

## **Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific**

### **Summary**

The fifth meeting of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific was held in Chiba, Japan on 10 December 2019, attended by forty-nine participants from twenty-five countries and FAO, ITU, SPC, UNSD, UN Women, ESCAP-SD and SIAP including the Chair of the Network.

Reports on the activities of the Subgroup on Gender Statistics as well as that of the Subgroup on Economic Statistics were discussed by the Network. It was agreed in the discussion during the meeting that the subgroups will continue to perform their identified functions. Likewise, the members of the Network agreed to further improve the database of training materials for a more efficient coordination of trainings being implemented by the different country members.

The Network recommended the creation of a small group to initiate discussion on accreditation and standardization of the training curriculum in the Subgroup on Gender Statistics and report the outcome in the 2020 Network Meeting for further consideration.

The Network supported the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP and Work Programme of the Network as indicated in the Work Programme of SIAP for the year 2020.

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### **Annex**

#### Agenda of the Fifth Meeting of the Network

#### **I. Background**

1. In September 2013, the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics established the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, with a mandate to act as a facilitator of information-sharing and of coordination among statistical training institutes in the region.

2. The fourth meeting of the Network was held on 12th September 2018. Apart from overall review of the progress made, the Network had set up a new Subgroup on Gender Statistics.

3. Also, in the fourth meeting, the Network considered the issue of accreditation of official statistics courses as per recommendation of the Governing Council of SIAP. The Network recognized that it was not possible to undertake any accreditation of official statistics courses since the training courses designed and developed by statistical training institutions though follow international standards yet they have to include a lot of content from country practices in these courses and also have to consider the nature and level of knowledge of participants.

## II. Decision and Recommendations of the Meeting

4. The Network recommended the creation of a small group to initiate discussion on accreditation and standardization of the training curriculum and report to the Network during its 2020 Meeting for further consideration. The modalities of the work of the small group need to be further discussed. This would be done via electronic meetings. Members were encouraged to participate in the small group. This discussion could start in the development of the gender statistics training.

5. The Network had a consensus that the Subgroup on Economic Statistics continue to perform its activities in the future as it was observed that many countries are still facing challenges in implementing fundamental principles of key economic statistics (e.g. SNA) and also, there was huge demand of statistics relating to newly emerging economic frameworks (digital economy, maritime GDP, green economy, creative GDP, Gross Domestic Knowledge Product, etc.).

6. The Network recommended SIAP to continue developing the database of training information to include information from other similar initiatives (i.e. trainings being conducted by the Subgroups on Economic and Gender Statistics). Although the development of the database is still at the initial stage, it was believed that through this database effective coordination of trainings could be attained to avoid duplication of efforts

7. The Network supported the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP endorsed by its Governing Council. The Network decided to support implementation of relevant activities identified in the Work Programme and Financial Plan of SIAP for 2020 as endorsed by its Governing Council. In addition, suggestion made by participants during the meeting as listed in the proceedings of the meeting would also be taken into account during the implementation phase of the plan.

## III. Summary of Proceedings

### Session 1: Report of the Subgroup on Gender Statistics

8. UN Women reported activities of the Subgroup in 2019 highlighting priority activities for 2020 and long-term plan for capacity building on gender statistics.

9. Indonesia stressed the need to provide gender statistics training to higher and managerial level staff.

10. UNSD, Philippines and other member States raised the need of accrediting the training curriculum on gender statistics and other similar training curricula.

- The Philippines suggested certification of the 'minimum or core' gender statistics training program modules.
- UNSD supported certifying the curriculum by taking a corporate and systematic approach to reach out to the other similar training networks at global level in long term.
- SIAP and UNSD noted that international standards should be reflected to national standards in consideration of national context and the Network should play the role of implementing the internationally agreed standards to different stakeholders. In addition, training needs and curriculum should take into account specific requirements of target participants (policymakers, NSO staff)

- UNSD suggested that UN Women could initiate the work of developing standard training curriculum at the international level and countries can continue discussion on certifying such curriculum and implementing it at national level in the next Network meeting.
- The Secretariat noted that members of the Network discussed possible modalities for accrediting courses on official statistics in the region during the previous Network meeting and the Network recommended that the accreditation was not obligatory, and that accreditation was only being discussed as a possibility.
- The Philippines favored experimenting accreditation scheme of gender statistics training curriculum in a few countries or institutions. Others can follow the lead by benchmarking success stories.
- Indonesia sought clarification on whether certification proposed would refer to simply appreciation of participation or it would include quality measures such as standard tests. It was informed that it would include completion of tests as prescribed as part of the process.

11. Members expressed that tests would be useful for accreditation but expressed some concerns in conduct of such tests. Specific concerns raised were the following.

- Concerns were expressed regarding cheating in conduct of tests and sharing of test questions when they get exposed to public via online courses. Potential solutions to these concerns include supervision of standard exams and increased number of questions from the pool of questions (data bank) which were randomly selected.
- Republic of Korea expressed difficulties in finding visible benefits of accrediting the curriculum and introducing standardized test in the training which would lead to low level of satisfaction on the part of participants.
- Mongolia pointed out that standardized test would only create barriers for potential trainees to participate in the training where on the contrary the focus should be engaging as many people as possible to participate in the training.
- UN Women proposed to experiment the idea of introducing “assessing” scheme to trainers through training of trainers and explore gradually further possibility of expanding the scope to other participants.

12. The Chair proposed the creation of a small group to initiate discussion on accreditation and standardization of the training curriculum and report to the Network in 2020 for further discussion. Her proposal was supported by participants of the meeting. The modalities of the work of the small group need to be further discussed. This can be possibly done via electronic meeting. Members are encouraged to participate in the small group. This discussion could start on the gender statistics training.

13. FAO suggested collaborating with the academe to integrate the gender statistics curriculum into regular university curricula to provide gender statistics training at early stage. UN Women noted that the Subgroup is already exploring options with universities in Hong Kong and Mongolia to integrate the training modules into their own curricula.

14. Nepal suggested to assess the possibility of including a set of gender related questions in census or other major household surveys. UN Women noted that gender cuts across all topics in the

survey and 'sex' is included in most of the surveys. Using other socioeconomic variables in the survey further disaggregation by sex can be performed under the condition that sample size is sufficient.

15. Republic of Korea highlighted the need for translating the training curriculum into local languages if it is to be implemented effectively.

### **Session 2: Report of the Subgroup on Economic Statistics**

16. ESCAP-SD reported recent activities of the Subgroup on Economic Statistics and shared key lessons learned from economic statistics trainings conducted in Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives and Nepal. It also raised questions to the Network for future direction on the activities of the Subgroup.

- The Network discussed whether the Subgroup should continue to perform its activities in the future. There was consensus that many countries were still facing challenges in implementing fundamental principles of key economic statistics (e.g. SNA) and there was huge demand of statistics relating to newly emerging economic frameworks (digital economy, maritime GDP, green economy, creative GDP, Gross Domestic Knowledge Product, etc.). Therefore, training institutions in the region would need further assistance of this Subgroup.
- ESCAP-SD acknowledged the importance and relevance of current economic analytic frameworks such as SNA, Supply and Use Table, and Balance of Payment. It also mentioned about increasing relevance of satellite accounts, such as ocean accounts, water accounts and others that lead up to environment and ecosystems account.
- UNSD suggested an upstream approach of developing global standards which is a regionally led initiative. One or two good cases of new initiatives on innovative ideas (for example measuring digital economy) can be incubated by bringing countries and agencies in the region together (possibly also engaging private sector). SIAP (and the Subgroup) can play a role in this experimental process and bringing it to the global level along its outcome and experiences.
- FAO noted that, like the Subgroup on Economic Statistics, the Subgroup on Agricultural and Rural Statistics also needs to transform its activities by shifting its focus on the use of ICT and big data in agricultural and rural statistics.
- The Russian Federation requested the Subgroup on Economic Statistics to develop new areas of statistics (big data, digital economy, satellite accounts) building from existing materials.

17. ESCAP consultant presented a prototype of the proposed training portal which could be used for making the training materials developed for Economic Statistics be made available to member countries.

### **Session 3: Development of database of training resources**

18. The Secretariat presented the status of the development of database and requested members to populate the database with relevant training materials.

19. The Network recommended SIAP to continue developing the database of training information to include the information from other similar initiatives (i.e. trainings conducted by the Subgroups on Economic and Gender Statistics). Even though that the database development is still at the initial stage, its importance in effective coordination to avoid duplication cannot be underestimated.

20. China questioned whether there is any specific standard for uploading the materials to the database. SIAP explained that items of information to be uploaded are listed in the menu of the database and they can upload the materials (regardless of the length of the training periods) directly by logging into the database.

21. Nepal requested further clarifications whether local training information should also be uploaded to the database. SIAP explained that the scope is limited to international training information.

22. UNSD stressed that all training information in the database should be open and accessible to all 193 countries in the UN.

#### **Session 4: Development of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP**

23. The Network supported the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP endorsed by its Governing Council. In addition, suggestion made by participants would be taken into account during implementation.

- Chair expressed that the Network had an importance role of providing guidance for coordinating the work of SIAP and national training institutes. For example, SIAP provided training of trainers of training institutes and then the institutes were expected to implement training programmes in their own national context.
- Representative from Philippines suggested that SIAP should focus on training of trainers and should collaborate with universities and colleges.
- The Russian Federation expressed its willingness to cooperate with SIAP and others for exchange of ideas and training materials (including translated materials). It also informed about the activities of GIST.
- UNSD emphasized the importance of creating an interoperable environment with the help of information technologies that enable sharing of ideas and training materials under the cloud environment. It also suggested use of training material developed by UNSD relating to trade statistics.
- FAO informed that UN was undertaking a regional review to streamline and coordinate its statistical activities of all UN agencies.
- China mentioned that training of trainers should be SIAP's major area of work and expressed willingness to collaborate with SIAP. It also requested that the database being developed should be shared with all the members.

#### **Session 5: Work Programme of the Network in 2020**

24. The Network decided to support implementation of relevant activities identified in the Work Programme and Financial Plan for 2020 which were approved by its Governing Council.

25. In addition, suggestion made by participants would be taken into account during implementation.

- FAO stressed the importance of linkage between agricultural census and population census with the use of IT technology, tablets and other IT devices and forging partnership with UNFPA and the Network.

- ESCAP-SD informed that it would organize Asia Pacific Statistics Week in 2020 which would aim to open up many cross-cutting areas where major innovations were being tested. The members of Network would like to utilize this opportunity to present some of the innovative experiments performed in their countries.
- SPC would like to strengthen partnership with SIAP and ESCAP in areas of practically oriented training programs such as census, household surveys and others.
- The Philippines would also like to collaborate with SIAP for training of trainers and other areas of statistical trainings.
- Research based training and training for non-statisticians were also discussed among participants.

#### **Session 6: Other matters**

26. The sixth Network meeting will be held on 1 December 2020, Chiba, Japan.

#### **IV. Organization of the Meeting**

##### **A. Opening of the Meeting**

27. The fifth meeting of the Network for the Coordination of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific was held in Chiba, Japan, on 10 December 2019.
28. The Chair of the Network, Ms. Zita Albacea officially opened the fifth Meeting of the Network.

##### **B. Attendance**

29. The meeting was attended by forty-nine participants from: Armenia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Nepal, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu, Viet Num, FAO, ITU, SPC, UNSD, UN Women, ESCAP-SD and SIAP including the Chair of the Network.

##### **C. Adoption of the agenda**

30. The meeting adopted the agenda as presented in the attached Annex.

**Annex. Agenda of the Fifth Meeting of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific**

Date/Time	Sessions and Events	Presenter
10:30-10:45	<p><b>Opening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome message from SIAP</li> <li>• Welcome message from the Chair of the Network</li> <li>• Adoption of the Agenda</li> </ul>	<p>Mr. Ashish Kumar <i>Director, SIAP</i></p> <p>Ms. Zita Villa Juan Albacea <i>Chair of the Network</i></p>
Group photo		
10:50-12:00	<p><b>Session 1: Report from the subgroup on gender statistics training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of activities in 2019</li> <li>• Priority activities for 2020 pertaining to gender statistics</li> <li>• Perspective of long-term plan for capacity building on gender statistics</li> </ul>	<p>Ms. Sara Duerto Valero, <i>Statistics Specialist, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UN Women</i></p>
Luncheon hosted by SIAP		

Date/Time	Sessions and Events	Presenter
13:30-13:50	<b>Session 2: Report from the subgroup on economic statistics training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of activities and perspective</li> </ul>	Ms. Rikke Munk Hansen <i>Chief, Economic and Environment Statistics Section, Statistics Division, ESCAP</i>
13:50-14:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training portal</li> </ul>	Mr. Dalisto Adrian Zabula <i>Consultant, ESCAP</i>
14:20-14:35	<b>Session 3: Development of database of training resources</b>	Mr. Makoto Shimizu <i>Deputy Director, SIAP</i>
14:35-15:45	<b>Session 4: Development of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the summary of discussion of the Governing Council of SIAP related to the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP</li> <li>• Comments from members of the Network related to the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan of SIAP</li> </ul>	Mr. Ashish Kumar <i>Director, SIAP</i>
Coffee/Tea Break		
16:05-16:35	<b>Session 5: Work programme of the Network in 2020</b>	Mr. Ashish Kumar <i>Director, SIAP</i>
16:35-16:45	<b>Session 6: Other business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities in GIST by SIAP</li> <li>• The date and venue of the sixth session of the Network</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>	Mr. Makoto Shimizu <i>Deputy Director of SIAP</i>
16:45-16:55	<b>Closing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closing message</li> </ul>	Ms. Zita Villa Juan Albacea <i>Chair of the Network</i>