



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Statistics

Third session

Bangkok, 12-14 December 2012

Item 7(b) of the provisional agenda*

Reports brought to the attention of the Committee:
Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

**Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical
Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its interim session**

I. Introduction

1. The Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) held an interim session in New York on 26 February 2012 in conjunction with the forty-third session of the Statistical Commission. Mr. T. C. A. Anant of India chaired the meeting, which was attended by representatives of the Institute's host Government, Japan, and elected members: China; India; Indonesia; Malaysia; Republic of Korea; and Thailand.

2. The main items for discussion at the interim session were determined at the seventh session of the Governing Council, which was held in Chiba, Japan, on 8 and 9 December 2011. On that basis, the following agenda was adopted at the interim session:

(a) Review of key recommendations made at the seventh session of the Governing Council pertaining to the financial status and work plan;

(b) "Brainstorming" on medium- to long-term strategies for ensuring the financial sustainability of SIAP;

(c) Discussion on the process for developing and communicating recommended strategies for engaging stakeholders;

(d) Other matters.

* E/ESCAP/CST(3)/L.1/Rev.1.

II. Review of key recommendations made at the seventh session of the Governing Council pertaining to the financial status and work plan

3. The Director of SIAP provided an overview of the key recommendations related to the financial status and financial planning of SIAP made at the seventh session of the Governing Council, and sought the advice of Governing Council members on their implementation.

A. Cash contributions

4. The Governing Council expressed the need to reach out and appeal in an effective manner to ESCAP member States for sustained and increased contributions. The Council recommended that the level of cash contributions given by member States be analysed more closely. It also recommended that a more effective approach be considered, compared with previous efforts, when engaging with the main users and beneficiaries of the Institute's services in efforts to mobilize funding and in-kind support.

5. It was suggested that a longer period (for example, five years) for increasing cash contributions might be more feasible for some member countries. Another point of discussion regarded the establishment of certain criteria to which the size of the contribution from each member State could be linked, although members had diverging views on such a measure.

6. The secretariat cautioned that any directive pertaining to member States' contributions to SIAP brought to the attention of the Commission would likely be deliberated in the context of all five of its regional institutions. Thus, the adoption of a resolution on that kind of measure would be difficult.

7. The Governing Council decided to issue a statement to all member States in which it would recommend, due to its concerns about the financial situation of SIAP, that all member States contribute a minimum of \$5,000 per annum to SIAP. The statement should be issued by mid-March 2012 to allow countries to consult relevant ministries prior to the sixty-eighth session of the Commission, at which countries traditionally announce their contributions for the following year.

8. The Governing Council requested the Director of SIAP to refer to that point in her report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.

9. The Governing Council requested that the secretariat inform the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) of the outcome of the interim session, in particular the above-mentioned statement.

B. Mobilizing funds from the private sector and non-governmental organizations

10. The Governing Council requested the secretariat to clarify, in writing, the rules and regulations governing collaboration, including funds transfer from a private sector entity to a United Nations entity, such as SIAP.

C. Mobilizing funds from international organizations

11. The Governing Council found that providing resources for additional SIAP training staff for the implementation of regional and global initiatives with strong training components, such as the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (see E/CN.3/2010/3), was an effective way to mobilize resources.

III. “Brainstorming” on medium- to long-term strategies for ensuring the financial sustainability of SIAP

12. The Governing Council noted that to help ensure the long-term financial sustainability of SIAP, measures to mobilize funds, through cash contributions or other means, should be directed towards programme development and operations, thus extending beyond the immediate funding needs of the Institute.

13. It was noted that a resource base would need to be established to secure the longer-term viability of the Institute. This could include the development of certified training materials, a system to certify “SIAP trainers”, and expertise in the development of curricula and delivery of training courses.

A. System of affiliates

14. The establishment of a system of SIAP affiliates in order to strengthen the expertise, quality assurance and the credibility of SIAP services and products was discussed at length.

15. A system of affiliates consisting of recognized statistical services and training institutions could support the Institute’s delivery of modular trainings by serving as a source of temporary lecturers. The representative of Japan indicated an interest in supplying interim lecturers and expressed the hope that other countries would lend their support in similar ways. The representative of China noted the difficulty that some institutions would encounter in sending lecturers abroad for a few weeks or months at a time and suggested that national experts could make substantive contributions to the Institute’s outreach programme.

16. The Governing Council suggested that a framework for the certification of trainers be developed and advised SIAP to look into existing models.

B. Partnerships

17. The Governing Council noted that partnerships with other international organizations would be central for mobilizing resources for SIAP in the long term.

C. Development of the strategic programme of SIAP

18. The Governing Council suggested that the strategic programme of SIAP should consider different components of the Institute’s work, including the proposed system for certification of trainers, training-of-trainers courses and trainings for different target groups, such as junior, mid- and senior-level statisticians, and statisticians from national statistic offices and other parts of national statistical systems.

19. The Director of SIAP suggested that a friends of the chair group be set up to provide the Institute with advice on the development of its strategic programme. The Governing Council agreed to the proposal, noting that concrete information should be shared on the functioning and scope of the work of the group.

20. It was suggested that, if the friends of the chair group needs to meet in person, such gatherings should be arranged in conjunction with other events, for example at meetings being attended by heads of different training institutions.

IV. Discussion on the process for developing and communicating recommended strategies for engaging stakeholders

21. No specific discussion took place under this agenda item. Related discussions are captured under items 1 and 2.

V. Other matters

A. SIAP work plans

22. The Governing Council requested that, contrary to the existing practice, future draft work plans put forward for its consideration should contain a proposed budget.

23. The Director of SIAP sought the approval of the Governing Council to revise the work plan for fiscal year 2012 in order that it might better match the resources secured for the period.

24. Having approved the request of the Director, the Governing Council asked to be informed of the revisions to the work plan by 15 March 2012.

B. Intersessional communication between the Governing Council and the Director of SIAP

25. The Governing Council agreed to take up a suggestion made by the Director of SIAP which would allow the Institute to seek advice from the Council on specific issues if and when needed, even in between formal sessions of the Council.
