

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
12 October 2010

Original: English

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**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****More relevant, effective and efficient statistical training  
through improved regional coordination****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document brings to the attention of the Committee issues regarding the coordination of training activities in Asia and the Pacific as an important tool for statistical capacity development. Using information furnished by providers of statistical training and other sources, the document presents an overview of the major factors that shape the statistical training opportunities available to ESCAP member States, including the organizational mandates of the training providers, the process by which the providers of statistical training determine and prioritize the training needs of their stakeholders, and the organization and management of the training. It also discusses the views of statistical training providers on the main challenges they face in remaining relevant, effective and efficient, and the strategies and approaches they are taking to effect the improvements and changes needed to meet these challenges.

The Committee may wish to discuss and identify mechanisms for developing and implementing a regional approach to the coordination of statistical training among training providers that could strengthen and support their ability to better meet the needs of member States.

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## I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the present document is to bring to the attention of the Committee issues regarding the coordination of training activities in Asia and the Pacific as an important tool for statistical capacity development. The document addresses how regional coordination might improve the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of statistical training. Specifically, it explores the following questions:

(a) To what extent is the regional coordination of statistical training necessary? What benefits can be reaped from such coordination?

(b) If regional coordination is necessary, what concrete measures can be taken to establish and maintain such coordination?

2. The document begins with an overview of the major factors that shape the statistical training opportunities available to ESCAP member States, including the organizational mandates of the training providers, the process by which the providers of statistical training determine and prioritize the training needs of their stakeholders, and the organization and management of training. It also discusses the views of statistical training providers on the main challenges they face in remaining relevant, effective and efficient, and the strategies and approaches they are taking to effect the improvements and changes needed to meet these challenges.

3. The document is based on information from two major sources. The first source consists of responses to an information request the secretariat sent to a selected number of organizations that provide international training in official statistics in the region. While most of these organizations are international or regional institutions, some national institutions that provide

statistical training to participants from other countries in the region were also included. The second source is a desk search of existing documentation about statistical training in the region, particularly the documents from the third and fourth workshops on forging partnership in statistical training organized by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP).

4. The document therefore reflects the basic features of and summarizes the views of a limited number of providers of international statistical training in official statistics (see annex 1). It does not cover the complete list of providers of statistical training targeting international participants, hereafter referred to as “international statistical training”. Nor does it cover the national statistical training institutions that target primarily a domestic audience, or domestic statistical training. For instance, institutions of higher education and the private sector in many countries in the region play an important role in providing training in official statistics. Since the focus of the document is on international statistical training, it does not cover the segment of providers that focuses on domestic statistical training. If the Committee determines that it is important to include these providers in future discussions on the issue of coordination, arrangements should be made to collect the appropriate information.

## **II. Providing international statistical training in Asia and the Pacific: an overview**

5. Statistical training opportunities for ESCAP member States are provided by a multitude of institutions, including national statistical offices (NSOs), national training facilities and international organizations (including regional and subregional organizations). Statisticians and other staff engaged in statistical work, including managers and human resources and information technology (IT) personnel, are trained in-country as well as in subregional, regional and international settings outside their countries and with participants from other countries. Training content ranges from basic to specialized, focusing on one or more topics and/or skills across differing levels of complexity. Participants may be homogeneous with regard to skills and qualifications but, as is more often the case, a training group frequently has a heterogeneous profile. Training may be offered on a regular or ad hoc basis. At a given point in time, there are multiple offerings on some topics while very few or even no training opportunities on others.

6. This section provides an overview of what determines and shapes international statistical training opportunities in the region, i.e. the supply side of training, including training provided by national training facilities targeting international participants, as well as the training provided by international organizations for participants from either for one country or multiple countries. The organizational factors examined include the organizational mandate for providing statistical training, the process by which the training providers determine priorities in the selection of topics, training objectives, target trainees and target countries, and the organization and management of training activities.

### **A. Organizational mandate for providing statistical training**

7. The strategic direction and focus of statistical training are typically shaped by the mandates of the organizations providing the training and the manifestation of those mandates. The organizational mandates of statistical training seem to manifest in a variety of forms. While the provision of statistical training figures prominently in the organizational mandates of

some providers, it is embedded in the broader strategies of statistical capacity development for others. Similarly, for some providers of training, the organizational mandates require them to target primarily external clientele. In other cases, the mandates require the providers to target both internal and external clientele. The differences in the organizational mandates, or the manifestation of such mandates, raise questions about (a) the extent to which country needs are met in a comprehensive manner and (b) the potential for cross-organizational synergy.

8. *Full vis-à-vis embedded mandates for training.* Table 1 shows how mandates of statistical training differ for a selected number of national and international providers of statistical training in the region. Some institutions, both international and national, are specifically set up to conduct training. Providing statistical training is the *raison d'être* of such institutions and is their regular activity. These institutions include SIAP and national training facilities, such as the Statistical Research and Training Centre (SRTC) in the Philippines, the Statistical Research and Training Centre (SRTC) in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Statistical Training Institute (STI) in the Republic of Korea and the Statistical Education and Training Centre of the National Bureau of Statistics in China (China International Statistical Training Centre), to name a few. Regular training activities are often part of the work programme of such institutions, which means that the contents of training, scheduling, budgeting and resource arrangements need to be planned well in advance. Research in statistics and statistical education also form part of the mandates of these institutions.

**Table 1. Organizational mandates for providing statistical training**

	<b>National training facilities</b>	<b>International/regional organizations</b>
<b>Full mandate for statistical training</b>	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical Research and Training Centre (Philippines)</li> <li>• Statistical Research and Training Centre (Islamic Republic of Iran)</li> <li>• Statistical Education and Training Centre (China)</li> <li>• Statistical Training Institute (Republic of Korea)</li> </ul>	Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIAP</li> </ul>
<b>Embedded mandate for statistical training</b>	Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thailand NSO</li> </ul>	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADB</li> <li>• UNESCO</li> <li>• EUROSTAT</li> <li>• IMF</li> </ul>

9. On the other hand, statistical training is embedded in broader organizational mandates for some providers. This is particularly the case with the international and regional institutions that are involved in national statistical capacity development. They include the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Labour

Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), all of which have extensive capacity development programmes. They tend to use a variety of tools for national statistical capacity development, such as standard-setting, advocacy, data collection and analysis, knowledge management and training. In other words, conducting training is only one of the tools used for this purpose.

10. *Organizational mandates for substantive areas.* Some of the providers of statistical training, particularly the national training facilities but also such regional and international providers as SIAP and the European Union, tend to include a wide range of substantive fields in terms of the contents of training. Many of the international organizations, however, have mandates in particular domains of their competencies. As such, the statistical training they provide is generally aligned with the substantive areas in which their organizations have mandates. In some cases, there are commonalities in methodological or substantive issues across the training activities of the different organizations.

11. As can be seen from the above, there is wide variation across the training providers in mandates for training as well as in the manifestation of such mandates. In the face of such variation, issues regarding regional coordination of statistical training arise, including the following:

(a) How are institutions with different mandates able to plan their assistance with a long-term view? Are the organizational mandates of the training providers related to their ability to develop and adopt a comprehensive approach to statistical training? How are different organizational mandates reflected in the strategies for statistical development assistance of the institutions?

(b) To what extent are national needs fully reflected in the face of the differences in the organizational mandates of the various training providers? Although individual providers of statistical training might be making efforts to take into consideration the overall needs for training at the country level, the variation in the organizational mandates may mean that the various training providers have different starting points while working with countries. Are the country needs fully considered when the organizations make training plans and deliver training activities?

(c) To what extent can synergies be established among the various providers of training activities? Although the mandates of different organizations mean that the training activities have different emphases, there might be commonalities in training contents or the substantive focuses. What benefits might be reaped by making the country strategies for statistical training of different organizations more coherent? What benefits can be reaped by having a common regional training programme in statistics so that various organizations can work together?

## **B. Process for determining training priorities**

12. Priorities in providing training are guided by organizational mandates, which also set the level of resource commitments. Over a planning period, training providers set these priorities in part through needs assessments of stakeholders and clients and through the utilization of results of impact and effectiveness evaluations of trainings that have been delivered.

13. The national training facilities seem to go through a variety of processes to determine the priorities of training activities. At the Statistical Training Institute in the Republic of Korea, decisions on participating countries, target trainees and training programmes are typically based on surveys conducted by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and SIAP, while the Statistical Education and Training Centre in China relies on the United Nations Statistical Division for professional inputs in designing international training programmes. In contrast, the international training provided by the Statistical Research and Training Centre in the Philippines often arises from requests by funders.

14. When it comes to the training of staff from within their own NSSs, the national training facilities seem to take similar approaches in priority-setting. Such approaches include aligning training with broader national statistical development strategies and planning training on the basis of regular needs assessments. For instance, in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand, the training institutions regularly conduct surveys of and consultations with stakeholders to assess training needs, including using feedback from participants in previous training activities. SRTC in the Philippines also reported trying to align training with the six-year Philippine Statistical Development Plan. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, training priorities are stipulated in the five-year National Statistical Plan developed by the Statistical Centre of Iran (SCI) on the basis of consultations with government agencies. Training plans (including training methods and materials, as well as rewarding measures for trainees) are made and revised on the basis of feedback from participants.

15. At the international level, SIAP uses the Core Skills Framework to assess the level and content of training. The framework can also be used by NSOs to structure their own staff development activities.<sup>1</sup> In addition to its annual work plans, SIAP also publishes a five-year long-term work plan. For instance, the current long-term plan, covering academic years 2010-2014, focuses on the following three areas: Millennium Development Goals and other development goals, integrated economic statistics and the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA), and the application of information and telecommunications technology in national statistical systems (NSSs).<sup>2</sup>

16. Other international organizations typically provide statistical training through their broader technical assistance or capacity development programmes. For instance, training courses provided by FAO are delivered as part of its technical assistance activities and fall under the overall integrated approach of statistical capacity-building, which also includes advocacy, data collection and analysis, and knowledge management.

17. Training provided by IMF is part of its Regional Technical Assistance Strategy Notes (RTASN), which outline the short- and medium-term technical assistance priorities for the individual regions covered. The Strategy Notes also provide a unifying framework for the delivery of technical assistance. The focus of technical assistance in macroeconomic statistics is on low-income and post-conflict countries that are committed to participation in and adoption of the General Data Dissemination System

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<sup>1</sup> SIAP, *Core skills framework for statisticians of NSOs in developing countries* (revised January 2010). Available from [www.unsiap.or.jp/coreskill/CSF.pdf](http://www.unsiap.or.jp/coreskill/CSF.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> SIAP, *Strategic Plan of SIAP for AY 2010-2014*. Available from [www.unsiap.or.jp/gc/stgplan09.pdf](http://www.unsiap.or.jp/gc/stgplan09.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2010).

(GDDS) as the framework for their statistical development. Technical assistance is planned and prioritized through diagnostic missions and Reports on Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC). The key criteria for assessing technical assistance needs in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, for example, remain specific capacity constraints, macroeconomic vulnerabilities and systemic importance, as well as track records with previous technical assistance.<sup>3</sup>

18. Eurostat has developed a tool called ASTRA to collect and analyse information on the demand by statistical offices for statistical training. The tool has been tested in Africa and could be tried out in Asia and the Pacific.

19. In summary, international organizations tend to integrate statistical training into broader technical assistance strategies. This approach, in principle, should be conducive to maximizing and sustaining the impact of training. However, most of the international organizations focus on particular substantive fields, which means that priority-setting for statistical training is inevitably shaped by the particular focus of substantive issues, which may or may not always be in line with the overall statistical capacity development needs of the country in question. The situation is different for national training facilities, which are not required to focus on particular substantive areas. On the other hand, based on limited information, as mentioned above, the national training facilities have limited scope in coverage.

20. It is not clear to what extent the processes of priority-setting as adopted by the national and international providers of training take into consideration the comprehensive perspectives (vis-à-vis the specific substantive areas, countries and statistical methods) of the needs of the recipient countries. More specifically:

(a) To what extent does the priority-setting process of international providers reflect the comprehensive needs for statistical capacity development of recipient countries in the region? To what extent does the training provided by national facilities reflect the priorities of recipient countries for statistical capacity development training?

(b) What is the likely impact of the different priority-setting processes on the likelihood of the training activities to meet the long-term needs of recipient countries?

(c) Is there a way for all parties involved to collect and share information about the training needs of developing countries in the region? What could be done to ensure the active participation of the recipient countries in the process and to allow their voices to be heard?

### **C. Organization and management of training**

21. Statistical training taking place in the region takes a variety of forms, ranging from face-to-face meetings of different durations—which seems to be the dominant form—to distance learning, the dissemination of technical and training materials for self-study, and a combination of the above approaches. The large variation in the organization and management

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<sup>3</sup> IMF, Statistics Department, *Recent Developments and Current Initiatives 2008*; *Recent Developments and Current Initiatives 2009* (Washington, D.C.).

of training means that innovative and flexible solutions are needed to meet the diverse needs for training in the developing countries. It may also mean that there are opportunities for the providers to learn from the good practices of other players in statistical training in the region. One question regarding the diversity in the delivery of training is: how are the needs of the developing countries met effectively and efficiently?

22. Some providers have full-blown training programmes in that they have staff dedicated to the design, organization and delivery of training activities, including professional trainers, as well as staff providing administrative, IT and other logistical support. For these providers, training tends to be their major activity. They are often also equipped with various teaching classrooms, computer rooms, networks and other teaching facilities. They include, for instance, the Statistical Research and Training Centre in the Philippines. The training facilities in most of the other countries also seem to be organized in this manner.

23. In some instances, the training unit is embedded within the NSO and internal mechanisms are used for the design and delivery of training, especially when training targets a domestic audience. In this case, coordination among institutions within countries is required.

24. In addition to providing training that targets international participants, the national training facilities tend to be the main providers of training to staff of national statistical systems in their own countries. As such, they tend to play important roles in the formulation of plans and strategies for the training of statisticians within the NSSs. For instance, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the SRTC works very closely with the Education Group at the Statistical Centre of Iran (SCI) to plan and conduct training of SCI staff. In the Philippines, the Statistical Research and Training Centre is the sole provider of statistical training services in the highly decentralized Philippine statistical system. The same is true of the Statistical Education and Training Centre in China.

25. At the international level, SIAP is dedicated to statistical training. In collaboration with partners, IMF has several training facilities in the Asia-Pacific region which are dedicated to the provision of statistical training. They include the IMF-Singapore Training Institute (STI), the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre (PFTAC), and the Joint India-IMF Training Programme. Although the main target of the training in international organizations is usually national statisticians, the training of field staff of the organizations is sometimes included.

26. Collaboration in the delivery of training seems common among the providers. SRTC in the Islamic Republic of Iran reported that it works with international organizations such as SIAP, ESCAP and the United Nations Statistics Division to deliver training for both local participants (SCI staff and other participants from government agencies) and statisticians from other countries in the region. With a compact staff, SIAP is able to deliver a rich catalogue of training courses due to collaboration with a multitude of institutional partners. For instance, the Statistics Department of IMF undertakes training in collaboration with the IMF Institute through a global network of regional training centres.

27. The Statistical Education and Training Centre of NBS in China reported working very closely with the United Nations Statistics Division in delivering international training. For instance, it reported that, for training on certain statistical topics, the United Nations Statistics Division would be



responsible for selecting experts and conducting training together with Chinese experts.

28. International providers, such as FAO and IMF, typically have a core team of experts and regular staff as well as experts and consultants in specific fields. At the same time, they partner with regional institutions by training their staff and/or posting regional advisers. The FAO core team provides technical expertise for the development and consolidation of the modules and technical backing for country work. It is responsible for global and regional training. Depending on the number of modules and countries, the core team may be adjusted accordingly. An indicative prototype budget is available as a basis for discussion with potential donors.

29. In addition, FAO also develops methodological handbooks, guidelines and other materials to be used for training, as do other international agencies with mandates for capacity development. In some cases, access to the training materials is limited to participants in the training. There is potential for dissemination of the materials to a wider audience. It is not clear, though, to what extent individual providers of training have adopted a wider dissemination approach.

30. Various providers have reported using a wide range of tools to evaluate the effects of both domestic and international training, including the following:

- (a) Formal reviews of technical assistance programmes;
- (b) Inspection visits;
- (c) Feedback from trainees after the training (questionnaire/assessment forms);
- (d) Evaluation of the course trainers and resource persons by the experts of the training office;
- (e) Feedback from training participants three months after the training (evaluation form);
- (f) Evaluation of job behaviour and at organizational levels;
- (g) Evaluation of learning capabilities in order to estimate how well each trainee understands the courses provided (multiple choice questions, essay questions, practical examination and presentation);
- (h) Evaluation of the practicality of each training course in order to estimate how useful the courses provided are for actual work in the field (evaluated by trainees and directors).

31. The most common tool used to evaluate the effects of international training seems to be feedback from trainees at the end of the training. SIAP has also been assessing the effects of training by collecting additional information from NSOs on the performance of its trainees. Given the resource implications, SIAP does this only for its Tokyo metropolitan area-based courses.

32. Comprehensive evaluations can be resource-intensive, especially if they take a long time. On the other hand, carefully planned and executed evaluations are essential for the continuous improvement of the design and delivery of training for maximum and sustainable impact. It might be worth considering what options, if any, can be explored for various providers of statistical training to collaborate in this important aspect of training.

33. The following issues can be raised on the basis of the diversity of opportunities for statistical training in the region:

(a) Training is ad hoc in some cases and regular in others. What are the merits and disadvantages of the different approaches in terms of meeting the training needs of the developing countries in the region promptly and sufficiently?

(b) Given the resource limitations faced by individual providers (both in terms of financial resources and expertise), what benefits can be reaped by further collaboration? What could be done for such collaboration to take place?

(c) The wide variation in the methods of training delivery may provide ample opportunities for individual providers to learn from the good practices of others. What could be done to facilitate information-sharing and peer learning?

(d) Is there potential for various providers to collaborate in assessing the impact of training activities? This could include the sharing of outcomes of evaluations conducted by individual providers, as well as sharing experiences and lessons learned in conducting evaluations.

### **III. Issues and challenges: remaining relevant, efficient and effective**

34. The landscape of official statistics is experiencing fundamental changes in Asia and the Pacific, as well as in the rest of the world, which has implications for training. Recent changes include: the introduction of new or revised standards and classifications (2008 SNA, for example); the increasing importance of certain types of measurements and indicators (purchasing power parity, short-term and high-frequency indicators, and migration statistics); discussions and debates about the usefulness and cost-effectiveness of traditional methods (population censuses and large-scale surveys); and the need to develop methods for the use of alternative data sources, such as administrative records. The rapid turnover of staff and the subsequent need to train replacements as well as to have a pool of talent to draw from also challenge the human resources development programmes of statistical offices.<sup>4</sup>

35. This section raises issues regarding the potential of coordination in statistical training to tackle the challenges brought about by these changes. It summarizes the views of statistical training providers about gaps in existing knowledge and skills, and strategies or approaches that have recently been adopted (and how they have worked) and/or strategies that are being considered and tested to meet the needs in the region and the reasons for these choices.

36. Table 2 provides a summary of the existing major gaps in the knowledge and skills of producers of official statistics that have been hampering the fulfilment of their organizational mandates as perceived by

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<sup>4</sup> Nancy McBeth, "Improving the Co-ordination of Statistical Training in the Asia-Pacific Region to Enhance the Impact on Official Statistics", background paper prepared for the fourth Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, 18-19 November 2009, Phuket, Thailand.

statistical training providers. Similarly, table 3 summarizes the views of these providers regarding the new knowledge and skills with which the producers of official statistics should be equipped in order for them to be able to readily respond to emerging needs.

**Table 2. Existing major gaps in the knowledge and skills in national statistical systems, as perceived by selected training providers**

Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis	<p>Classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Limited access to the latest developments in statistics or methodologies in some NSOs</li> <li>-- Limited knowledge needed to apply the internationally universal and standard statistical theories, classifications, indicators and methods</li> </ul> <p>Data collection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Inability to generate basic data for use in MDG monitoring</li> <li>-- Weak survey methodology</li> </ul> <p>Data processing, analysis and interpretation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Forecasting and model building to monitor performance of the economy (time series)</li> <li>-- Data disaggregation</li> <li>-- Data imputation to address delays and non-availability of data</li> <li>-- Limited capacity for data analysis and interpretation</li> </ul>
Strategic and managerial issues	<p>Management and development of human resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Lack of qualified statisticians/technical experts/human resources other than statisticians</li> <li>-- Limited statistical capacity-building (e.g. training capacity)</li> </ul> <p>Management and development of technological resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Inadequate budget/funding for database development and maintenance</li> </ul> <p>International cooperation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Lack of coordination skills needed to work with other institutions in generating data</li> <li>-- Lack of a proper mechanism to ensure effective producer-user communications</li> </ul>
Specific topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- National accounts</li> <li>-- Government finance statistics</li> <li>-- Informal sector statistics</li> <li>-- External sector statistics</li> <li>-- Agriculture statistics</li> <li>-- Macroeconomic statistics</li> </ul>

37. As can be seen, both the gaps and the emerging needs cover a wide spectrum of knowledge and skills, ranging from statistical methodologies to a variety of substantive domains to coordination with other institutions to produce data. It should be pointed out that the summaries in these two tables should not be taken as reflecting the views of all training providers in the

region. Nor should they be taken as an assessment of the diverse training needs of the recipient countries in the region.

**Table 3. Essential new knowledge and skills for producers of official statistics, as perceived by selected training providers**

Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis	<p>Classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Application of the internationally universal and standard statistical theories, methods and indicators</li> </ul> <p>Data sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving data collection (e.g. utilization of administrative records)</li> <li>▪ Enhancement of data availability (e.g. financial sector)</li> <li>▪ Improving survey design/planning</li> <li>▪ Strengthening vital statistics systems</li> <li>▪ Compilation of new statistical areas/inclusion of new modules in the standard surveys</li> </ul> <p>Data editing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Application of information management and related ICT</li> <li>▪ Application of geographic information technology to facilitate the conversion of generated data or statistics from surveys and censuses into geographically referenced information</li> <li>▪ Imputation methods for missing and delayed data</li> </ul> <p>Data analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statistical analytical skills (e.g. use of panel data for monitoring and evaluation)</li> <li>▪ Production of disaggregated statistics</li> </ul> <p>Dissemination, data warehousing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data archiving and warehousing to ensure long-term availability and use of data</li> <li>▪ Use of business register for frame updating</li> <li>▪ Statistics communication and dissemination (especially to the public)</li> </ul>
Specific topic	Economics statistics: implementing 2008 SNA
Strategic and managerial issues	<p>Institutional framework and principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management of statistical activities</li> </ul>

38. These results are nevertheless indicative of the range of deficiencies in the capabilities of NSS staff, as well as emerging needs. In any event, it is reasonable to say that the range may be wider than that covered by any single provider of statistical training. Thus, it would be unrealistic to expect one provider, or even several of them, to be able to cover all of the areas, as well as the levels of knowledge and skills. This assessment does not include the number of people in need of such training, which would be enormous.

39. On the other hand, existing training activities already cover common topics. Annex 2 provides a list of topics that were covered in the training of selected national and international providers. For instance, at least three of the providers that responded to the secretariat's information request said that they were conducting or had conducted training on sampling techniques

and other survey methods, statistics quality management, statistical methods for analysing survey data, the production and analysis of indicators, etc. From a substantive perspective, economic statistics, health statistics and the labour force survey, among others, were the focuses of training of at least four of the selected providers. It is not the purpose of this document to provide information on where the training took place, who participated in the training, the level of difficulty, etc.

40. These responses mean that much could be gained from collaboration among the various providers. Potential gains include: (a) expanded capabilities of individual providers to design and deliver particular training, especially if they can tap into the intellectual, human and financial resources of their counterparts; (b) the minimization of duplication in developing training materials and conducting training; and (c) new synergies to be created through working together. All of these gains would result in enhanced aggregate capacity to provide training in the region.

41. The following questions arise from these assessments:

(a) What is the potential for different providers of statistical training to work together in order to help NSSs in the region to meet existing and emerging training needs in all statistical and substantive areas?

(b) What is the potential for various providers of training to work together in order to help all countries in the region to develop their staff capabilities through training?

#### **IV. Ways forward: better coordination as a regional approach to the relevant, efficient and effective provision of training in the region**

42. A number of questions have been raised thus far regarding the coordination of statistical training in the region. These questions touch on the broad issues of the effective assessment of and incorporation of the needs of NSSs, the development of a coherent regional training strategy and the mobilization of resources.

43. More specifically, coordination is essential for the effective assessment of and incorporation of the training needs of NSSs in the region. Rapid changes in the political, social, economic and environmental realities in the region mean that NSSs need to constantly strive to overcome existing barriers and be ready to meet new and emerging challenges. In terms of statistical training, the reality requires ongoing analysis of the demand for statistical knowledge and skills, a diagnosis of the shortages of such knowledge and skills and an understanding of the dynamics of the labour market which have implications for the turnover of the staff in NSSs.

44. Coordination among training providers can help develop a holistic strategy to address training needs in the region. Such a strategy is meaningful and effective only when all providers are able to work together to define priorities, share goals, agree on solutions and jointly monitor progress.

45. Important aspects of a coherent strategy are the effective use of existing resources and the mobilization of additional resources. The former would include coordinated planning to avoid duplication in developing training materials and conducting training. The latter could mean a

consolidated and cost-effective approach to fund-raising to improve access to funding and ensure a more efficient allocation of resources.

46. A tentative list of options for conducting regional coordination in statistical training, including both establishing and administering a coordination mechanism, is provided in annex 3. The list has been compiled on the basis of: (a) suggestions given by statistical providers to the secretariat in response to its information request; and (b) the outcomes of the discussion at the fourth Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training, organized by SIAP.

47. The Committee may wish to express its priorities regarding regional coordination of statistical training. In case coordination is deemed necessary, the Committee may wish to provide guidance on the following:

(a) The modality this coordination should adopt to make the exercise the least burdensome and the most beneficial possible for all parties involved;

(b) Coordination measures that can encourage and ensure the commitment of all providers of statistical training in the Asia-Pacific region;

(c) Ways to harmonize and prioritize statistical training activities among different providers in the region;

(d) Concrete ways for countries to best incorporate their priorities and training needs into their statistical systems;

(e) Ways in which and the extent to which coordination operations should link to the work of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics.

## Annex I.

### List of national and international providers of statistical training that responded to the information request of the secretariat

#### National training facilities

- **China**, Statistical Education and Training Centre
- **Iran (Islamic Republic of)**, Statistical Research and Training Centre
- **Philippines**, Statistical Research and Training Centre
- **Republic of Korea**, Statistical Training Institute
- **Thailand**, National Statistical Office

#### International organizations

- **ADB**, Development Indicators and Policy Research Division
- **EUROSTAT**, International Statistical Cooperation
- **FAO**, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
- **ILO**, Department of Statistics
- **IMF**, Statistics Department
- **UNESCO**, Institute for Statistics

**Annex II.****Summary of topics of training by selected national and international providers**

	<b>Four or more respondents</b>	<b>Fewer than four respondents</b>
<b>Generic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sampling techniques and other survey methods</li> <li>▪ Statistics quality management</li> <li>▪ Statistical methods for analysing survey data</li> <li>▪ Production and analysis of indicators</li> <li>▪ Statistics dissemination</li> <li>▪ Courses on specific statistical software</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advanced/complex sampling</li> <li>▪ Compilation of supply and use table</li> <li>▪ Data aggregation</li> <li>▪ Data disaggregation</li> <li>▪ Database management</li> <li>▪ Development of metadata system</li> <li>▪ Data reconciliation and quality standards</li> <li>▪ Effective statistical presentation techniques</li> <li>▪ Fundamental principles in official Statistics</li> <li>▪ Methods of population estimation and projection</li> <li>▪ Methods of controlling statistical information disclosure</li> <li>▪ Principles and methods of interviewing</li> <li>▪ Statistical report writing</li> <li>▪ Time series</li> <li>▪ Use of emerging cost-effective tools and methods (GPS/remote sensing, CAPI/PDA, GIS, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Specific topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Economic statistics</li> <li>▪ Government finance statistics</li> <li>▪ Health</li> <li>▪ Industrial statistics</li> <li>▪ Labour force survey</li> <li>▪ National account statistics</li> <li>▪ Population census</li> <li>▪ Prices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to ICT</li> <li>▪ Balance of payments</li> <li>▪ Child labour force surveys</li> <li>▪ Decent work indicators</li> <li>▪ Disability</li> <li>▪ Education</li> <li>▪ External debt statistics</li> <li>▪ Foreign direct investment statistics</li> <li>▪ Financial savings (Finance soundness indicators)</li> <li>▪ Harmonization IMTS and SITS</li> <li>▪ ICP 2011</li> <li>▪ Informal sector/ non-observed economy</li> <li>▪ International trade-in-services statistics</li> <li>▪ ISIC Classification Rev 4</li> <li>▪ Labour market information analysis</li> <li>▪ Millennium Development Goals</li> <li>▪ Monetary and financial statistics</li> <li>▪ Poverty measurement</li> <li>▪ Remittances statistics</li> <li>▪ Trade statistics</li> <li>▪ Transport</li> <li>▪ Vital registration</li> </ul>



### Annex III.

#### Sample measures on how to improve international coordination

<p>Improving networking among the statistical training institutions operating in the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SIAP may be able to organize training institutions in the region around focal points for training assistance in their respective subregions</li> </ul>
<p>Information sharing on training, best practices, experiences, strategies, plans and schedules, and materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Newsletter, website</li> <li>▪ Improving the quality of information collected by PARIS21 in the Partner Report on Support to Statistics</li> </ul>
<p>Improving the existing communication and consultation mechanisms between NSOs and data users in order to guarantee that national strategies (NSDSs) and national statistical development plans (NSDPs) meet the data needs of users</p>
<p>International and national statistical training providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advance planning and coordination: setting a more or less fixed schedule for regional courses</li> <li>▪ Adopting common standards, classifications, concepts and methods (e.g. SIAP common skills framework)</li> <li>▪ Formation of a specific working group on training needs comprising focal points from various international organizations</li> <li>▪ Identifying how international associations, such as the International Association for Statistical Education (IASE), could be used to foster further cooperation through enhanced professional linkages and development</li> </ul>
<p>NSOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensuring that existing and new cooperation agreements are explicit with regard to training cooperation</li> <li>▪ Signing a memorandum of understanding as a first step in bilateral cooperation in the statistical areas and to prepare a framework for joint activities; moreover, basing future memorandums of understanding on principles recommended by the United Nations</li> <li>▪ Identifying opportunities for further cooperation, particularly in relation to South-South cooperation in statistical training</li> <li>▪ Engaging in regional forums supporting training coordination</li> </ul>
<p>Committee on Statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing regular agenda items for human resource management planning across the region</li> <li>▪ Establishing a forum, along with a workable implementation mechanism, (for example, where international/regional organizations present a multi-year package of statistical capacity-building activities)</li> <li>▪ Supporting NSOs in the coordination of training by establishing a task force or subcommittee on training, with a focus on a coordinated approach to training development and implementation</li> </ul>
<p>SIAP and ESCAP (Statistics Division):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing a regional cooperation framework for donor coordination for statistical development</li> </ul>

*Note:* This table draws heavily on: Nancy McBeth, “Improving the Co-ordination of Statistical Training in the Asia-Pacific Region to Enhance the Impact on Official Statistics”, background paper prepared for the fourth Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, 18-19 November 2009, Phuket, Thailand. The information drawn from the background paper has been supplemented with responses from the national and international training providers contacted in connection with the preparation of the present document.