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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific****Seventy-eighth session**

Bangkok and online, 23–27 May 2022

Item 4 (j) of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: statistics****Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its seventeenth session***Summary*

The seventeenth session of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific was held online on 2 and 3 December 2021. During the session, Council members expressed their views on the Institute's e-learning training materials and methodologies. The Council also considered its regular agenda items, including the report of the Director of the Institute on its achievements in 2021 and the proposed work programme and financial plan for 2022.

The Council requested that additional good e-learning development methodologies be employed, including the utilization of hands-on sessions in web-based training, which can be actively shared among member States; that the possibility of allocating resources for translation of e-learning courses into additional United Nations official languages be explored; and that training-of-trainers programmes be organized to build the capacity of staff at national statistical offices to conduct national-level training activities and for such programmes to include training on facilitation skills.

The Council reviewed and endorsed the work programme and financial plan for 2022.

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\* ESCAP/78/L.1/Rev.1.

## **I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention**

1. The Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific notes the actions taken by the Institute to implement the recommendations made during the sixteenth session and thereafter. The Council notes with appreciation the developments regarding the revision of the resource mobilization strategy and the creation of the communication and advocacy strategy and expresses interest in participating in the implementation of the strategies.

2. Having reviewed the performance of the Institute regarding e-learning training and expressed appreciation to the Institute for its work in developing training materials and promoting the e-learning courses of collaborating agencies within the region, the Council:

(a) Requests that additional good e-learning development methodologies be employed, including the utilization of hands-on sessions in web-based training, which can be actively shared among member States;

(b) Requests that the possibility of allocating resources to the translation of e-learning courses into additional United Nations official languages be explored;

(c) Requests that training-of-trainers programmes be organized to build the capacity of staff at national statistical offices to conduct national-level training activities and for such programmes to include training on facilitation skills.

3. The Council recognizes that the demand for web-based training will be high regardless of the evolving coronavirus disease (COVID-19) situation and calls for continued investments in e-learning training. The Council also notes that some face-to-face training courses should resume once travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted. The Council calls for the continued enhancement of blended learning training courses to ensure that they are accessible to national statistical offices and line ministry officials, and further calls for the courses with the Japan International Cooperation Agency to be continued in face-to-face format when possible.

4. The Council, having reviewed the progress achieved by the Institute including its administrative and financial status, acknowledges the significant achievements of the Institute, especially regarding the organization of web-based training courses, in which the number of participants was its highest in the Institute's 51 years of history. The Council notes that as of 30 September 2021, women participants accounted for 1,520 out of the total 2,574 participants, and among the 25 web-based training courses organized by the Institute, 18 courses were on new topics.

5. The Council acknowledges the contributions of member States, associate members and statistical development partners to the Institute's achievement of the programme of work in 2021.

6. The Council, having reviewed the work programme and financial plan of the Institute for the year 2022, endorses the programme and plan. The Council proposes that country courses be tailored to countries' needs and new courses be developed on the basis of emerging needs in areas such as administrative data, big data, training of trainers, and modernization of national statistical offices and national statistical systems. The Council suggests that the

Institute explore priority areas of training, in consultation with appropriate focal points in the national statistical offices, prior to the formulation of the work programme. The Council also proposes to further develop the certification for courses, including for training-of-trainers courses.

7. The Council agrees that its eighteenth session will be held in Chiba, Japan, on 12 and 13 December 2022.

## **II. Proceedings**

### **A. Matters arising from the sixteenth session of the Governing Council (Agenda item 2)**

8. The Council had before it a note by the secretariat on matters arising from the sixteenth session. The Council noted with satisfaction the action taken and the current status of the matters as reported by the Institute.

9. The representative of Japan expressed appreciation to the Institute for its activities in 2021, including the revision of the resource mobilization strategy. The representative took note of the explanation provided to the Government of Japan by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) regarding the programme support costs. The Government, aware that other governments/entities were having discussions with the United Nations on the programme support costs, would like to monitor the progress of those discussions. The representative welcomed the new communication and advocacy strategy and noted that the Government of Japan, as the provider of in-kind contributions for the website of the Institute, would be happy to continue to support the revision of the website, which was mentioned in the communication and advocacy strategy.

### **B. Development of e-learning training materials and methodologies (Agenda item 3)**

10. The Council had before it a note by the Director of the Institute on the development of e-learning training materials and methodologies, upon which it was asked to provide comments and guidance.

11. The representative of Japan predicted that the demand for e-learning training would remain high even after the COVID-19 pandemic and praised the Institute for developing interactive e-learning courses and webinars. It was requested that good methodologies regarding e-learning be actively shared with member States. The web-based course with the Japan International Cooperation Agency was ongoing.

12. The representative of China expressed appreciation for the Institute's work in developing and conducting e-learning courses. If the e-learning courses, especially those related to the Sustainable Development Goals, were translated into Chinese, many more participants from China would be able to attend. In that regard, the representative requested that funds be allocated to the translation of e-learning courses into some other United Nations official languages, for example Chinese.

13. The representative of Maldives requested that resources be allocated to the development of training-of-trainers courses so that government officials could deliver training to the local island areas themselves.

14. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran asked the Institute to consider providing technical assistance and consultants to staff the national statistical systems. It was noted that the mandate of the Institute was limited to training.

15. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat expressed appreciation to the Institute for its close collaboration, including in promoting e-learning courses in the regions, and informed the Council that the Institute had been actively contributing to the work programme of the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training.

### **C. Report of the Director of the Institute**

(Agenda item 4)

16. The Council had before it the report of the Director of the Institute. The Director highlighted key results and accomplishments in 2021 and summarized the Institute's financial and administrative status.

17. The representative of India encouraged the Institute to continue its excellent work and praised it for meeting the COVID-19-related challenges with innovative training modalities.

18. The representative of China confirmed that a high number of participants in the Institute's training courses had been from the Government of China and asked the Institute for a breakdown of course participants by country. The Institute agreed to provide the requested breakdown after the Council session. In addition, the representative expressed interest in a course on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange which, the Institute explained, would be delivered next year in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ESCAP.

19. The representative of the Russian Federation confirmed the continued support and contribution of the Government to the translation of training materials into Russian, which had assisted member States in Central Asia to improve their ability to produce quality official statistics in the region.

20. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran requested the Institute to conduct courses regarding the usage of administrative data, as the Government would be conducting a register-based census in 2026.

21. The representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic thanked the Institute and its partners for delivering various web-based courses which enhanced the capacity of government staff. The representative expressed continued support for the development of e-learning courses and also requested the development of training at the country level, including hands-on sessions and training-of-trainer sessions, to enable participants to better absorb the information provided.

22. The secretariat commended not only the high number of participants in the Institute's training courses in 2021 but also the high number of new e-learning courses delivered and the progress towards gender parity, evidenced by a high number of women participants.

### **D. Work programme and financial plan for 2022**

(Agenda item 5)

23. The Council had before it the work programme and financial plan of the Institute for 2022.

24. The Director of the Institute presented the proposed 2022 training courses, training development activities and indicative timetable. The plan had been prepared with the assumption that the COVID-19 situation would improve in 2022 and that if the situation continued as it had been and travel restrictions remained in place, face-to-face training programmes and events would be cancelled, postponed or changed into virtual mode, according to the severity and period of travel restrictions and in consultation with the partners of each course/event.
25. The representative of Japan supported the Institute's work programme and financial plan for 2022 and expressed hope that face-to-face training would resume soon, as there were some elements such as fieldwork training in the courses with the Japan International Cooperation Agency that were difficult to replace with web-based training only.
26. The representative of China predicted that COVID-19 would continue for a while and that reliance on e-learning training would also increase as the demand for information technology and big data continued to rise. In order to reflect those needs and to better design the courses, the representative requested the Institute to put more effort into researching training needs.
27. The representative of Mongolia expressed appreciation to the Institute for its previous work and welcomed the work programme and financial plan for 2022 and the revised resource mobilization strategy. The courses with the Japan International Cooperation Agency were of considerable importance. They contributed to the increased capacity of statisticians and should revert to an in-person format when possible. The representative echoed the request of the representative of China to conduct a training needs assessment.
28. The representative of the Republic of Korea expressed appreciation for the Institute's work in 2021 and explained that the Government of the Republic of Korea had originally planned two training courses with the Institute in 2021, but they had been postponed. The representative requested that the work programme and financial plan for 2022 be implemented as planned.
29. The representative of Tajikistan, while acknowledging the travel restrictions due to COVID-19, requested the Institute to carry out in-country expert visits.
30. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran also requested a training needs survey to be carried out by the Institute.
31. The representative of Maldives explained the difficulties in offering certification and promotion to national statistical system staff and said that information and e-learning courses on the website of the Institute were useful for advancing statistical literacy.
32. The representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic reiterated that a training needs assessment was required, given that the needs and levels of knowledge varied among organizations and countries.
33. The representative of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) provided information about the training-of-trainers course on gender statistics conducted by UN-Women and the Institute. The participants who had successfully completed the course were provided with certificates and their information was logged in a repository of experts. In addition, the training course, including examples and

exercises, would be available online as a self-paced course for those who had been unable to take the course but were interested in the topic.

34. The Council was informed that the Institute's method of topic selection and course design was to prioritize the Sustainable Development Goals and to give special consideration to country requests. All member States were asked to contact the Institute directly with any specific training requests, so that it could look into the matter and possibly partner with the appropriate custodian agency to conduct courses. The Institute had encountered difficulties in a previous training needs survey, which it had conducted by circulating a questionnaire to the national statistical offices. The problem was that responses had differed among officers in each national statistical office. The Institute noted that accreditation matters had been discussed at the meetings of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific.

**E. Other matters**  
(Agenda item 6)

35. No other matters were raised by the Council.

**F. Dates of and venue for the eighteenth session of the Governing Council**  
(Agenda item 7)

36. The Council had before it the proposed dates of and venue for its eighteenth session.

37. The Council decided that its eighteenth session would be held in Chiba, Japan, on 12 and 13 December 2022.

**G. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council on its seventeenth session**  
(Agenda item 8)

38. On 3 December 2021, the Council discussed section I of the present report.

39. The recommendations and decisions of the Council at its seventeenth session were adopted.

40. It was agreed that, as secretariat of the Council, the Institute would prepare the full report on the seventeenth session for submission to the Commission at its seventy-eighth session.

### **III. Organization**

**A. Opening, duration and organization of the session**

41. The seventeenth session of the Governing Council of the Institute was held on 2 and 3 December 2021. In view of the situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the session was held online.

42. The representative of Thailand who had served as Chair of the sixteenth session of the Council officially opened the seventeenth session.

**B. Attendance**

43. The session was attended by representatives of the host country, Japan, and seven of the eight elected members of the Council: Bangladesh; China; India; Mongolia; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; and Thailand. The representative of Pakistan was unable to attend.

44. Representatives of the following members and associate members of the Commission attended the session as observers: Azerbaijan; Georgia; Hong Kong, China; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Nepal; Philippines; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; and Viet Nam.

45. Representatives of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ESCAP attended.

46. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds attended: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Labour Organization; United Nations Children's Fund; and UN-Women.

47. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations attended: Asian Development Bank; Association of Southeast Asian Nations; Pacific Community; and Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries.

48. A representative of the International Statistical Institute also attended.

**C. Election of officers**

49. The Council elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chair: Ms. Hataichanok Chinauparwat (Thailand)

Vice-Chair: Ms. Orié Hirano (Japan)

**D. Agenda**

50. The Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening statements;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters arising from the sixteenth session of the Governing Council.
3. Development of e-learning training materials and methodologies.
4. Report of the Director of the Institute.
5. Work programme and financial plan for 2022.
6. Other matters.

7. Dates of and venue for the eighteenth session of the Governing Council.
8. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council on its seventeenth session.



## Annex I

### Financial statement of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific for the year ended 31 December 2021

(United States dollars)

<i>Income</i>	
Contributions	2 241 800
Interest income	19 934
<b>Total income</b>	<b>2 261 734</b>
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	
	(2 131 644)
<b>Net income over expenditure</b>	<b>130 090</b>
Fund balance as at 1 January 2021	5 959 678
Refunds to donors/fund transfer	-
<b>Fund balance as at 31 December 2021</b>	<b>6 089 768</b>

**Annex II**

**Financial statement of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific for the year ended 31 December 2021, by project component**  
(United States dollars)

	<i>Joint contributions - capacity development project</i>
<i>Income</i>	
Contributions	2 241 800
Interest income	19 934
<b>Total income</b>	<b>2 261 734</b>
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	(2 131 644)
<b>Net income over expenditure</b>	<b>130 090</b>
Fund balance as at 1 January 2021	<b>5 959 678</b>
Refunds to donors/fund transfer	-
<b>Fund balance as at 31 December 2021</b>	<b>6 089 768</b>

## Annex III

**Cash contributions to the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific for the institutional support account received for the year ended 31 December 2021**

(United States dollars)

<i>Country/area</i>	<i>Year ended 31 December 2021</i>	<i>Year ended 31 December 2020</i>
Bangladesh	-	10 000
Brunei Darussalam	15 000	15 000
Cambodia	2 000	2 000
China	70 000	70 000
Fiji <sup>a</sup>	9 754	8 892
Hong Kong, China	30 000	30 000
India	24 962	25 000
Japan	1 843 765	1 859 765
Kazakhstan	3 500	5 000
Macao, China	20 000	20 000
Malaysia	20 000	20 000
Mongolia	9 561	9 482
Myanmar	1 000	1 000
Philippines	36 750	-
Republic of Korea	53 546	53 000
Russian Federation	30 000	30 000
Samoa	3 962	1 980
Singapore	15 000	15 000
Sri Lanka	10 000	10 000
Thailand	23 000	23 000
Viet Nam	20 000	20 500
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 241 800</b>	<b>2 229 619</b>

<sup>a</sup> Contribution for Fiji was inadvertently recorded and reported under Australia in the 2020 financial statement. It was rectified in 2021 and reported under the correct donor.