I. Background & Rationale

The Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (Global Strategy) provides a framework for national and international statistical systems to produce and to apply the basic data and information needed to guide policy on rural development and sustainable agricultural production. It aims to significantly increase the availability and quality of agricultural and rural statistics, produced by a sustainable agricultural statistical system with appropriate institutional, human and financial capacity. The Global Strategy is based on three pillars: identifying a minimum set of core data; the integration of agriculture into the national statistical system; and the sustainability of the agricultural statistical system through governance and statistical capacity building. The Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) is coordinating the implementation of the training component of the Global Strategy through principles laid down in the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the Global Strategy.

The current course is a part of the programme of work of the Asia-Pacific Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training (the Network), specifically the sub-group on agricultural and rural statistics which was established in September 2014. The Network members recognized that better coordination would provide an environment within which training recipients and training providers can use a common language and set of tools to describe priority needs and identify and fill training gaps in the region. In the area of agricultural and rural statistics, the sub-group will facilitate coordination in the implementation of the training component of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan of the Global Strategy.

The course will run from 15 to 18 December 2014, in Chiba, Japan in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with support of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) of the Government of Japan.

II. Objective of the Course

This training-of-trainers course aims to equip participants with requisite knowledge and tools for developing, implementing and managing needs assessments as a basis
for assessing the training and development needs and improving the performance of the statistical workforce of national statistical offices and statistics units within ministries and agencies in the area of agricultural statistics.

III. Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, participants are expected to be able to train staff in their respective organizations and manage and organize their work to accomplish the following:

a) Determine the most suitable approach to assessing training needs in agricultural statistics in the organization;
b) Design a training needs assessment process and develop tools to implement the process;
c) Analyze the results of the training needs assessments; and
d) Use the assessment results as a basis for identifying and designing appropriate training programmes and courses to strengthen the capacity of their organizations to produce quality agricultural statistics.

IV. Target Participants

The course is designed for managers and human resource development staff engaged in identifying, designing and implementing training and development programmes for statistical staff of their organizations. Since the course will focus on training and development needs in the area of agricultural statistics, participants should have a working knowledge of the processes of data collection, production and analysis in this area.

V. Course Main Topics and Design

The course will cover the following main topics:

- Framework for understanding what a training needs assessment is, its features, objectives and corresponding approaches, benefits and challenges
- Core skills framework as a basis for training needs assessment
  - Standard position classifications/levels of statistical workforce (e.g., entry level, middle-level, senior-level)
  - Job and task descriptions by position/level
  - Knowledge and skills requirements at each position/level
  - Core competencies for each level
- Four types of training needs assessment: Objectives and process
  - Knowledge and skills assessment
  - Job and task analysis
o Competency-based needs assessment
o Strategic needs assessment

- Strategies and tools for data collection and data analysis for needs assessments
  - General methods: interviews, focus group, surveys
  - Tools for different types of needs assessment

- Using results of training needs analysis to develop a training curriculum, delivery strategy and evaluation strategy

The training will feature practical sessions on developing a core skills framework, identifying appropriate types of training needs assessment needed for capacity development objectives for improving agricultural statistics, designing the needs assessment process and developing appropriate tools for assessments and analysis. Training experts will introduce the foundational theories and models underlying the various elements for understanding and developing needs assessment tools and processes and using the results for developing a training strategy for agricultural statistics in organizations.

VI. Requirements from Participants

Participants will need to bring to the training their organizations documents describing their statistical workforce and organizational chart, job/position descriptions and classifications, human resource development plans, and process used in assessing and identifying training needs and developing training programmes.

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