

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
STATISTICAL INSTITUTE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (SIAP)

Regional Course on SNA 2008 (Special Topics): Improving Exhaustiveness of GDP Coverage

31 August – 4 September 2015
Daejeon, Republic of Korea

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Introduction

This training course on SNA 2008 is the seventh in an annual series offered by the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific that aims to assist countries in Asia and the Pacific in implementing the 2008 System of National Accounts. The course focuses on selected topics as a follow-up to the annual basic- and intermediate-level e-learning SIAP courses that provide the overview of the SNA framework, introduces the new features of the 2008 SNA and builds knowledge and core skills in compilation of national accounts statistics in accordance with the framework.

The integrating framework for improving basic economic statistics is the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA); as such, the course supports global, regional and national commitments to implement the 2008 SNA.

The 5-day course will be conducted in collaboration with the Statistical Training Institute (STI) of Statistics Korea (KOSTAT), Government of the Republic of Korea, in Daejeon from 31 August to 4 September 2015.

II. Course Objectives

The course is designed to enhance the capacity of participating organizations to:

- a) Apply SNA 2008 concepts and definitions in the compilation of national accounts statistics and
- b) Expand and increase exhaustiveness in the coverage of GDP estimates in national accounts statistics.

III. Learning Objectives

At the end of the training, participants are expected to be able to:

- a) Understand key changes in the SNA 2008 and their implications in compiling GDP
- b) Incorporate SNA 2008 changes relating to military expenditures, research and development expenditures and financial services in their GDP compilations;
- c) Identify key data sources and apply appropriate techniques to improve coverage of the non-observed economy in GDP estimates.
- d) Identify appropriate price and volume indices to compile constant price aggregates in national accounts; and
- e) Implement an action plan to improve the quality of national accounts in the areas covered by the course.

IV. Target Participants

The course is designed for statisticians compiling national accounts. More specifically, the participant is one with the following profile:

- a) Is a middle- to senior- level statistician working in national statistical agencies;
- b) Has comprehensive knowledge of the theoretical framework of national accounting at least at the level of the SIAP Intermediate-Level e-Learning Course on SNA 2008;
- c) Has experience in and demonstrated ability to apply different methods for compiling GDP at current and constant prices;
- d) Current job involves estimation and compilation of the items covered in the course;
- e) Holder of a university degree or its equivalent; and
- f) Able to read, write and express themselves well enough in English to participate fruitfully in discussions, presentations and be in a position to share their technical experiences with other participants.

V. Course Content and Design

The course is designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience across countries in implementing the SNA 2008 on specific topics. Training sessions will consist of lectures, demonstrations, country presentations, group discussions, workshops on working with data and consultation sessions with experts on specific country issues.

The course will start with an overview of the system of national accounts, specifically highlighting the major changes between the 1993 SNA and 2008 SNA and their implications to GDP estimation. Subsequent sessions will focus on specific compilation issues, the data sources and practical methods for improving exhaustiveness of estimates, and the use of volume measures. Participants will synthesize the knowledge and skills acquired from the course by developing an actionable plan for improving quality of national accounts estimates in the items discussed in the course.

Main Topics

- A. Key changes in SNA 2008: Estimation methods
 - Overview of SNA 2008: Main Changes from 1993 SNA
 - Estimating military expenditures
 - Estimating research and development expenditures
 - Estimating financial services
- B. Improving GDP Exhaustiveness
 - GDP scope and coverage
 - Estimating imputed rent for owner-occupied dwelling
 - Methods to improve coverage in GDP of the non-observed economy
- C. Use of Volume Measures
 - Principles
 - Methods
- D. Quality Issues in National Accounts

VI. Pre-course Requirements: Country Report

All participants need to submit a comprehensive country report which will be the basis for (a) sharing of experiences and practices; (b) consultation sessions with experts and (c) inputs to the action plan.

The report should cover the following:

- I. Identify three major areas of concern in their national accounts, from among the following:
 - Estimation of (a) military expenditures; (b) research and development expenditures; (c) financial services
 - Estimation of imputed rent for owner-occupied dwellings
 - Coverage of the non-observed economy
 - Use of volume measures

and

- II. Quality practices and issues in national accounts [Describe the quality assurance framework used and identify quality issues/concerns.]

For part (I), the report should include a description of the following aspects:

- A. Current Practices and Status
 - 1) Describe the estimation methods or current state of affairs on the specific topic. Outline the data sources that are critical and currently available on the topic.
 - 2) State any achievements/accomplishments that your country has made on the specific topic over the years.
- B. Challenges
 - 1) Describe three main methodological challenges that need to be addressed in order to be able to compile /implement national accounts recommendations to the highest quality standards in line with SNA 2008.
 - 2) Put up some specific questions that may be raised with experts to obtain guidance on what actions may be taken to address these challenges.