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

Bangkok, 16–19 October 2018

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of progress by partners with respect to the collective vision and framework for action: 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 with a mandate to facilitate information-sharing and coordination among statistical training institutes in the region.

At the third meeting of the Network, held on 5 December 2017, it reviewed its programme of work for 2016–2017, which had been endorsed by the Committee on Statistics at its fifth session, in December 2016. The meeting identified and further analysed factors which were thought to have impacted the delivery of its programme of work for 2016–2017.

While encouraging all Network members to participate in activities, in accordance with their interests, the meeting agreed to create a team (also referred to as a subgroup) composed of Network members willing to work within and support the objectives of the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, focusing on training activities on economic statistics.

Having examined the issues with regard to the delivery of training programmes and how the Network could best contribute in that regard, the meeting developed its programme of work for 2018–2019.

The fourth meeting of the Network will be held on 12 September 2018. Apart from reviewing overall progress, the Network may set up a subgroup on training for gender statistics.

The Committee is invited to endorse the present document and provide further guidance on the future work of the Network.

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\* ESCAP/CST/2018/L.1/Rev.1.

## I. Background

1. At its third session, held in December 2012, the Committee on Statistics of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) endorsed the objectives, strategy and mechanisms for improving regional coordination of statistical training activities as proposed by the Working Group on the Regional Coordination of Statistical Training, which was established by the Committee at its second session. The Committee requested its Bureau to finalize the terms of reference and constitute the group.

2. In September 2013, the Bureau of the Committee established the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific<sup>1</sup> and in accordance with paragraph 7 of the endorsed terms of reference, the Bureau invited the following to become members of the Network: (a) heads of statistical training institutions of ESCAP members and associate members with requisite statistical training facilities or active training programmes on official statistics that catered to both national (internal) and foreign (external) clients; (b) representatives of ESCAP member States, regional and international organizations and subregional cooperation entities that delivered training on official statistics or provided substantive donor resource support to statistical training activities in the Asia-Pacific region; (c) the Chair or Co-Chair of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific; and (d) the Chair of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

3. To date, 25 countries and international organizations are members of the Network (see annex for a list of member countries and organizations).

4. In 2014, as part of its programme of work, the Network established the Subgroup on Training for Agricultural and Rural Statistics composed of users, producers, trainers and external stakeholders, including national statistical offices, ministries of agriculture, statistical training institutes, development partners, universities offering courses on agriculture and rural statistics, which are involved in the production of agricultural and rural statistics and have mandates to develop training tools, programmes and methods on the production and assessment of agricultural and rural statistics, in order to build human capacity.

5. At its second meeting, in March 2016, the Network reviewed and updated its programme of work for 2016–2017, including the Subgroup's, and decided to (a) extend its scope of work to other areas of official statistics; (b) establish a database of experts and of training resources on official statistics; and (c) formulate a programme for certifying trainers and training institutes on official statistics.<sup>2</sup>

6. The present document is a report prepared by the secretariat of the Network on progress in implementing the programme of work for 2016–2017, which was endorsed by the Committee at its fifth session.<sup>3</sup> It also contains a proposed programme of work for 2018–2019 based on comments and suggestions made at the third meeting of the Network, held in December 2017.

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

<sup>2</sup> See E/ESCAP/CST(5)/8.

<sup>3</sup> See E/ESCAP/CST(5)/9.

## II. Outcomes of the third meeting of the Network

7. The third meeting of the Network, held in Chiba, Japan, in December 2017, was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP: Afghanistan; Bhutan; China; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; and Viet Nam. Representatives of the following international organizations also attended: Asian Development Bank; ESCAP; and International Telecommunication Union.

8. The meeting reviewed the work implemented during the period 2016–2017 with an emphasis by the secretariat of the Network on the importance of coordinating statistical training activities and facilitating the modernization of training resources.<sup>4</sup>

### A. Components of work in the programme of work for 2016–2017 initiated by the secretariat of the Network

#### 1. Development of a database

9. During the programme period in question, the secretariat of the Network initiated the creation of a database of training resources, including the development of a concept note for the database, and engaged an information technology specialist to further discuss production of the database. This led to the creation of a database prototype with assistance from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of the Government of Japan. The prototype was tested during a four-month training course at the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. Customization and a final test run of the actual database are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2018, with a target of January 2019 for the launch.

#### 2. Designing of curricula

10. The secretariat of the Network also began designing curricula for priority training courses on official statistics with the Chair of the Network; specific activities included engaging an expert to develop a training needs assessment tool and piloting the tool within the national statistical systems of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Mongolia.

11. Representatives of the Governments of Myanmar and Japan shared their views on the use of the training needs assessment tool.

#### 3. Challenges

##### (a) Delivery of work

12. The meeting identified the following as factors potentially impacting the effectiveness of the work: (a) most member countries volunteering to contribute to activities did not, in fact, participate; (b) targeted outputs could not be fully attained as the initial activities conducted by the secretariat of the Network were not efficient enough to act as a substantial driving force to meet targets; and (c) there was a different degree of understanding in the importance

<sup>4</sup> For the agenda and documentation, see [www.unsiap.or.jp/tnetwork/1712\\_NW3.html](http://www.unsiap.or.jp/tnetwork/1712_NW3.html).

of coordination and commitment to enable effective delivery of the planned work.

**(b) Nature of the database**

13. The meeting agreed that the database could not be something of a repository but needed to be timely and that the members must commit themselves to sharing training resources so they could be utilized in training activities.

14. Some representatives expressed their willingness to share training materials, and a suggestion was made to have the materials made available in different languages.

**B. Expanding the scope of the training subject**

15. Representatives of the Statistics Division of ESCAP made a presentation and provided insights into the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific with its focus on increasing the institutional capacity of national statistical offices and training institutions by offering a foundational training programme to staff members who were involved in the production and dissemination of economic statistics in national statistical systems.

16. The presenters explored the best possible methods to deliver training activities on economic statistics with a specific emphasis on how the Network could support the Regional Programme training component which included (a) the creation of a training curriculum and the selection of training materials corresponding to the core set of economic statistics; (b) the creation of resources for trainers; and (c) the provision of guidance on setting up and/or improving training activities at the national level.

17. While encouraging all Network members to participate in activities, in accordance with their interests, the meeting agreed to create a team (also referred to as a subgroup) that was composed of Network members willing to work within the Regional Programme, support its objectives and focus on training activities on economic statistics. The subgroup would operate on a voluntary basis and was expected to support the activities of the training component of the Regional Programme.

18. The meeting explained that ESCAP, as the secretariat of the Regional Programme, would seek input from Network members on training materials and the curricula to be developed, with the clear indication that individual countries or members would not be requested to develop any training materials and that the activities would be strictly limited to what was described in paragraph 16 of the present document.

**C. Updated programme of work for 2018–2019**

19. Having examined the issues with regard to the delivery of training programmes and how the Network could best contribute in that regard, the meeting developed a programme of work for 2018–2019 with the aim of achieving (a) the development of a training needs assessment tool to be utilized for the creation of training programmes; (b) the identification of disparities in training activities with a specific focus on understanding, measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals; (c) the compilation of a database of training resources for use by Network members; (d) the design of a common curriculum for statistical training activities on prioritized

components within agricultural and rural statistics; and (e) the development of a curriculum, materials and country-based training activities on economic statistics.

20. The following table contains information on the five priority outputs, supporting activities, the composition of the task teams responsible for undertaking the activities, and the time frame for delivery of the outputs.

**Updated programme of work**

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Time frame</i>
1. Database of training resources compiled and accessed by Network members	Drafting of guidelines for the creation of a database	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, member countries and international organizations of the Network	January to February 2018
	Submission of materials to populate the database		March to August 2018
	Customization and testing of the database		September to December 2018
	Launch of the database		January 2019
2. Training needs assessment conducted using the training needs assessment tool	Finalization of the training needs assessment tool	Consultant	January 2018
	Conducting the training needs assessment at the national level using the developed training needs assessment tool	Members of the Network, Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific	February to September 2018
	Consolidation of the training needs assessment results at the regional level		October to December 2018
	Updating the core skills framework of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific		January to December 2019
Assessment of training needs on the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level	ESCAP Statistics Division, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, member countries and international organizations of the Network		February to September 2018
Organization of training activities/workshops/events on Sustainable Development Goal indicators		October to December 2018	
ESCAP Statistics Division and Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific share good practice on country assessments		January to March 2019	

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Time frame</i>
4. Development of common training curricula on agricultural and rural statistics	Development of training curricula	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, member countries of the Subgroup on Training for Agricultural and Rural Statistics of the Network and international organization members of the Network	January to February 2019
	Production of training materials in priority areas		March to May 2019
	Expert meetings of the Network to endorse curricula and training materials		June to July 2019
	Organization of training the trainers workshops		August to September 2019
	Organization of country-based training on basic agricultural and rural statistics to support the core set of economic statistics on agricultural and rural statistics		October to December 2019
5. Increase national capacity to deliver training on basic economic statistics	Development of training curricula	ESCAP Statistics Division, Steering Group for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, and international organization members of the Network	January 2018 to July 2019
	Production of training materials in priority areas		
	Organization of expert meetings of the Network to review and consult about the curricula and training materials		June to July 2019
	Organization of training the trainers workshops		April to July 2019
	Organization of country-based training in basic economic statistics to support the core set of economic statistics delivered by newly trained trainers		July to October 2019

### III. The fourth meeting of the Network

21. The fourth meeting of the Network will be held on 12 September 2018. Apart from reviewing overall progress, the Network may set up a subgroup on training for gender statistics.

**IV. Issues for consideration**

22. The Committee is invited to (a) provide guidance on the delivery of the proposed programme of work in a way that ensures the identified targets are duly met; (b) endorse the report; and (c) provide further guidance on the future work of the Network.

**Annex**

**List of members of the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific**

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Organizations</i>
Australia	Asian Development Bank
China	Eurostat
India	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Indonesia	International Labour Organization
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	International Monetary Fund
Japan	International Statistical Institute
Malaysia	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century
New Zealand	Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries
Pakistan	Pacific Community
Philippines	Statistics Division of the United Nations
Republic of Korea	University of the South Pacific
Russian Federation	World Bank
Thailand	