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

Second session

Bangkok, 15-17 December 2010

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda

Coordination of statistical capacity-building activities:**Statistical training**

**Response to request for information for preparation of
document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by
Philippines¹**

GUIDE QUESTIONS

1. How would your organization's mandate to provide statistical training be best described? Please provide a summary of its key features. (*Note: You may provide a copy of available documentation that contains this information.*)
 - *Is providing statistical training a specific function of the organization or capacity building?*
 - *What is the organizational set-up (infrastructure, human, financial resources) for providing training?*

For national training organizations - If you provide training to or collaborate in the provision of training to other countries, please include information on this.

Legal Basis of SRTC as National Training Organization for Statistics in the Philippines. The Statistical Research and Training Center (SRTC) is the focal agency on statistical research and training in the Philippines. Its mandate as the sole provider of statistical training services in the highly decentralized Philippine Statistical System (PSS) is clearly spelled out in Executive Order 121 issued on January 30, 1987 under the Freedom Constitution of 1985 (See attached Executive Order No. 121). Currently, SRTC is under the administrative supervision and policy and program coordination of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) through Executive Order No. 149.

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Functions. As the government agency in-charge of statistical research and training, the SRTC is responsible for: (a) developing a comprehensive and integrated research and training program on theories, concepts and methodologies for the promotion of the statistical system; (b) conducting non-degree training programs to upgrade the quality of statistical personnel and expand statistical manpower base in support of the needs of the statistical system; (c) undertaking research on statistical concepts, definitions and methods; (d) promoting collaborative efforts among members of the academic community, data producers and users; and (e) providing financial and other forms of assistance to enhance statistical research and training.

Mission. The overall mission of the SRTC is the improvement of the quality of statistical information generated by the PSS through conduct of high quality, objective and responsive statistical research and training activities. Through these activities, SRTC helps ensure that the country's statistical system generates quality, timely and relevant information for use in development planning, policy formulation and in general, decision making in government.

Total Manpower. SRTC has twenty-four (24) professional staff, six (6) of which are with the Training Division. The Training Division is the unit responsible for the development/updating and implementation of the non-degree training programs of the agency. In addition, SRTC has nine (9) research and information technology staff, seven (7) administrative and finance staff and two (2) support staff in the Office of the Executive Director.

Sources of Funds for Training. The SRTC has four sources of funds to finance the conduct of its training activities. These are: (a) regular allocation from the government which is allocated yearly through a budget appropriation law; (b) income from the investment of its endowment fund; and (c) trust funds provided by client government agencies and foreign funding institutions for the conduct of statistical researches and trainings; and (d) trust incomes coming from fees collected from training participants. For the last three years, trust funds provided by client government agencies and foreign funding institutions, and training fees collected from participants accounted for the bulk of funding support that went to the implementation of training programs of SRTC.

Statistical Training Program of SRTC. As a whole, statistical training refers to the design and conduct of non-formal statistical training programs intended to improve the capability of government statistical personnel in handling statistical work. In the Philippines, statistical training effectively complements efforts to improve the statistical services in government.

The statistical training program of SRTC consists of: (a) regular training courses; and (b) specialized/customized training courses. Said training programs are highly subscribed by local clients who are mainly statistical and technical personnel of various government offices in the country (Philippines). In addition, international clients also avail of the training programs of SRTC by sending selected statistical personnel to meet statistical competency needs. Under regular trainings, SRTC offers annual courses on data collection and processing, database management, data analysis and statistical modeling, statistical report writing, and statistical presentation/dissemination. The courses provide participants with practical, "hands-on" knowledge, skills and experience in various aspects of statistical work. On the other hand, specialized or customized training programs refer to courses covering desired set of topics on statistics for local or international clients. Such programs may range in duration from five days to one month. The contents of these trainings are individually designed to meet specific needs and demands of clients. In close consultation with clients, the course contents are developed by resource persons and SRTC training staff. The costing of

each customized program depends largely on developing the training program including materials, program duration, food arrangements and other incidental expenses. Generally, SRTC can package training courses that will suit the requirements of clients. It also prides itself of having the distinct advantage of tapping its pool of experts within the country due to its linkages with other organizations in the conduct of research and training activities that are statistical and multidisciplinary in nature.

Trainings for International Clients. SRTC conducts statistical trainings that cater to international clients. Most of these trainings are customized or specialized type of statistical trainings. These are implemented with the assistance and/or support of UN agencies or international institutions like JICA, WB, ADB, etc. SRTC provides counterpart support to these trainings through provision of its training facilities and technical experts as resource persons, supplying the needed administrative support to carry out the trainings, and shouldering certain incidental expenses. Currently, SRTC is implementing several multi-year arrangements to provide statistical capacity building services to ASEAN countries like Myanmar and Cambodia with JICA as its partner. It is also assisting the UNSIAP in implementing the regional training on system of national accounts/integrated economic accounts which attracts NSO personnel from at least 20 countries in the Asia and Pacific region. Aside from these, SRTC has extended various statistical capacity building assistances to national statistics offices of North Korea, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and others in collaboration with international organizations like UNICEF, UNFPA, WB, etc.

2. What would you consider the major achievements/outputs of your organization in relation to the provision of training in the last five years? Briefly discuss why you consider these as major achievements of your organization. What are some critical success factors that may be drawn from your experiences?

- *Training activities (training programme; workshops; courses: Please provide information on number of trainees, countries covered (if applicable), substantive area of training, mode of delivery, whether training materials are made available in the public domain.)*
- *Training frameworks developed and adopted (Please describe the framework.)*
- *Assessment and evaluation frameworks and tools developed and applied (Please describe the frameworks and tools.)*

The SRTC training program caters to all statistical personnel of government units/offices engaged in statistical activities either as primary or secondary function. Also, the training program is open to participants from other countries. However, since the language of instruction for all SRTC training courses is English and all training materials are written in English, a working knowledge of English is required from interested foreign participants.

For the last five (5) years, SRTC conducted a total of 228 training courses, where 192 are customized/specialized training courses and 36 are regular courses. The number of participants that benefited from these training courses totaled to 5,238 with 4,969 local participants and 269 foreign participants. Of the 228 training courses conducted during the 5-year period, 21 were for foreign statisticians while the rest (207) were for local statistical personnel. In 2009, the SRTC conducted an unprecedented eighty-six (86) training courses, categorized as follows: (a) 15 under its regular training program with 18 statistical personnel from Sri Lanka and 1 from Oman as among those who participated; (b) 13 customized training courses which benefited 162 statisticians and related staff of other countries and held in partnership with various foreign institutions like the UNICEF-DPRK, Royal Government of Bhutan, UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and JICA; (c) 14 customized training courses for the staff of various government agencies; (d) 17 trainings on Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) modules for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

project with UNDP; (e) 11 trainings subsidized by SRTC for selected agencies in the PSS and conducted in partnership with the SRTC's regional affiliates; and (f) 16 other courses undertaken as part of its research projects. A total of two thousand eighty-nine (2,089) participants benefited from the training courses that promoted statistical capacity building and heightened awareness on the significance of statistics in various endeavors. The number of trainings conducted marked a big increase of 65% in comparison to the previous year with 52 training courses and almost tripling the number of trainings targeted for the year, which were 35. The training courses conducted constituted 2,493 training hours.

Following is the list of regular training courses offered/conducted by the SRTC on yearly basis for the last three (3) years: (a) Descriptive Statistics; (b) Statistical Report Writing; (c) Database Management Using MS Access; (d) Processing and Analysis of Administrative Records; (e) Design and Operation of Socio-Economic Surveys; (f) Advanced Database Management Using MS Access; (g) Effective Use of MS Excel and PowerPoint for Statistical Reports; (h) Effective Statistical Presentation Techniques; (i) Statistical Projection and Forecasting Techniques; (j) Statistical Techniques for Socio-Economic Data Analysis; (k) Statistical Analysis Using STATA; (l) Statistics for Local Development Planning; (m) Econometric Modeling; (n) Sampling Design for Surveys; (o) Statistics for Policy Analysis; and (p) Statistical Methods for Research. The curriculum and materials of the courses are developed and updated from time to time by the SRTC training staff with assistance of resource persons. The training programs are listed in the calendar of courses, made available in hard copy and electronic format through the SRTC webpage - **www.srtrc.gov.ph**. The statistical course offerings are updated every year based on feedback received from participants and consultations with statistical agencies and stakeholders.

The training courses offered by the SRTC under its regular training programs categorized by type of statistical personnel targeted are: (i) Descriptive Statistics, Statistical Report Writing, Processing and Analysis of Administrative Records, and Statistics for Local Development Planning are open to lower level statistical personnel with no background in statistics but are handling statistical jobs in agencies; (ii) Database Management Using MS Access and Advanced Database Management Using MS Access would require participants to have basic understanding of the capabilities of microcomputers such as word processing, spreadsheet, database and graphics software, and are open to those involved in the database management and providing support to users of data; (iii) Effective Use of MS Excel and Power Point for Statistical Reports and Effective Statistical Presentation Techniques would require participants to be computer literate and at the very least, familiar with MS Word and Excel and are open to statistical personnel involved in the preparation, presentation, and dissemination of statistical reports; (iv) Statistical Methods for Research, Sampling Designs for Surveys, Design and Operation of Socio-Economic Surveys, Statistics for Project Monitoring and Evaluation, Statistical Techniques for Socio-Economic Data Analysis, Statistical Analysis Using STATA and Statistics for Policy Analysis would require the participants to have knowledge of descriptive statistics and basic statistical concepts and are open to intermediate level statistical personnel or those handling relatively important statistical job in agencies; and (v) Statistical Projection and Forecasting Techniques and Econometric Modeling would require the participants to have good knowledge of regression analysis and are open to professional statisticians, econometricians and higher-level statistical personnel doing analysis involving time series data. The above categorization of training courses serves as the framework for providing needed trainings for statistical personnel of government units/offices including the major statistical agencies.

Likewise, in 2009, under the south-south cooperation program, SRTC was made a partner by JICA in assisting some of the ASEAN countries in improving their statistical capacities. Through this program, the SRTC has conducted several statistical trainings aimed at enhancing the capacity of the technical staff of the Ministry of Economy and Finance in providing policy inputs for decision making of the Royal Government of Cambodia. The

whole training program is designed to be implemented in two years beginning 2009. For 2010, JICA also contracted SRTC to be its partner in helping the Department of Planning of the Myanmar Government to migrate to 1993 system of national accounts through a 3-year training program. These engagements have given SRTC a major responsibility in providing statistical capacity building services to many countries in the Asia and the Pacific region. Moreover, in the many international trainings conducted by SRTC, evaluations revealed that most participants and sponsoring institutions prefer to have trainings be held in the Philippines. Some of the reasons cited were: (a) cheaper to conduct in the Philippines; (b) availability of knowledgeable and competent resource persons and adequate facilities for training; (c) Filipinos easily adapt/relate to participants; (d) affordable cost of staying in Manila; (e) English spoken by Filipinos is more understandable to participants; and (f) handling of trainings, in general, is at par with those in developed countries.

All training programs at SRTC adopt the adult learning principle where every topic in the lectures should be followed by practical exercises through workshops. In most cases, workshop activities make use of the real situation encountered by the participants in their workstations.

The SRTC has a pool of resource persons for its training programs. These resource persons are practicing statisticians and professionals with extensive teaching experience in the academe, non-government offices and international organizations. The academic institutions are the School of Statistics at the main campus of the University of the Philippines (UP) in Diliman, Quezon City and the Institute of Statistics at UP Los Baños in Laguna while the major statistical agencies are the National Statistics Office (NSO), National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), and Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS). Other lecturers are freelance human resource development experts and communication media specialists. Also some of staff of the SRTC are tapped as lecturers for training. For IT-related trainings, SRTC usually has as its resource persons those from private IT companies, MIS unit of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and other government agencies.

Most of the resource persons of SRTC have at least a master's degree relevant to the subject they are assigned to teach. In some other specialized training courses, their practical experiences on the subject are given higher consideration. Apart from their academic background and experiences on the subject matter assigned to them, the effectiveness in the delivery of lectures is also considered. Lecturers who get low evaluation from training participants are usually not invited anymore in other training courses.

The SRTC itself prepares the syllabus that it uses in the conduct of a training program. This material is drawn from the results of assessment and processing of the training evaluation of the participants. There are existing materials that were also developed by training staff. However, lecturers can also provide their own materials or modify the contents of SRTC materials. The training staff also assist in the preparation of powerpoint presentations but lecturers can also prepare their own, should SRTC presentations be not sufficient. In most cases, training materials are available at SRTC and these are provided to the lecturers, who are given the option to make the necessary changes. Whenever applicable to the training course, the United Nations and international training materials are used. These, however, serve only as reference materials and not training materials because in most cases these are not designed according to actual training requirements.

At the SRTC, the participants always evaluate the training programs they attended and lecturers who handled them. The evaluation forms are prepared, processed and consolidated by the staff to be included in a training completion report prepared for each concluded training course. Part of the evaluation is an inquiry about future training needs of the participants apart from the completed training course already attended. The information

served as a basis for determining future training courses that can be offered. Also, the information is used to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in the conduct of training course. The results of lecturer's evaluation are likewise used as basis for determining the effectiveness of lecturers in delivering assigned topics and determine future engagements as resource persons of SRTC. The job behavior level and organizational level evaluations are difficult to determine given that most indicators used at these levels are more qualitative than quantitative in nature. Training courses that focus on institution building are easier to evaluate since the objective of such courses are focused on concrete developments at the organizational level. A training course can be said to have completely fulfilled its objective if on a given period of time, certain changes in the statistical data production have been achieved like in certain administrative forms where information are actually processed, statistics are generated, and data are analyzed in a target organization. However, evaluation at these levels require greater budgetary/resource allocation to administer. This is one reason why SRTC, until now, does not conduct evaluation at job behavior and organizational levels.

3. How does your organization develop its strategy and determine its priorities for providing training?
 - *Describe the overall process undertaken currently to determine priorities. What are considered in the selection of substantive area, target trainees, target countries (if applicable), mode of delivery? What assessment tools are used to determine training needs?*
 - *Are you considering changes in the current process? If so, what are these changes and why are these changes being introduced?*

Basically, the statistical training program is aligned with the country's statistical development plan. The importance of statistical training program as a strategy and activity in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the country's statistical system is elaborated in the chapter on human resources management and development of the current **Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP) for 2005-2010**.

In implementing its training program, SRTC's main priority is to cater to the statistical training needs of the agencies under the PSS and all government agencies as a whole. However, there are constraints that SRTC should consider in responding to training requests and requirements and expanding the boundaries of its non-degree training programs. The major constraints include: (a) it has a very small unit in-charge of said activity; (b) its office is based only in Manila, the capital city of the country; and (c) it does not maintain in-house experts that can serve as resource persons of trainings. To address these concerns, the SRTC has adopted several strategies. One of these is the establishment of the strong linkages with premier academic institutions in statistics, major statistical agencies, other government agencies, and international agencies operating in the country. The linkages has enabled the SRTC to source the needed resource persons for various local and international training programs. Another approach more applicable to local trainings is the recruitment of higher education institutions, such as local universities and colleges operating in the regions, to serve as SRTC training affiliates in areas where its statistical training services are needed. The arrangement gives a chosen training affiliate the responsibility to determine appropriate training program to be conducted locally, closely coordinate the conduct of pre- and post-training activities with the SRTC, collect fees from the participants, recommend the appropriate resource person/s for the training, and utilize the collected fees to defray the cost of the training. SRTC provides honoraria of resource person/s, as it is mainly responsible for the selection of appropriate resource person/s for the training. SRTC also issues certificates to successful participants of the trainings. To ensure the viability of this arrangement, the SRTC has made investments in the following areas: (a) training the point person in each training affiliate on properly coordinating and managing a training program; (b) make an inventory of potential resource persons in the area and possible topics they can handle; (c) inventory of

training and other related materials available at SRTC that can be used in local trainings; and (d) conduct of training programs for potential resource persons of future training courses. As of January 2010, the SRTC has forty-seven (47) local universities and colleges as its training affiliates. In 2008 and 2009, there were 23 and 5 new member-colleges/universities, respectively. SRTC uses this approach to make its presence felt more in areas outside Metro Manila and reach a larger clientele, while affiliate institutions see this arrangement as an opportunity to generate additional income, be more relevant to the local area and serves as a vehicle in launching programs of strengthening research capability, especially its statistical side.

In coming up with its annual regular course offerings, SRTC conducts consultations with statistical agencies and stakeholders. The information gathered from these consultations is then validated with those coming from the 6-year Philippine Statistical Development Plan. Through this process, the regular course offerings are prepared. These statistical course offerings are updated every year based on the feedback received from training participants and comprise a complete line up of the basic, intermediate and some advanced statistics topics which covers practically almost all the necessary statistical competencies that personnel under the PSS and government agencies, and even private companies would need in performing their statistical work (The 2010 course offering is attached as sample). Announcement of the annual course offering is made at the start of each calendar year where letters of invitation, with the copies of the annual course offering attached, are sent to heads of government agencies (and selected private companies) for their consideration. This announcement is also posted at the SRTC website for wider dissemination. Agencies and individuals send in registrations via fax, email, or speed mail to reserve slots.

Another scheme used by SRTC in making its training services available is partnering with agencies of the United Nations such as UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), as well as aid-giving international institutions like World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Japan International Cooperation Agency. Through these partnerships, SRTC is able to conduct several training programs for the statistical personnel and related staff of other countries like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Royal Governments of Bhutan and Cambodia, Myanmar and many others. It should be noted that these trainings are mostly predetermined by partner-institutions and SRTC's role is usually focused on the following aspects: (i) preparation of the course outline; (ii) development of training materials; (iii) recruitment of resource persons; (iv) implementation of the training program; and (v) conduct of both pre and post course evaluations.

In instances where the agencies' training needs is highly specialized, or focused on a statistical application specific to the agency line of work, then that particular agency requests for a customized training to meet such requirement. To come up with the program that will fit the requirements of the requesting agency, a training need assessment is conducted initially by SRTC. This involves a thorough assessment through consultations and meetings with employees, to ensure that trainings will be designed according to their needs. Meetings with supervisors and heads of agencies are also done to properly address their training concerns. The process enables the training design to be modified according to actual requirements of all parties within the client-agency.

4. ***Future directions in the provision of training.*** Please respond to the questions below from the perspective of a training provider in the ESCAP region:
 - 4.1. What are the *existing* major gaps in the knowledge and skills of organizations comprising the national statistical systems that hamper the accomplishments of their mandates?

Per the experience of SRTC, some of the major existing gaps in the knowledge and skills of national statistical agencies in the ESCAP region are: (i) inability to undertake major data collections like surveys and censuses simply due to lack of trained statisticians on survey design and operations; (ii) lack of qualified statisticians to man the major statistical positions in the organization; (iii) lack of appropriate skills and basic data to support migration to new system of national accounts; (iv) lack of coordination skills to work with other institutions in generating data for use in planning and decision-making; (v) inability to generate basic data for use in MDG monitoring; (vi) lack of technical knowledge in conducting forecasting and model building for use in monitoring the performance of economy; (vii) lack of knowledge in conducting poverty analysis; (viii) lack of knowledge on small area estimation to generate lower level data; (ix) lack of skills on development of public use files and techniques on statistical disclosure control so as to produce safe micro data and tables for external use; and (x) lack of skills in data imputation to address delays and non-availability of data.

4.2. What are new knowledge areas and skills that producers of official statistics should be equipped with in order for them to be able to respond readily to emerging needs in the next five to ten years?

Some of the new knowledge areas and skills that producers of official statistics should be equipped with in order for them to be able to respond readily to emerging needs in the next five to ten years are: (i) data archiving and warehousing to ensure long-term availability and use of data; (ii) use of computerized data capture system to ensure accuracy and timeliness of collected data; (iii) application of the technology on geographic information system in the field of statistics including desktop mapping to facilitate the conversion of generated data or statistics from surveys and censuses into geographically referenced information; (iv) imputation methods for missing and delayed data; (v) utilization of administrative records to provide complementary information for various uses; (vi) management of statistical activities; (vii) use of business register for frame updating; (viii) capturing e-transactions; (ix) use of panel data for monitoring and evaluation; and (x) generation of small area statistics for local planning and decision-making.

4.3. What new strategies and training approaches have your organization recently adopted or are being considered and tested to better meet the training needs in the region? Please elaborate the reasons for these choices to meet the abovementioned needs for training in the region.

The SRTC has been in existence for twenty years and accumulated many experiences in the conduct and/or handling training programs. Because of these experiences, the SRTC has listed some strategies that may help ensure the effectiveness of its training programs. These strategies largely focus on resource persons and linkages.

One of these strategies includes broadening of the base to source the resource persons for training programs. This involves tapping experienced staff or experts from statistical organization operating in the statistical system, academe, different agencies in the government and private sector to serve as resource persons. Since the life of statistical training programs rest primarily on the available lecturers, persons from the academe are generally more effective lecturers in training programs considering their training and experience. However, when dealing with various actual applications of statistics and utilizing statistical methodologies, these qualifications are found mostly among statisticians and practitioners in statistical agencies, different agencies in the government, research institutions, professional groups and private sector. In the Philippines, the practitioner-type of lecturers are often sourced from statistical agencies like NSO and BAS. These personnel are involved in survey methodology development, field operations, processing of census/survey data, analytical work on census/survey results, application of IT in statistical work, and packaging and dissemination of census/survey results.

In tapping these experts and personnel for the training programs, there is a need for the training institution to develop and maintain strong linkages with the academic community, research institutions and professional groups so that their experts or professionals who have solid foundation and experience in statistics can be invited to conduct statistical training programmes. The pool of resource persons outside of the organization is a good source of experts that can be utilized for curriculum development and/or improvement as well as in the preparation of needed training materials for the programmes. However, for the latter work, these experts should be compensated separately. To ensure that these resource persons will be properly compensated and continuously be available to do lecturing work with the training organization, an applicable and acceptable system of honoraria or remuneration should be provided. The system of remuneration should be in accordance with the existing government-wide system of compensation for easy implementation. In coming up with said system, the following should be considered: (a) the lecturer's academic background; (b) position in the government/statistical organization; and (c) experience in the chosen statistical field/endeavor. In the Philippines, those with doctorate degree in statistics or related disciplines and/or holding director's position or higher are paid the maximum amount as allowed by existing government accounting and auditing rules. However, those within the training organization or group, although meeting the academic and necessary experience and will serve as lecturers in the training programmes, are not allowed to claim honoraria since lecturing is considered part of their regular job. Whenever possible, this system of honoraria or remuneration should be updated from time to time to make it competitive with those offered by other government training institutions or by the private sector.

To prepare the resource persons for the lecturing job, there is a need to invest in training the resource persons on the proper conduct of lectures, preparation/proper use of visual aids, use of IT facilities to facilitate conduct of lecture, motivating trainees to actively participate in every aspects of the training, proper way of managing workshops, etc. Per experience in the Philippines, this investment has somehow helped in improving the delivery of training programmes and getting the maximum attention and participation from the trainees. Usually, this training is done in early part of the year or before the start of the implementation of yearly training programme. During this training, training experts handle the lectures that update the resource persons on the latest approaches or techniques in conducting and delivering lectures while the SRTC training staff do the orientation on the new training equipment or facilities available for use by lecturers, and brief them on the course offerings for the year and their probable schedule. Also, this training serves as an opportunity to firm up the list of lecturers for each training course and their commitments to these assigned courses.

To finance the conduct of training programs, there are several options that may be considered. One option is for the training institution to fully subsidize the conduct of training programmes. This means that every year, the training institution shall allot funds for training programmes. Another one is to charge a fee from each of the training participants, covering all expenses for the training from the collected fees. Sponsorships of the trainings from another government office or other institutions with stakes on the training programmes can also be considered. In the Philippines, the regular training programmes are fully funded by fees collected from the participants. On the other hand, the customized or specialized trainings are usually funded by a proponent institution which is a government office, a private institution, or a foreign funding institution. There are instances where SRTC provides a subsidy to this kind of training by way of financing the honoraria of resource persons just to ensure that the appropriate resource persons will handle the training.

5. Regional coordination of training

5.1. Does your organization have existing policies or practices with regard to coordination of training? If yes, please briefly describe these. What are the benefits for your own organization?

In terms of training coordination across regions within the Philippines, SRTC uses the approach on regional training affiliates program as discussed in pages 6 and 7.

With respect to capacity building assistance covering the Asian neighbors, SRTC collaborates with international institutions like ILO, ADB, WBI, JICA and agencies under the United Nations. In fact, SRTC also serves as partner institution of UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) in implementing its regional training courses. In the last 5 years, SRTC has hosted for SIAP several regional trainings: (i) Research-based Regional Course in 2004 and 2005; (ii) System of National Accounts in 2006; and (iii) Integrated Economic Accounts in 2007, 2008, and 2009. All these international engagements are done through bilateral arrangement via memoranda of agreement with SRTC entering in behalf of the Government of the Philippines.

In 2009, SRTC entered into an agreement with JICA to assist them in the delivery of vital capacity building services in statistics under the south-south cooperation program. Through this program, the SRTC has conducted several statistical trainings aimed at enhancing the capacity of the technical staff of the Ministry of Economy and Finance in providing policy inputs for decision making of the Royal Government of Cambodia. The whole training program is designed to be implemented in two years beginning 2009. For 2010, JICA also contracted SRTC to be its partner in helping the Department of Planning of the Myanmar Government improve its system of national accounts through a 3-year training program. These engagements have given SRTC a major responsibility in providing statistical capacity building services to many countries in the Asia and the Pacific region.

In general, this partnership of SRTC with foreign institutions is beneficial to both parties. The arrangement allowed the foreign institutions to conduct more training programs for the national statistics offices in the region at a reduced cost and strengthen the partnership it has developed with SRTC in the conduct of statistical capacity building activities. Also, the arrangement afforded the SRTC the opportunity to conduct training that caters to the requirements of international clients, gain more experience in handling such kind of training, and enhance its capability of providing quality training programs to local and international clients. Likewise, through this partnership, the SRTC was able to showcase the capability of local statisticians as resource persons in international training and gain respect for local lecturers.

5.2. In your view,

- *What are the benefits of better coordination in the provision of training for the national statistical systems in the region?*
- *What principles and strategies for regional coordination would be most relevant? What corresponding mechanisms would be most useful?*
- *What are two main issues related to coordination of training that you wish the Committee on Statistics to consider at its Second Session?*

The benefits of a well-coordinated training for the national statistical systems in the region cannot be over-emphasized. Good coordination on all aspects must be ensured. The most important aspects are: (i) identification of the specific training needs to be responded to;

(ii) the training course content and design; (iii) the necessary workshops that will firm-up the appreciation of the concepts and methods lectured; (iv) other training activities that will enhance the learning process; (v) specifications of the required educational and work background of the intended participants; (vi) competency and mastery of the resource persons on the subject matter; and (vii) preparedness of the training management.

Advance planning and coordination is crucial to achieve a well prepared training program. It will be beneficial if a more or less fixed schedule is set for regional courses as in the case of Integrated Economic Accounts (IEA) Course which SIAP conducts with the SRTC of the Philippines. That way, the SRTC can program appropriately its other commitments and make the necessary preparations for the conduct of the course. It is also worth considering the possibility of providing assistance to implementing agencies towards improvement of training facilities such as training rooms and updated computers and multi-media equipment. SRTCs quality delivery of training courses will be further enhanced if such assistance is set in place.

Also, there is a need to improve the networking and complementation among the statistical training institutions operating in the region so that they can easily assist those countries that need help in handling problems related to human capacity building. Given the location and spread of the training institutions in the region, SIAP can possibly organize these institutions along following arrangement: Iran and Turkey can be made to serve as focal points of training assistance for the countries in the Middle East as well as Pakistan, Afghanistan and former satellite countries of USSR in Asia; India for countries in the Indian Ocean area; Republic of Korea for the Korean Peninsula; Philippines and Indonesia for the countries in the ASEAN region; Australia for the island countries in the Pacific, etc. Through this, the presence of training institutions in various areas in the region can be maximized to deal with whatever statistical human resource development problems confronting the region.

In conclusion, while there is evidence that the overall statistical capability is improving in the Asia and the Pacific region, many developing countries are still unable to compile a minimum set of basic statistics. Relevant and reliable statistics are fundamental requirements for the development of evidence-based policies and their implementation. Here, SRTC is hopeful that thru training, it will be able to contribute in putting the statistical systems of these countries at par with the rest. To achieve this program, SRTC is looking forward to further strengthening its partnership with institutions like UN and JICA so that needed statistical services can be made available to these countries. Given the favorable feedback on the many training programs it has handled, SRTC is in very enviable position to assist the developing countries in the region face the challenges of development.
