

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, 18 – 19 November, Phuket, Thailand - Summary Report

***Nancy McBeth
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Overview

1. The workshop brought together representatives of NSOs from Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong, China, as well as representatives from the following international and specialist organisations – ILO, IMF, ASEAN Secretariat, ADB, ESCAP and SIAP.
2. The workshop had two themes. Day One focused on Developing an outcome oriented training programme using the skills based training approach, with a particular focus on the Core Skills Framework that SIAP will be using. Day Two focused on Strengthening Partnerships in Statistical Training. This report provides a summary of the key themes from each of the two days.

Day One – Developing an outcome oriented training programme using the skills based training approach

3. In the days prior to the workshop, the SIAP Governing Council had endorsed the adoption of the SIAP Core Skills Framework (CSF). Accordingly, the key desired outcome of this day of the workshop was to identify ways in which the SIAP Core Skills Framework could be implemented.
4. Prior to small group discussions of the CSF, delegates discussed a number of presentations:
 - Summary of the SIAP Training Needs Survey
 - SIAP Skill Based Training Approach of SIAP
 - Developing Skill Based Training at SIAP
 - Experiences in the use of Skill Based Frameworks for Training in NZ
5. Key points raised in the discussion of the SIAP Training Needs Survey included
 - a) the need for NSOs to co-ordinate input from other parts of the national statistical systems (NSS), when responding to future SIAP Training Needs Surveys
 - b) in order for NSOs to better co-ordinate input from other parts of the NSS, SIAP were requested to allow NSOs more time for completing Training Needs surveys
 - c) SIAP to consider how they can use information from other organisations, such as the ESCAP assessment of economic and vital statistics, in identifying training needs
 - d) Statistical training provided by SIAP, is a core part of statistical training, but only one of the ways that NSOs and NSSs use to meet the demand for statistical training.

6. Points raised in the discussions of the SIAP Skill based Approach and SIAP's plans for Developing Skill Based Training included:
- a) Support for the change in approach as agreed by the SIAP Governing Council
 - b) desire for greater clarity on the implications of adopting the CSF, for the specific training provided by SIAP, both in Tokyo and country training.
7. Delegates raised the following points raised in the discussion of the NZ experiences in the use of Skill Based Frameworks:
- a) a recognition that while New Zealand had adopted a sophisticated model, this had taken over 10 years to implement
 - b) while Statistics NZ did not have the same skills levels as the SIAP CSF, through the use of a skills framework approach, it would be possible to determine how Statistics NZ staff would fit with the SIAP CSF.
8. To assist in helping SIAP further develop the CSF, delegates formed four groups to discuss the following questions:
- 1) How do you identify training needs in your organization?
 - 2) Do you have training programmes in your organization? If yes, how do you develop these?
 - 3) Is the CSF is able to capture training needs of your organization?
 - 4) Are the requirements at each level right? What should be the absolute minimum of knowledge or expertise at each level?
 - 5) Is the description of topics in the CSF, such as SNA and MDG appropriate for your organization's capacity building policy?
9. Key points raised by delegates in response to these questions are summarised below.

1) How do you identify training needs in your organization?

Across the region, training needs are identified through a combination of top down planning – taking into consideration the needs of the NSO and factors such as the budget, as well as bottom-up. Bottom-up includes responses to previous training, as well as identification of training needs from line managers.

2) Do you have training programmes in your organization? If yes, how do you develop these?

All countries in the region have training programmes. Different national requirements will shape the different requirements. An example cited was the case of China which needs to plan for training at the National, Provincial, Regional and County level. The size of the Chinese statistical system, including the 3 million enterprise based reporters, poses different challenges.

In many countries, there is a centralised approach to training, with academia and

international experts supplementing resources from within the NSS.

SIAP training provides a key role for NSOs. Country training meets specific skill development needs. Tokyo based training is seen as a way of developing future leaders of the NSO, providing leadership, international exposure and networking opportunities.

3) Is the CSF is able to capture training needs of your organization?

There was general agreement that the CSF is able to capture training needs. However, it was recommended that in implementing the CSF, that SIAP work with NSOs to provide more detail on the pre-requisites for each level of the CSF.

4) Are the requirements at each level right? What should be the absolute minimum of knowledge or expertise at each level?

While in general there was agreement that the requirements were about right, a number of suggestions were made

- a) Consider reviewing the titles for each level to make them more generic
- b) Develop a stronger link between competencies and training
- c) Review whether there is a need for a link between qualification and the position held
- d) Develop clearer accountabilities for each of the level of the qualification – for example being clear about accountability for outputs and outcomes
- e) Work with NSOs to be more specific in the definition of pre-requisites
- f) Clarity whether training is at the level, or to get to the level

In terms of gaps for each of the levels, the following detailed suggestions were made

Level of the CSF	Area of Identified Gap	Specific Recommended Inclusion
Level 2	ICT	Minimum knowledge of ICT
	Microdata	Understanding of key requirements
	Respondent Management	Understanding of target respondents
	Statistical system	Knowledge of statistical laws and methodologies
Level 3	Concepts and Frameworks	Understanding of concepts, metadata, methods, standards and International Frameworks
	Statistical system	Understanding of limitations in the use and production of statistics
Level 4	Management of the System - Output focus	Analysis and Management of the Statistical System
	User Management	Understand how to target Users Understand how to meet the essential needs of Users
	Communication Skills	Negotiation Skills
Level 5	Management of the System -	Direction, Strategic Planning

	Outcome focus	Management skills Strategic Planning skills
	Leadership Skills	Leadership of the Statistical System
	Communication Skills	Communication skills with stakeholders in the bureaucracy and political system

5) Is the description of topics in the CSF, such as SNA and MDG appropriate for your organization's capacity building policy?

It was considered that the approach was appropriate. However, while delegates understood why SIAP as part of the wider UN family were promoting SNA 08, there was a strong view that there should continue to be support for NSOs who are still moving to or using SNA68 or SNA 93.

Summary of Day One

10. Delegates were very supportive of the Governing Council's decision for SIAP to implement the outcome based approach to SIAP training, including the Core Skills Framework.

Delegates identified a number of aspects for SIAP to consider in implementing the CSF. These suggestions were made in the context of NSO approaches to designing and developing training needs. Delegates agreed that SIAP training had different roles in countries in the region. For some, country training was critical for skill development, for others, SIAP training was a critical way of developing future leaders.

Delegates encouraged SIAP to further develop the CSF, and provided a number of specific suggestions for areas of improvement.

Recommendations from Day One

11. In providing advice to SIAP in developing the implementation plan for the CSF, delegates at the Fourth Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific welcomed the decision of the SIAP Governing Council to proceed with the Skills Based Approach. Delegates recommended that:
- a) Both NSOs and SIAP work to ensure that future SIAP Training Needs Surveys include input from other parts of the national statistical systems
 - b) SIAP consider how they can use information from other organisations, such as the ESCAP assessments of statistics, in identifying training needs
 - c) SIAP further refine the CSF, taking into account country suggestions in regard to NSO experiences of the specific skills required at the different levels of the CSF and specific topics required by NSOs
 - d) SIAP consider reviewing the titles for each of the levels of the CSF, in order to improve comparability across the region
 - e) SIAP continue to get feedback on the detailed aspects of the CSF, including from

countries and international and regional organisations not able to attend the workshop;
by posting the CSF on the SIAP website and actively seeking additional feedback

Day Two – Strengthening Partnerships in Statistical Training

13. The focus of Day Two was to identify practical ways in which the partnerships in statistical training between countries and the various regional, inter-governmental and specialist agencies could be strengthened.
14. Delegates were presented with some overarching questions to help their consideration of the issues.
- Why is co-operation of training important? What is the added value for countries?
 - Is there a need for improved co-ordination between international partners? What could be done to make it better over the next 2 years?
 - What can be done to improve bilateral and multilateral co-operation between countries in the provision of statistical training?
 - What should be the role of regional and sub-regional organizations in strengthening partnership in the provision of statistical training?
15. Delegates were also advised of the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics which had been released the previous day. The declaration, contains four key principles:
1. All countries must be encouraged and supported to define their own priorities, integrating user needs, and set out their own development pathways for statistics, from collection to dissemination, respecting internationally recognised quality standards.
 2. All partners should promote the development of statistical systems and methods that anticipate and respond to new and emerging requirements for data at all levels.
 3. Efforts to improve statistics should support, strengthen and sustain the institutions and agencies that make up national statistical systems.
 4. Development partners should help strengthen and use developing countries' statistical systems in line with the Accra Agenda for Action.
- More on the Dakar declaration can be found at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/57/0/44088255.pdf>
16. Prior to the small group discussions on strengthening co-operation and co-ordination of statistical training, delegates discussed the presentation based on the concept paper. The presentation “Improving the Co-ordination of Statistical Training in the Asia-Pacific Region to enhance the Impact of Official Statistics” placed a number of suggestions for strengthening partnerships, in the context of both the wider regional changes in political co-operation, and the changing demand for technical and institutional capacity building.
17. Among the questions and points raised in response to this presentation included:
- a) How to maintain capacity within NSOs without ongoing reliance from regional and inter-governmental organisations

b) the need to build both institutional and technical statistical capacity

18. Each of the regional and inter-governmental organisations presented their plans for training and technical assistance in the region. This is summarised in two ways – by topic and by country/region.

Topic Summary

Topics	ESCAP	ADB	ASEAN	IMF	ILO	SIAP
Generic Skills						
Data into information						√
Micro data dissemination						√
Policy Analysis					√	√
Economic						
Balance of Payments				√		√
Economic Statistics	√ - special focus on countries without capacity to produce Core Set of Economic Statistics			√		√ - for Central Asian countries – in Russian language
FDIS			√- incl Train the Trainers			
Financial Savings		√Planned – Financial Soundness Indicators				
Government Finance and Monetary			√	√		√
Harmonisation IMTS and SITS			√ - incl Train the Trainers			

Informal Sector	√ - piloting in three countries, but activities are aimed at all in region	√				√
ICT			future			√
ISIC Classification Rev 4			√			
Manufacturing			√			√
Non-Observed Economy			√			√
Prices		√		√		√
SITS				√		
SNA		√	√ - new	√		√
Survey methodology for Economic Surveys		√				
Trade Statistics			√			√
Transport			√ - new			
Indicators						
ICP 2011		√				√
MDGs	√ - focus is on countries with special needs	√			√	√
					√	
Labour Market			√ - new		√	
Labour Force Surveys					√	√
Child Labour Force Surveys						√

Labour Market Information Analysis						√
Decent Work Indicators						
Social						
Disability	√ - Developing countries and countries in transition					√
Education			Future			√
Health			Future			√
Population census						√
Population Census Communication						√
Population Census IT	Russian language					√
Poverty measurement						√
Vital registration	√ - focus on countries needing assistance with vital systems					√
Specific Software						
REDATAM						√
STATA or SPSS						√
Other						
Disaster Risk	New					

Regional members, associate members of ESCAP, and other Economies.

Asia

Specific Countries/Region	ESCAP	ADB	ASEAN	IMF	ILO	SIAP
Afghanistan	√	√		√	√ (to be confirmed)	√
Armenia	√	√		√		√
Azerbaijan	√			√		√
Bangladesh	√	√		√	√	√
Bhutan	√	√		√		√
Brunei-Darussalam	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cambodia	√	√	√	√	√	√
China		√		√ Dedicated Training Institution		√
Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)	√ special programme - planned					√
Georgia	√			√		√
Hong Kong, China	√	√				
India	√	√		√ Training Institution		√
Indonesia	√	√	√	√	√	√
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	√			√		√
Japan	√			√		
Kazakhstan	√			√		√
Kyrgyzstan	√			√		√
Laos PDR	√	√	√	√	√	√
Macao, China	√			√		√
Malaysia	√	√	√	√	√	√
Maldives	√	√		√		√
Mongolia	√ Informal sector pilot	√		√		√

Myanmar	√ special programme	√ (planned ICP 2011)	√	√	√	√
Nepal	√	√		√		√
Pakistan	√	√		√		√
Philippines	√ Informal sector pilot	√	√	√		√
Republic of Korea	√			√		√
Russian Federation	√			√		√
Singapore	√	√		√	√	√
Sri Lanka	√ Informal sector pilot	√		√		√
Taipei, China	√	√		√		√
Tajikistan	√			√		√
Thailand	√	√	√	√	√	√ Also Piloting Distance learning
Turkey	√			√		
Turkmenistan	√			√		√
Uzbekistan	√			√		√
Vietnam	√	√	√	√	√	√

Pacific

Specific Countries/Region	ESCAP	ADB	ASEAN	IMF	ILO	SIAP
Pacific Region					√ (to be confirmed) possible partnership with Pacific regional organizations	
American Samoa	√					√
Australia	√			√		
Cook Islands	√					√

Fiji	√	√		√		√
French Polynesia	√					√
Guam	√					√
Kiribati	√			√		√
Marshall Islands	√			√		√
Micronesia – Federated States	√			√		√
Nauru	√					√
New Caledonia	√					√
New Zealand	√			√		
Niue	√					√
Northern Marianas	√					√
Palau	√	√		√		√
Papua New-Guinea	√			√		√
Samoa	√			√		√
Solomon Islands	√			√		√
Timor-Leste	√	√ Planned		√		√
Tonga	√			√		√
Tuvalu	√					√
Vanuatu	√			√		√

Note: The regional tables show where each of the regional and inter-governmental organisations attending the workshop have some involvement with the different ESCAP members and associate members. The extent of involvement may differ depending on the role of the relevant regional or inter-government organisation. More details on the exact involvement of any particular regional or inter-government organisation should be obtained directly from the relevant organisation.

Strengthening Co-operation and Co-ordination of Statistical Training in the Region – Suggestions

19. In groups, delegates identified practical steps to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination of statistical training in the region.

20. The specific proposals identified by delegates are as follows:

- i) Establish a Centralised Regional hub for Capacity-Building, including Statistical

Training, to be managed by the Statistical Division of ESCAP.

This would include establishing a website which would provide information on capacity building, including statistical training and technical assistance in the region. The information would include the target audience, sponsors and the partners. It is proposed that this website cover bilateral/multilateral country assistance, as well as assistance provided by global, regional and intergovernmental bodies.

The website would include both recent activities, and proposals for new work, as well as current activities

Part of the hub would include training schedules/calendar from training providers, as well as links to other relevant websites, such as PARIS21.

ii) Establish a forum of Regional/Sub-regional organisations involved with statistical training and capacity building to support countries in the region. This forum would meet around the meetings of the Committee on Statistics

ii) Establish forum of Statistical Training Institutes to also meet around the Committee on Statistics.

Note – it was noted that at the request of the UN Statistical Commission, ESCAP are establishing an informal forum to support capacity building in the region. This forum would meet around the Committee on Statistics or the UN Statistical Commission in the years that the Committee on Statistics was not meeting

iii) Consider organising the meetings of the Governing Council of SIAP, back to back with the Committee on Statistics to minimise travel for key players

iv) ESCAP to continue to support a regular Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training, to support on-going networking between NSOs, Statistical Training Institutes and global, regional and inter-government bodies.

v) Continue to use informal networks as a means of sharing expertise and information.

vi) Identify a group of people who can be trained as Trainers in relevant statistical disciplines across the region.

vii) NSOs to be pro-active in identifying possible duplication of training and other technical assistance with international donors

viii) NSOs to continue to develop bilateral and multilateral co-operation modelled on south-south co-operation models

Recommendations from Day Two – Strengthening Partnerships in Statistical Training

21. Delegates at Fourth Workshop on Forging Partnerships in Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific recommended that:

a) The Statistical Division of ESCAP to establish a centralised hub of capacity-building in the region. This would include establishing a website which would provide information on capacity building, including statistical training and technical assistance in

the region. The information would include the target audience, sponsors and the partners. It is proposed that this website cover bilateral/multilateral country assistance, as well as assistance provided by global, regional and intergovernmental bodies.

b) In establishing the informal forum to support capacity building in the region, as directed by the UN Statistical Commission, ESCAP should

i) Establish a forum of Regional/Sub-regional organisations to support countries in the region.

ii) Establish a forum of Statistical Training Institutes

iii) ESCAP consider the best way of utilising existing meetings, noting that not all NSOs or regional/sub-regional organisations attend the annual UN Statistical Commission meetings

c) SIAP consider organising the meetings of the Governing Council of SIAP, back to back with the Committee on Statistics to minimise travel for key players

d) SIAP and ESCAP continue to sponsor the Workshop on Forging Partnerships, to support on-going networking between NSOs, Statistical Training Institutes and global, regional and international bodies.

e) SIAP to work with NSOs, Statistical Training Institutes and regional and inter-governmental bodies to identify a group of people who can be trained as Trainers in relevant statistical disciplines across the region.

f) Consistent with Principle 1 of the 2009 Dakar Declaration, NSOs to pro-actively identify possible duplication of training and other technical assistance with international donors.