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**SEMINAR ON HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING  
SESSION III**

Introduction of statistical training activities in the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia  
and the Pacific

Submitted by the Office of the Director-General for Policy Planning,  
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications,  
Japan

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) is a preeminent institution for statistical training of government statisticians from developing countries in Asia and the Pacific. It was established in 1970 as the Asian Statistical Institute, and was given the status of a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 1995.

**II. MISSION**

2. The mission of SIAP is to strengthen the capability of national statistical systems in the region and to enhance statistical training capabilities and related activities at the country level through practically oriented training of official statisticians in order to produce timely and high-quality statistics that can be utilized for economic and social development planning.

**III. ORGANIZATION**

3. SIAP has a Governing Council which holds its session once a year to provide advice and guidance to SIAP. Members of the Council comprise the representative of the host government, Japan, and eight representatives of member and associate members of ESCAP elected by the Commission once every five years. The current Governing Council is composed of the representatives of elected members namely China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, and Thailand which were elected to a five-year term at the sixty-first session of the Commission held at Bangkok in May 2005 in addition to the host government, Japan.

4. The financial resources of SIAP are principally derived from the contributions of the host government and cash contribution from members and associate members of ESCAP.

5. The Government of Japan, as the host government, supports the work programme of SIAP through its cash and in kind contributions as determined on the basis of the relevant and applicable laws and regulations of the Government of Japan and in accordance with its annual budgetary appropriations.

6. The host government extends co-operation to SIAP through the Office of Director-General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) by providing administrative and infrastructure support such as the provision of office space, equipment, facilities and services of local personnel in addition to cash contributions. The Government of Japan also sponsors fellowship for the Tokyo Metropolitan Area (TMA)-based group training courses through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

7. SIAP is located in Makuhari, Chiba Prefecture, which is within the Tokyo Metropolitan Area in Japan. It has modern premises, equipments and facilities including excellent personal computer facilities for participants, and training sessions are conducted with the latest technology and equipment.

#### IV. ACTIVITIES

8. SIAP regularly conducts the training programmes such as (a) TMA-based group training courses conducted in Chiba, Japan and (b) a research-based training programme and specialized regional, sub-regional and country training courses, workshops and seminars conducted in collaboration with country partner institutions under the Outreach Programme. SIAP also collaborates with regional and international agencies especially in the conduct of their statistics training-related activities.

9. As of 31 March 2006, there were 9,893 statisticians who have been trained by SIAP. A total of 2,588 participants received their training in Japan while another 7,305 participated in the Outreach Programme with training activities organized at the country/sub-regional/regional levels.

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10. The training directions and implementation strategies of SIAP have increasingly been aligned to the requirements for national and international official statistics arising from the programmatic themes of the UNESCAP and the agreements reached at the global Summit Conferences, particularly the commitment to monitor the MDGs. SIAP courses, whether in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area and outside, have actively integrated current priorities of UNESCAP to the extent the themes are logically relevant to the institutional mission.

11. SIAP is working on a partnership with the Korea National Statistical Office to collaborate with the e-Learning Center of the Korea National Open University (KNOU) in piloting the development of a prototype distance learning material on introductory statistics. The KNOU provides e-learning in, among others, graduate level education in public administration, business administration, information science, and continuing education.

## V. CONTENTS OF TRAINING PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup>

### A. Programme conducted in Tokyo Metropolitan Area:

12. Regular training courses are conducted at the premises of SIAP and fellowships for attending group training courses are normally funded by JICA as follows:

(i) Group Training Course in Modules on Fundamental Official Statistics: this course provides training in fundamental statistical techniques and operations, statistical frameworks and methodologies on various fields of official statistics for statisticians with three to five years working experience in national statistical organizations (NSO). The modular approach is adopted to meet the different needs of countries. Currently the three modules are statistical and survey methods, national accounts and economic statistics, and demographic and social statistics. Tutorials, class exercises and case studies are employed to enhance the effectiveness of classroom teaching. The course is conducted annually and has a duration of six months.

(ii) Group Training Course in Application of Information and Communications Technology to Production and Dissemination of Official Statistics: formerly the Statistical Computing Course for Trainers, this course has been realigned to train statisticians and its staff of statistical organizations in the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in their daily practice. The main aspect of the curricula include computer applications covering areas such as data capturing, editing, processing, and tabulating; statistical analysis, dissemination, and data base construction; spreadsheets, graphics, and presentations; basics and consequences of the implementation of ICT in a statistical office, including system analysis, data base and quality management, and re-engineering of processes; and website design. Under the guidance of the faculty, participants will select specific topics for a project work/action plan as practical demonstration of applicable techniques. The course is conducted annually and has a duration of two months.

(iii) Group Training Course in Analysis, Interpretation and Dissemination of Official Statistics: this course provides training in analysis, interpretation and dissemination of data for middle-level official statisticians. Since 1997, a particular subject or topic has been designated as the focus of the study through lectures, workshops, and case studies. A major

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component of the course consists of statistical project work/action plan undertaken by each participant using official data to prepare a report. The participants have to present their reports at the end of the course, demonstrating the application of statistical techniques and analysis. The course is conducted annually and has a duration of two months.

(iv) Area-focused Training Course in Collection and Analysis of Official Statistics for Central Asian Countries: this course is intended to facilitate the transition to the market economy through improving economic statistics as basis for the development for the Central Asian countries. The training programme is structured to impart to the participants a good understanding of practical statistics with special focus on official statistics, covering the planning and designing surveys as well as field operations, compilation, analysis, and dissemination. The Course also aims to provide the officials with a sound grasp of statistical computing and to enhance their capability to write a report incorporating the results of analysis and interpretation of statistical data.

13. The Institute will introduce distance learning as a new initiative to provide training on official statistics through the use of the most recent ICT developments. This will enable the Institute to reach out to a wider clientele across the entire Asian and Pacific region.

B. Outreach Programme:

14. The outreach programme complements the courses conducted in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area and is carried out with the collaboration of national statistical offices, related training institutes, international organizations, and donor agencies. It has expanded considerably in recent years, thereby enriching the content and scope of training of SIAP. The courses, normally conducted at country, sub-regional and regional levels, are of short-term duration and cover a wide range of topics. The topics are, however, specific in nature and are in demand by some or a group of developing countries.

15. The manner in which these courses are conducted is cost-effective with NSOs preferably providing the training facilities and administrative support. In several cases, the contributions from NSOs have been substantive, providing full board and lodging to foreign participants and resource persons. Where specialized expertise is lacking within the faculty, the services are sought externally and through collaborative arrangements with statistically developed countries of the region. This modality of training allows a larger number of statisticians to be trained. The backgrounds of the participants are more homogeneous as they come from the same country or countries with similar characteristics. When courses are conducted at country level, participants from neighbouring countries could be invited to participate with funds provided from their own sources.

16. The research-based training programme, implemented in 2001 with the view to raise the capacity of statisticians in undertaking independent research studies as well as producing quality statistical reports, was reformatted from a TMA-based course to a regional training course under the Outreach Programme, effective AY 2003. The new format has met both objectives of expanding the number of participants while maintaining cost effectiveness. In two courses conducted in 2004, 28 participants completed the programme under the intensive six-week outreach format compared to only 10 from 2001 to 2003 under the TMA-based course.



17. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been a major supporter of SIAP's outreach programme. In 2004, SIAP started implementation of a two-year data/statistical capability building for the promotion and generation of quality and reliable data to monitor the progress of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and contribute to accurate MDG Reports under the UNDP-supported MDG Initiative for Asia and the Pacific (RAS/04/060). As a member of the United Nations family of organizations, SIAP collaborates with regional and international agencies especially in the conduct of their statistics training-related activities.

## VI. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES FOR 2005<sup>2</sup>

### A. Tokyo Metropolitan Area (TMA) Based Course

- (i) Sixth Group Training Course on Modules on Core Official Statistics, 4 October 2004-18 March 2005;
- (ii) First Group Training Course on the Application of Information and Communications Technology to the Production and Dissemination of Official Statistics, 11 May-12 July 2005;
- (iii) First Group Training Course on Analysis, Interpretation and Dissemination of Official Statistics, 19 July-16 September 2005;
- (iv) Area-focused Training Course on Collection and Analysis of Official Statistics for Central Asian Countries, 25 July-22 September 2005;

### B. Outreach Programme

- (i) Third SIAP/ESCAP Management Seminar for the Heads of National Statistical Offices(NSOs) in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 31 January-2 February 2005;
- (ii) First Subregional Course on Statistics for Pacific Island Developing Countries, Nadi, Fiji, 28 February-23 March 2005;
- (iii) Eleventh Course/Workshop on Sample Design for Household and Establishment/Enterprise Surveys, Tehran, 11 June-6 July 2005;
- (iv) First Regional Course on Statistical Quality Management and Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, Daejeon, Republic of Korea, 27 June-1 July 2005;
- (v) Third Research-based Regional Course, Daejeon, Republic of Korea, 25 July-2 September 2005;
- (vi) First Regional Course on Price Statistics and the International Comparison Programme, Malé, 25-29 September 2005;
- (vii) Fourth Management Seminar for the Heads of NSOs in Asia and the Pacific, Putrajaya, Malaysia, 28-30 September 2005;
- (viii) First Regional Course on the System of National Accounts, Macao, China, 10-28 October 2005;
- (ix) Fourth Research-based Regional Course, Metro Manila, 2 November-9 December 2005;
- (x) Country Course on Analysis of Statistics for Monitoring Millennium Development Goals, Thimphu, 3-7 January 2005;
- (xi) Country Course on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in the Philippines, Metro Manila, 24 January-4 February 2005;

