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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Committee on Statistics**Fifth session**

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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda\*\*

**The framework for action, partner coordination and stakeholder responsibilities: Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific****Report on the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific****Note by the secretariat\*\*\****Summary*

In September 2013, the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics established the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific. The Committee endorsed the Network's initial programme of work in its decision 4/8 at its fourth session in March 2015.

At the Network's 2nd meeting in March 2016, it reviewed its progress in implementing the activities contained in the programme of work and discussed issues and agreed on plans for addressing those issues in 2016 and 2017. The present document contains a report on the review and recommendations made as a result of that meeting, including an updated programme of work. Specifically, the Network agreed to focus on three outputs: (1) identified training gaps in understanding, measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals; (2) a database of training resources that is accessible to Network members; and (3) a common curriculum for priority statistical training on agricultural and rural statistics.

The Committee is invited to endorse and provide guidance on the implementation of the proposed updated programme of work to ensure delivery of the prioritized outputs. The Committee is further invited to identify the Network's roles and responsibilities in the implementation of activities under action area E (skills and human resources) of the document entitled "Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community".

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\* Reissued for technical reasons on 22 November 2016.

\*\* E/ESCAP/CST(5)/L.1.

\*\*\* The present note was submitted late owing to the need for further consultation among the implementing partners on its contents.

## **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 the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific as its secretariat. At the Committee's second and third sessions, it endorsed the Network's terms of reference and membership,<sup>1</sup> and at its fourth session, it endorsed the Network's initial programme of work in its decision 4/8.<sup>1</sup>

2. In reviewing the initial programme of work, which is annexed to the present document, the Committee stressed the importance of using the Network's information-sharing function for the prioritization of statistical training activities and noted the requests for training in areas of advocacy and data analysis. It welcomed the offer from new and upgraded national training institutions in Bangladesh and Pakistan to coordinate and host regional trainings. It urged member States to provide strong support for the delivery of the Network's programme of work. The Committee also noted the interest in further developing the idea, presented by the Statistics Division of the Secretariat, of establishing a global network and training model based on the example in Asia and the Pacific.

3. The present document contains a report prepared by the secretariat of the Network on the progress in implementing the programme of work. It also contains a proposed update for the period 2016-2017 based primarily on the review undertaken at the 2nd meeting of the Network in March 2016. In addition, the Network's proposed focus areas have been reviewed in the context of discussions at the Asia-Pacific Conference: Transforming Official Statistics for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, held in Bangkok from 24 to 26 August 2016, which aimed to formulate a collective vision and framework for action for the region, with the participation of the Chair of the Network.

## **II. Progress in implementing the Network's initial programme of work**

### **A. Status of 2015-2016 activities and outputs**

4. The Network's initial programme of work contained the following items: (a) developing, piloting and finalizing training needs assessment tools; (b) exploring options for storage and retrieval of training materials, including for e-learning, for use of members of the Network; (c) identifying areas for developing common curricula and coordinating production of training materials; (d) developing a resource database to support sharing of information on capacity development activities and experts; and (e) establishing a subgroup on training for agricultural and rural statistics.

5. At the Committee's fourth session, it endorsed the terms of reference and the initial work plan of the Subgroup on Training for Agricultural and Rural Statistics, which was established to support the implementation of the training component of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, in support of the implementation of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. The Subgroup's outputs contribute to the Network's programme of work. To date, the Network's activities and outputs are related to the Subgroup's activities. The ongoing activities of the Subgroup that are financed by the Regional Action

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<sup>1</sup> See E/ESCAP/CST(4)/12.

Plan are (a) developing, piloting and finalizing training needs assessment tools and (b) identifying areas for developing common curricula and coordinating production of training materials, as applied to the agricultural and rural statistics domain.

6. As part of the activities for developing common tools for training, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific organized a training-of-trainers workshop from 29 February to 3 March 2016 with members of the Network and senior officials from institutes that provide training on official statistics in the Asia-Pacific region. The workshop's aim was to pilot a generic training-of-trainers manual on specific areas of agricultural statistics and to identify approaches for customizing the generic manual to other fields of official statistics.

## **B. Outcomes of the 2nd meeting of the Network**

7. Eighteen participants from thirteen member States and two international organizations attended the 2nd meeting of the Network, which was held in Chiba, Japan. The member States were Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Thailand and Viet Nam. The international organizations represented in the meeting were the International Statistical Institute and the World Bank.

8. The meeting reviewed the progress in the implementation of the initial programme of work with a focus on accelerating the establishment of the resource database and the process for certifying trainers and training institutes on official statistics. The meeting also discussed opportunities for extending its work to other areas of official statistics.<sup>2</sup> Based on these discussions, the meeting proposed an updated programme of work for the Network for 2016-2017.

### **1. Expanding the inventory of and access to trainers on official statistics in the region**

9. To start the development of a database of experts, the meeting agreed to create a task team to prepare a concept note that would take into account the following features: relevant items of information to be included; criteria for inclusion of experts in the database; and process for uploading information and ensuring the quality of information provided. The Network would review the proposals in the concept note and agree on the features.

10. The meeting agreed that certification of trainers served to enhance the quality of statistical training but recognized the challenges in establishing a certification programme. Among the questions raised were (a) What should be the purpose of the certification? Should those who are uncertified not be hired? (b) Who should certify trainers? Will it be the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and/or training institutions with some possibility of utilizing criteria established by the Network? (c) How would language issues be addressed? Since statistical officials are not necessarily proficient in English, languages other than English might be necessary for statistical training in such countries.

11. The meeting discussed some options for certification, including compiling a list of recommended trainers of statistical organizations who have several years of experience as statistical trainers and a process of

<sup>2</sup> For the agenda and documentation, see [www.unsiap.or.jp/tnetwork/1603\\_NW2.html](http://www.unsiap.or.jp/tnetwork/1603_NW2.html).

certified credentials from specific institutions based on their qualifications and experiences with training; in addition to academic or subject matter credentials, certification criteria should include skills such as knowledge and application of instructional design models.

12. The meeting agreed to create a task team to formulate recommendations for a certification process. The team's recommendations would be based on a review of existing certification programmes and, if possible, identification of a relevant success model.

13. Network members agreed to prioritize operationalization of the database of training resources, including experts and training information and materials.

## **2. Expanding the work of the Network: consideration of statistical domains**

14. The meeting looked into how the work of the Network could be expanded and considered three areas that are currently on the Committee's statistical development agenda, namely, data and statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals; civil registration and vital statistics; and economic statistics. In addition, the meeting also discussed a new World Bank initiative to promote and build capacity to produce data for the Goals using multi-topic household surveys.

15. The meeting agreed to prioritize the training needs for the production of data and statistics for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. It identified the identification of training gaps in understanding, measuring and monitoring the Goals as a priority output.

16. Network members agreed to continue to prioritize the development of the training needs assessment tools and common curricula for agricultural and rural statistics. The Network agreed that the modality of a subgroup for facilitating training coordination in a specific statistical domain, similar to the Subgroup on Training for Agricultural and Rural Statistics, could be applied to the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics.

## **3. Expanding the work of the Network: the global network for training coordination**

17. With regard to the interest of the Statistics Division of the Secretariat in establishing a global network and training model based on the example in Asia and the Pacific, the meeting supported the idea but emphasized that it needed to have a bottom-up approach, namely, that the initiatives of the global network should be region- and country-driven and the region's priorities should be communicated to the global network. The regional network should stay fully operational to ensure training developments address regional considerations; hence, the global network configuration could be a network of regional networks.

## **4. Challenges**

18. The meeting noted that the diversity of languages in the region would be a factor for consideration in the design of activities for a global network. Thus, a working model for a global network as a network of regional networks could better address the language problems associated with conducting trainings for countries covering many different languages.

19. With the development of action plans to implement the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in the Pacific and Commonwealth of Independent States countries, the Subgroup on Training for Agricultural and Rural Statistics would be expected to facilitate coordination of training components for these plans.

20. That the major ongoing activities of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific are those with financial support from the Regional Action Plan highlights the importance of mobilizing resources to ensure faster implementation of the Network's programme of work. The Network emphasized the need to enhance and strengthen the human resources of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific so it could fulfil its role as secretariat and promote the Network's activities.

### III. Updated programme of work for 2016-2017

21. Based on discussions and agreements at its 2nd meeting, the Network proposed updates to the initial programme of work to reflect priority outputs for the period 2016-2017 for consideration by the Committee.

#### A. Priority outputs

22. The table below presents the three priority outputs, supporting activities and the composition of the task teams responsible for undertaking the activities, as well as the time frame for delivery of the outputs.

Table  
Updated programme of work

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Time frame</i>
1. Identified training gaps in understanding, measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members assess training needs on the Goals at the national level</li> <li>Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific shares good practices on country assessments</li> </ul>	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand	April to December 2016
2. Database of training resources compiled and accessed by Network members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a concept note for a prototype for the database design (including specifications for credentials, resource materials)</li> </ul>	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, World Bank, India, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Russian Federation	April 2016 to June 2017

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Time frame</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a beta version of the database of resources with contributions from Network members (on the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific's website)</li> </ul>		July to December 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A task team reviews existing certification programme and formulates recommendations</li> </ul>	Team: Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan	April to December 2016
3. Common curricula for priority statistical training on agricultural and rural statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot testing of training needs assessment tools</li> <li>• Development of training curricula for agriculture and rural statistics</li> </ul>	Asian Development Bank, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Lao People's Democratic Republic (pilot country), India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Viet Nam	April to December 2016 January to December 2017

## **B. Role of the Network in advancing official statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals**

23. Under agenda item 2 of the provisional agenda for its fifth session, the Committee will review for endorsement a document entitled "Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community".<sup>3</sup> Of particular relevance to the mandate of the Network is proposed action area E on skills and human resources. The proposal identifies the Network as a key implementing mechanism for the collective actions and supporting activities under this action area.

<sup>3</sup> E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1.

#### **IV. Issues for consideration**

24. The Committee is invited to:

(a) Endorse and provide guidance on the implementation of the proposed updated programme of work to ensure delivery of the prioritized outputs;

(b) Discuss and identify the Network's roles and responsibilities in the implementation of activities relating to skills and human resources for advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Annex

### Initial programme of work

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Partners</i>
Training needs assessment tools (for example, core skills framework; methodology; classifications; questionnaire)	Development (including methodology) Pilot testing Finalization	Japan, Pakistan, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
Existing training materials are accessible to Network members	Explore options for storage and searching Classification of materials by using standards, such as the Classification of Statistical Activities Uploading of materials (including guidelines and formats) Explore e-learning options	Australia, China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
Training materials produced by the Network	(To be determined after the needs analysis)	
Database of experts compiled and accessible by Network members	Compile the list of experts	Japan, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
Common curriculum for priority statistical training available	(To be developed after the needs analysis)	
Subgroup on Training for Agricultural and Rural Statistics established and working	The Subgroup will support coordination strategies and activities of the training component of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, to implement the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics  Identify members and invite them to join the Subgroup  Establish the Subgroup and its workplan at an organizational meeting  The Subgroup produces outputs aligned with Network priorities with a focus on training in agricultural and rural statistics	Asian Development Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, University of the South Pacific, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific