

STAT/SIAP/GC(6)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
 STATISTICAL INSTITUTE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Governing Council
 13 – 14 December 2010
 Bangkok, Thailand

Report of the Governing Council on its sixth session

CONTENTS

I.	Matters arising from the fifth session of the Governing Council.....	1
II.	Review of the progress in the implementation of the Commission resolution 65/2 on regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific.....	2
III.	Report of the Director	4
IV.	Consideration of the work plan of the Institute for the academic year 2011	6
V.	Matters arising from the external evaluation of SIAP.....	7
VI.	Items of information.....	8
	A. Review of the draft annual report of the Institute to the Commission	8
	B. Draft manual of the research-based training programme.....	8
VII.	Other matters.....	8
VIII.	Adoption of the report.....	9
IX.	Organization.....	9
	A. Opening of the session.....	9
	B. Attendance	10
	C. Election of officers.....	10
	D. Agenda.....	10

I. Matters arising from the fifth session of the Governing Council

1. The Governing Council had before it the document STAT/SIAP/GC(6)/3. The document, which presented the actions taken by SIAP in connection with the matters arising from the fifth session of the Governing Council included, among others, discussions on: (a) strategies for strengthening the arrangements for increasing cash and in kind contributions; (b) steps to enhance distance training and provide e-training resources; (c) conducting joint training activities with country partner institutions and international organizations; and (d) progress in implementing the skills-based training approach to ensure that the training

programmes are aligned to support the training needs of members and associate members.

2. Representatives of the following Council members made statements: Australia; Japan; and Republic of Korea.

3. To increase the effectiveness of SIAP training as well as the accountability of participating national statistical offices, one member stressed the need to strengthen the existing evaluation system of course participants and to send their performance records to the respective heads of the national statistical offices.

4. The Governing Council expressed concern about the current financial situation of the Institute stemming from the continued appreciation of the Japanese yen against the United States dollar as well as the depreciation of the dollar against other currencies during the preceding 27 months. That had resulted in a significant increase in the budget shortfall in spite of steps taken by the Institute to balance expenditure with income/cash contributions during the past years.

5. Several members of the Council noted that the implementation status of the core skills framework in SIAP activities should be encouraged and stressed the need to take further steps to strengthen the effective use of the framework.

II. Review of the progress in the implementation of the Commission resolution 65/2 on regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific

6. The Council had before it document STAT/SIAP/GC(6)/4, which had been prepared in accordance with Commission resolution 65/2 to provide a review of the initiatives undertaken by the Institute and of the progress made in strengthening financial support to SIAP with the objective of raising the sense of ownership by member States.

7. Representatives of the following Council members and observers made statements: Australia; Japan; India; Kazakhstan; Mongolia; Russian Federation; Samoa; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); and International Labour Organization (ILO).

8. The Council acknowledged that the Government of Japan was doing its best to maintain its cash contribution to SIAP at the current level despite the difficult financial situation. Reflecting on the Institute's deficit with the bulk of the cash contributions (87.5 per cent) coming from the Government of Japan, the Council urged other members and associate members to increase their cash contributions.

9. The Council was informed that the following members and associate members had increased their annual contributions to SIAP: India; Indonesia; Philippines; Republic of Korea; and Turkey.

10. The representative of Japan requested that members and associate members of ESCAP and international organizations make further efforts to

strengthen the financial support of SIAP to ensure the stability of its operations.

11. One delegation expressed concern about the financial stability of SIAP. Despite continuing efforts to increase cash contributions and mobilize resources to supplement institutional funds, he stressed that SIAP had been using accumulated cash reserves to cover the excess of expenditure over the cash revenues for the past several years.

12. One delegation suggested that the Council might make cash contributions from member States obligatory, while noting that several member States had been receiving assistance from SIAP on a sustainable basis but had not made any contributions.

13. The representatives of Kazakhstan and Mongolia informed the Council that their respective Governments were considering the possibility of contributing up to \$10,000 in 2011 while the representative of the Russian Federation stated that his Government was considering the possibility of supporting SIAP activities in 2011.

14. The Council commented that the content of the training provided by SIAP could be enriched to meet the needs of national statistical systems and not only national statistical offices. That might also lead to the enhancement of the sense of ownership of SIAP by members and associate members and, thus, increase the financial resources of the Institute.

15. One Council member suggested that arrangements be explored for allocating the Institute's administrative overhead costs associated with conducting training activities to other agencies as a way to increase financial resources.

16. The Council suggested that SIAP further strengthen the efforts to diversify its funding basis, such as by reinforcing partnership collaborations with donor governments, United Nations agencies and international organizations, including country offices of international organizations, increasing the number of self-funded individual participants, and other forms of mobilizing resources as mentioned in the strategic plan of the Institute for academic years 2010–2014 (see E/ESCAP/CST/INF/6).

17. The Council urged the Director to formulate a financial plan and present it to the Council for consideration during its next meeting, which was proposed to be held in February 2011 alongside the forty-second session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

18. Concerning the fortieth anniversary of SIAP, the Council was informed that the celebratory events had helped increase knowledge about and the visibility of SIAP. The celebration of the fortieth anniversary had also provided an occasion for the Institute to envisage its future role, particularly in the light of the increasing demand for official statistics for evidence-based decision-making. The Governing Council expressed appreciation to the Government of Japan, other members and associate members, the ESCAP secretariat, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international organizations for their support in celebrating the fortieth anniversary of SIAP.

III. Report of the Director

19. The Governing Council had before it the report of the Director of SIAP (STAT/SIAP/GC(6)/5/Rev.1). The Director reported the key results achieved, new initiatives implemented, a summary of SIAP activities in the reporting period, and institutional matters.

20. The Director pointed out the Institute's efforts to monitor and improve its performance on a continuous basis to address the demand for training in Asia and the Pacific. The report stated that the training programmes were demand-driven and linked to national and international capacity-building initiatives.

21. The Governing Council noted that SIAP had: (a) started to use the core skills framework for designing and implementing training programmes; (b) strengthened its training programmes as an integral component of the ESCAP statistics subprogramme; and (c) intensified collaboration with other United Nations agencies and international organizations.

22. The Director reported that SIAP had revised its training programme and initiated several new courses to address the capability building needs of government officials/statisticians to produce and disseminate data to monitor achievements with regard to the Millennium Development Goals in a comprehensive manner. This would ensure access to data and build the statistical skills of producers/users in line ministries and civil society. Examples of the new courses included the following: the four-month Tokyo Metropolitan Area (TMA)-based SIAP-Japan International Cooperative Agency (JICA) group training course on the production and development of official statistics in support of national development including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, for junior-level statisticians; the three-week joint Asian Development Bank (ADB)-SIAP workshop for middle-level statisticians; a subregional training/workshop on the dissemination and communication of Millennium Development Goals statistics for effective use in policy and decision-making, organized jointly with Statistics Korea, the Statistics Division and the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, and attended by producers and users of statistics in civil society organizations; and the four SIAP-United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA)-Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication training courses for statisticians involved in population and housing census activities.

23. The report also provided an overview of the administrative and financial status of the Institute in 2010 (as of 31 October 2010), with details of cash contributions from member States, including the host country, as well as statements of expenditure and account balances.

24. Representatives of the following Council members and observers made statements: Australia; Japan; India; Nauru; Philippines; ADB; ILO; and UNFPA.

25. The Council noted with appreciation that the computer system, including the local area network (LAN), of SIAP had been upgraded and expanded by the host Government with higher capacity hardware and new versions of software packages that were commonly used by national statistical offices.

26. The representative of Japan recognized the important contributions made by ADB, UNFPA, the IMF, ILO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Bank, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) and the United Nations Statistics Division in conducting training courses during the reporting period. One delegation commented that the topics of the two management seminars were very relevant at the country level and expressed interest to hear feedback from participants and participating organizations on the effects that the seminars had had on statistics management at the country level. The delegation further commented that the disaggregated data in Millennium Development Goals that focus on inequality would be a relevant and timely seminar topic. The delegation also noted that the Institute was making an effort to become more results oriented.

27. One Council member welcomed the fact that the number of self-funded and co-funded participations in the training courses had increased and requested SIAP to strengthen its training methods, diversify training contents and make the most use of new information technology (IT) infrastructure in order to best address the training needs of member States.

28. The Governing Council advised SIAP to continue to strengthen its partnerships and collaboration with existing national and regional training institutes. To this end, the Council suggested that in the long run, the Institute should focus on providing training that covers emerging issues related to the strategic development of national statistical systems in the region.

29. The Governing Council acknowledged with appreciation the Government of Japan's continued support to SIAP, comprising a cash contribution of \$1,680,500, an in kind contribution equivalent to \$1,229,085, made through the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, and the provision of 71 fellowships through JICA for the group training courses conducted in Chiba, Japan. The Council also expressed gratitude to the host Government for its generous support in conducting distance training courses through JICA for officials of the national statistical offices of Cambodia, India, Mongolia, Mozambique, Philippines, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam and to JAXA for supporting officials of the national statistical office of Thailand.

30. Furthermore, the Governing Council acknowledged with appreciation the contributing members and associate members in the region for their continuing cash and in kind contributions, through which they had demonstrated their ownership of the Institute's activities. The Council expressed gratitude to the Governments of India, Indonesia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Turkey for increasing their cash contributions to SIAP.

31. The Council expressed its gratitude to UNFPA for its programme support and funding of four training courses on population and housing census with gender concerns.

32. The Governing Council acknowledged with appreciation the contributions of the following: (a) the Governments of India, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Thailand as well as the governments of Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China, for hosting and providing organizational support of regional and subregional courses through their respective

national statistical offices; (b) the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan and the Central Statistical Organization of India for providing resource support on specific subjects at SIAP training courses and workshops through their experts; and (c) other agencies of the United Nations and other regional and international organizations, particularly ADB, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC),^a ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre, ILO, IMF, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank and PARIS21 for collaborating with SIAP in the implementation of its training activities.

IV. Consideration of the work plan of the Institute for the academic year 2011

33. The Governing Council had before it the document entitled “Work plan of the Institute for the academic year 2011” (STAT/SIAP/GC (6)/6/Rev.1). The draft work plan of the Institute for the academic year 2011, which covered the period from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012, was developed within the context of the proposed five-year long-term work plan of the Institute for the academic years 2010-2014, taking into account the direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework of ESCAP for 2010-2011 and the draft strategic framework for 2012-2013, as endorsed by the Commission at its sixty-sixth session.

34. The Director informed the Council that the work plan had been developed to deliver the outputs as indicated in the two-year work plan for the academic years 2010 and 2011 endorsed by the Council at its fifth session, in 2009, and to contribute to the expected accomplishments of the statistics subprogramme of ESCAP.

35. The Council was also informed that the SIAP-JICA TMA-based courses were to be formalized on the basis of the relevant and applicable laws and regulations of the Government of Japan and in accordance with the Institute’s annual budgetary appropriations for Japanese fiscal year 2011. Similarly, the plan for TMA-based short-term courses, the outreach programme and the distance training courses, would be finalized in accordance with the annual budgetary appropriations of SIAP and collaborating organizations for fiscal year 2011.

36. Representatives of the following Council members and observers made statements: Australia; India; Indonesia; Japan; Philippines; Samoa; Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT); Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC); and UNFPA.

37. One Council member noted that both the revenue and expenditure side of the budget needed attention and had to be worked out in detail. In addition, members noted that the proposed work plan reflected the efforts being made to manage the costs by reducing the length of the courses. The member also noted with appreciation that work was being done to incorporate the core skills framework into the programme as well as to frame the curriculum of the training courses. The discussion on this issue also brought out the need to indicate the costs including overheads for each

^a The Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE).

component in order to make better use of existing funds and get sponsors for unfunded elements.

38. One delegation, which represented the Pacific islands, informed the Council that the statistical systems of the Pacific islands were at different levels of statistical development and that some basic training in official statistics was still needed. The delegation stressed, however, that SIAP courses had been very useful for the countries of the Pacific and that they should continue to be offered.

39. One Council member suggested that SIAP should target its programme more effectively. For the countries with training facilities, SIAP should conduct training courses for the “trainers” or on advanced topics in specific areas. For the countries without developed training facilities or with a shortage of trained statistical personnel, the member suggested that SIAP and ESCAP should arrange basic training courses on official statistics.

40. Some delegations of special agencies sought partnerships with SIAP in delivering their mandates.

41. The representative of FAO expressed a desire to collaborate with SIAP in developing the training component for the Asia-Pacific region for the global strategy to improve agricultural statistics, while the representative of ILO expressed an interest in working with SIAP in developing training modules for the compilation of decent work indicators.

42. One delegation informed the Council about the training programmes developed by EUROSTAT and conveyed the desire of EUROSTAT to share the training materials and other resources with SIAP.

43. The delegation of SESRIC informed the Council that it would initiate a partnership with SIAP in statistical capacity-building for mutual member States.

44. Several members of the Council and some delegations of international organizations stressed that it was essential that SIAP collaborate with the training institutes of the national statistical offices, United Nations agencies and other international organizations in developing training materials, sharing resource persons and conducting training courses.

45. The Council endorsed the work plan for the academic year 2011 and advised SIAP to take into consideration the concerns raised relating to the contents of training, the offers for collaborative training activities with other international agencies, and the mobilization of financial resources for conducting planned training activities.

V. Matters arising from the external evaluation of SIAP

46. The Governing Council had before it the document entitled “Matters arising from the external evaluation of SIAP” (STAT/SIAP/GC(6)/INF/5).

47. One Council member noted that an evaluation was indeed important at this critical stage of the Institute, as a strategic approach was necessary to deal with the recommendations, and to work out a way forward. Thus, the member proposed that training institutes collaborate closely with the donor

organizations to enable SIAP to meet the training needs of the region while maintaining financial stability.

48. Several members stressed the need to devote more time to examining the recommendations of the evaluator. The Council agreed to meet informally within a short time, possibly during the session of the United Nations Statistical Commission scheduled to be held in February 2011, after conducting electronic exchanges.

49. The Council requested that the Director of SIAP prepare and submit a management response to the recommendations of the evaluator in 2010 for consideration at its informal meeting proposed to be held alongside the Statistical Commission session in February 2011.

VI. Items of information

A. Review of the draft annual report of the Institute to the Commission

50. The Governing Council had before it the draft annual report of the Institute to the Commission (STAT/SIAP/GC(6)/7).

51. The objective of the report was to enable the Commission to review how SIAP functioned under the guidance of the Governing Council with the financial support of members and associate members, including the host country. The report also aimed to explain how SIAP assisted member States in the region in building their statistical capabilities with collaborative support from the Statistics Division of ESCAP and other regional institutions. The Council reviewed the draft report and advised SIAP to reflect the decisions of the Council in the report and circulate it to the members for comments.

B. Draft manual of the research-based training programme

52. The Governing Council had before it the draft manual of the research-based training programme (STAT/SIAP/GC(6)/INF/4).

53. The Council was informed that the manual intended to assist trainees in their research studies and enhance their capability in undertaking independent research in official statistics and preparing quality statistical reports. The manual had been made available for comments to a wider audience through the SIAP website. It was also being used as a guide for conducting the research-based training course on a trial basis in 2010.

VII. Other matters

54. Representatives of the following Council members and observers made statements: Australia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; and Thailand.

55. One delegation suggested that the Council consider expanding its membership. Some other delegates, opining that it might help increase the sense of ownership by the member States, expressed support for the suggestion.

56. One Council member expressed concern about the proposal, as the motives and the purpose behind it were not very clear. The member said that in most boards, the membership was kept as small as possible in order to be able to make decisions. The member commented that factors designed to ensure effective decision-making and not simply encourage active participation should be taken into account in determining the appropriate size of a board. Another Council member pointed out that only the Commission could make decisions regarding the composition of the Council. Thus, it was agreed that the matter was more properly discussed in the Commission and not the Council.

57. One Council member mentioned that the issue of expanding the Governing Council membership would require time for consideration by all parties concerned.

58. The Council noted the suggestion made by the delegation to consider expanding its membership.

59. The Governing Council agreed to hold its seventh session in Chiba, Japan, in December 2011.

VIII. Adoption of the report

60. The Governing Council adopted the present report on 14 December 2010.

IX. Organization

A. Opening of the session

61. The sixth session of the Governing Council of SIAP was held in Bangkok on 13 and 14 December 2010.

62. The representative of China welcomed all the participants.

63. The opening remarks of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP were delivered by the Director of the Statistics Division of ESCAP. The Executive Secretary welcomed the representatives and expressed deep appreciation to the Governing Council for the invaluable advice and guidance given to SIAP at its fifth session. She described the important role of SIAP, and expressed the hope that the Governing Council's observations and guidance would help SIAP stay relevant, maintain its edge and evolve to meet the continuing and emerging needs of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The Executive Secretary expressed gratitude to the host Government for its valuable and generous contributions to SIAP, including the awarding of fellowships for training courses in Japan through JICA since the establishment of the Institute four decades before. She expressed deep appreciation to the Office of the Director-General for Policy Planning in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan for the substantial financial, administrative and infrastructure support as well as the services of experts for Tokyo-based training courses it had provided to the Institute. The Executive Secretary also highlighted the importance of using the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) high-speed communication satellite, Wideband InterNetworking engineering test and Demonstration Satellite (WINDS), for SIAP distance training and expressed appreciation for the support of the Ministry in enabling the experimental training in

October 2010 of statisticians of the National Statistical Office of Thailand in collaboration with JAXA. She requested that the Government of Japan maintain its support, including cash and in kind contributions at the same level, to enable SIAP to fulfil its mandate in the coming years.

64. The Executive Secretary also expressed appreciation to ESCAP members and associate members for their financial support of SIAP, and stressed the need for them to increase their annual contributions. She valued the collaborations with countries and many other international agencies, especially UNFPA, ADB and IMF, in implementing the Institute's training programmes, and appealed for continuous cooperation and support to implement the proposed programme for the academic year 2011.

65. The Executive Secretary requested that the Governing Council members carefully review the issues placed before the Council for deliberation and provide appropriate guidance and recommendations.

66. The representative of Japan expressed his gratitude to the members and associate members of ESCAP for their participation in the Governing Council and paid tribute to the Director and staff of SIAP for their efforts in implementing the work plan of the Institute during the reporting period.

B. Attendance

67. The session was attended by representatives of eight of the nine newly elected members of the Governing Council: Australia; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; Republic of Korea; and Thailand.

68. Representatives of the following members and associate members attended the session as observers: Cambodia; Kazakhstan; Mongolia; Nauru; Philippines; Russian Federation; Samoa; Sri Lanka; Turkmenistan; Hong Kong, China; and Macao, China.

69. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and intergovernmental organizations participated as observers: United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) East and Southeast Asia Regional Office (ESARO), UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office; FAO; ILO; ADB, EUROSTAT; and SESRIC.

C. Election of officers

70. The Governing Council elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chair: Mr. Ismail bin Yusoff (Malaysia)
Vice-Chair: Mr. Shunsuke Kimura (Japan)

D. Agenda

71. The Governing Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening addresses;
 - (b) Election of officers;

- (c) Adoption of the agenda.
 - 2. Matters arising from the fifth session of the Governing Council.
 - 3. Review of the progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 65/2 on regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific.
 - 4. Report of the Director:
 - (a) Progress in the implementation of the work plan since the fifth session of the Governing Council;
 - (b) Administrative and financial status.
 - 5. Consideration of the work plan of the Institute for the academic year 2011.
 - 6. Matters arising from the external evaluation of SIAP.
 - 7. Items of information:
 - (a) Review of the draft annual report of the Institute to the Commission;
 - (b) Draft manual for the research-based training programme.
 - 8. Other matters.
 - 9. Adoption of the report.
-