region comprise: Middle East (METAC); Pacific Region (PFTAC). The IMF runs three regional training centres in the Asia and Pacific region: Singapore; Pune, India; Dalian, China. Countries from the region can also attend courses offered at IMF Headquarters in Washington DC and at the Joint Vienna Institute in Austria. Finally, the Fund also has a number of long-term statistical advisors in selected countries and regions, including some in the RTACs [IMF 2009].

2. Undertaken by the Statistics Unit, ASEAN Secretariat. Work undertaken under the purview of the ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting (AHSOM). Special assistance will be provided to member countries that do not have a national standard industrial classification. ASEAN has also been promoting the harmonization of industrial statistics through seminars, workshops and studies [ASEAN Secretariat 2008, ASEAN Secretariat 2009]. An EU-ASEAN Capacity Building Programme to support ASEAN integration through more accurate and relevant statistics which facilitate decision-making prepared the document *Regional Programming for Asia Strategy Document 2007-2013 – Support to Regional Integration*<sup>30</sup>. The aim is to strengthen the capacity of ASEAN Secretariat for improved comparability of official statistical data among ASEAN members as well as between ASEAN and the EU. The programme also aims to strengthen statistical and analytical capacities of those ASEAN countries that need most support, particularly Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (LDCs). The work is undertaken in partnership with a number of national and international partners such as: Australian Bureau of Statistics; Korean National Statistics Office; Statistics New Zealand,

<sup>30</sup> Available at [http://www.delidn.ec.europa.eu/en/relations/rerelations\\_4\\_fiche\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.delidn.ec.europa.eu/en/relations/rerelations_4_fiche_statistics.pdf)



METI Japan / ERIA, ILO, IMF; UNSD, ESCAP, SIAP, ADB; UNSD Jakarta; International Trade Centre (WTO); UNCTAD; ASEAN-US Technical Assistance and Training Facility / USAID; ASEAN – Australian Development Co-operation Programme / AUSAID; ASEAN – EU Program for Regional Integration Support; EU – ASEAN Statistics Capacity Building Programme / Eurostat

2. Undertaken by the ILO Department of Statistics
  3. The Statistics 2020 concept developed by the SPC in collaboration with partners aims to: develop a minimum core data set of common development indicators across key sectors; the establishment of a long-term programme to support the regular collection and compilation of key statistics underpinning the indicators.
  4. Technical co-operation in statistics development is undertaken through the statistics sub-programme by the ESCAP Statistics Division.
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