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Coordination of statistical capacity-building activities:

Statistical training

**Response to request for information for preparation of
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Republic of Iran¹**

Q No.1.

In the Statistical Centre of Iran (SCI), Education Group is responsible for planning and holding the training courses for the SCI staff, and the Statistical Research and Training Centre (SRTC) conducts internal and international training courses. The SRTC conducts international training courses jointly with international organizations such as SIAP, ECO, ESCAP and UNSD both for local participants (SCI staff and other participants from government agencies) and regional countries.

Equipments in the SRTC:

1. Lab: two labs with 40 computers
2. Class: 4 classes with a capacity of 45 persons
3. Access to 40 electronic statistical and economic magazines
4. E-library
5. The latest versions of statistical software packages
6. LAN and Internet accessible to every computer
7. E-mail server and website
8. Emergency power system

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Countries benefiting from the training courses:

Central Asia countries and Caucasus, ECO member states, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Georgia, South Korea, Republic of Korea, Tongva, China

Table1. Educational Activities of the SRTC 2005-2009

Educational Activities	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Training courses	11	11	20	21	23	86
International courses	8	9	5	7	7	36
Workshop	1	0	2	6	10	19
Lectures	7	7	11	20	10	55

During the past five years, a Comprehensive Plan for Training of Staff Members was developed based on a well-organized procedure and the organizational chart of the SCI. The posts in the SCI were carefully analyzed in accordance to the official organizational chart of the SCI and the tasks entrusted to each position holder.

With regard to different ranks of organizational posts for any field of activity and the differences in the job description of each post and unit, the required qualifications for appointments all are considered in this planning. Subsequently, based on the organizational posts and their responsibilities and job descriptions, the required capacities and skills for holding each post were totally surveyed. In the next step, the required training courses were planned accordingly.

The requested training courses through the survey will be reviewed and refined before finalizing by the Training Office of the SCI and the finalized courses will be included in the training calendar.

The finalized training courses in the calendar will be conducted by the training institutions, SRTC or the SCI training group. Immediately after concluding each course, assessment forms are distributed among the participants of that course.

In addition to this, the experts of the training office of the SCI fill out evaluation forms of the training institutes as well as the course trainers and resource persons. To evaluate the effectiveness of the training course, the impacts of the training course are also assessed after 3 months. The assessment is done through distribution of evaluation forms among the pertinent offices. Subsequently, based on the survey outcomes, decisions are made on measures like revising the training plans, improving the methods and material as well as the rewarding measures for the trainees.

In the next part, the training courses for the SCI's subject-matter statistics experts will be presented as an example of the activities of the Office of Training and Management Services. These training courses are as follows:

- Introduction to SPSS software
- Applied Statistics
- Principle and Methods of Interview
- SQL databases
- Sampling methods and their applications
- Principles of Official Statistics
- Introduction to Statistical Software
- Introduction to SPLUS software
- Introduction to principles and rules for designing and formulating statistical surveys
- Introduction to SAS software
- Non-response in surveys(reduction, imputation and weighing)
- Methods of population estimation and projection
- Introduction to the system of administrative registers
- How to prepare research proposals
- Research Methodology
- Programming (basics)
- Programming (advanced)
- Webpage designing
- Methods of controlling statistical information disclosure
- Introduction to Iranian Statistical System
- Quality management in producing statistics
- Drafting and Preparing Statistical Reports

The frameworks of the training courses in the SRTC are official statistics, poverty statistics, GIS, and national accounts. The success in carrying out the training courses has resulted in increase of the number of participants in the new courses.

3. SCI determines its strategies and educational priorities based on its goals and major activities. Each year the Office of Training and Management Services asks other offices to announce their training requirements and after receiving their educational needs, the Education Council determines the educational priorities for each year. The "Comprehensive Plan for Staff Member Training" is reviewed each year in

order to adjust it to new educational needs. In addition to the training courses in educational calendar, the SCI holds some other training courses according to the needs claimed by its offices.

Training priorities are stipulated in the National Statistic Plan (NSP) which is developed every five year by the SCI. The NSP contains all training needs of government agencies and is approved by the High Council for Statistics. All training needs of government agencies are surveyed and NSP is developed according to the statistical priorities.

4-1. Any changes in the existing policies of the National Statistical System can result in major gaps in the training programmes; moreover, new staff with university degrees lack principle skills required for their jobs. In order to develop a sound training programme, we should recognize the gaps, shortages and deficiencies in knowledge and skills of new and old personnel. Some areas in which all staff need to be trained are as follows:

- Official statistics
- Conducting statistical and sampling surveys
- Editing and imputation
- Estimation of small areas
- Complex sampling
- Statistical and economic analysis
- Time series
- How to build statistical capacity
- Statistical literacy and awareness

4-2. New and modern technologies like video projection, E-learning, E-library, distance learning, data mining, quality management, application of IT in production, accumulation and dissemination of statistics.

4-3. One of the activities which SCI conducts is to recognize the skills and capabilities needed by each of its staff for organizational posts. This was done based on job description resulting in recognizing existing gaps in knowledge and skills of employees and drawing out needed training courses for staff. In this plan, staff at different levels ranging from manager to different employees is distinguished to pass different training courses. This kind of activity can be done in the region.

At the regional level we need more cooperation to meet our training requirements through exchange of lecturers and providing facilities..

5-1. The SCI cooperates with the international organizations like OIC, ECO, SIAP and UNFPA in conducting training courses for regional countries. Holding such training courses has been useful for the SCI. We

could gain experiences in the area of capacity building for trainer, preparing, training materials, cooperation with other NSOs through concluding MOU and sharing experiences with other countries.

5.2. The benefits for the regional countries are:

- ◆ Avoiding duplication in the field of training
- ◆ Decreasing the costs of training courses in the region
- ◆ Sharing experiences in conducting statistical surveys,
- ◆ Making coordination in production of statistics,

We suggest bilateral and multilateral cooperation through signing the Memorandum of Understanding. The SCI has signed statistical MOUs with some countries like South Korea, Sudan, Syria and Azerbaijan and these MOUs have paved the way for bilateral cooperation in the statistical areas and prepared a framework for joint activities. If these MOUs are based on principles recommended by UN, they work more effectively. If organizations like UNESCAP and SIAP develop a regional cooperation framework and define guidelines, they can help to develop this cooperation.

The followings are suggested for regional cooperation.

- ◆ Developing a specific framework for regional cooperation
 - ◆ Recognizing capabilities of the regional countries for holding regional training
 - ◆ Developing a program for placement of staff and relevant training
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