



# ESCAP

Economic and Social Commission  
for Asia and the Pacific

# Evaluation of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP)

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# Evaluation objectives

- To assess the results achieved and performance of SIAP using the standard evaluation criteria, including **impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability** and **gender/disability inclusion** mainstreaming.
- To determine ways to enhance the **results-orientation** of SIAP and identify specific outputs and delivery modalities that are **most relevant** to the member States, based on needs expressed by relevant stakeholders.
- To recommend actions for improving the **results orientation** and **performance** of the Institute.

# Data gathering

## Guided by evaluation matrix

### a. Document review

- Covering normative and strategic documents, reporting and M&E documents

### b. Key Informants

- 29 Semi-structured interviews (using interview guide) and one written response
- Selection of interviewees with SIAP, targeting government officials (NSOs), ESCAP staff (HQ and SIAP) and implementing partners
- 2 Focus Group Discussions

### c. Online survey

- Targeting GC members and national focal points, training participants and implementing partners
- Questionnaire designed by evaluator, disseminated by ESCAP
- Low response rate (n = 32 )

# Pandemic disruption

- In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, of the 25 courses planned, 12 courses were postponed while 6 were cancelled
- Travel restrictions continued in 2021 due to the with all training programmes delivered through e-learning
- SIAP resumed face-to-face training for the Pacific with partners in Sept. 2022
- The Institute resumed face-to-face training in Japan in April 2023
- Ongoing implications include financial constraints of members and implementing partners

# Findings based on KEQ – Impact

**Finding 1:** Based on good practices (e.g. gender, disaster statistics), key success factors for SIAP interventions include building on clear linkages between:

- normative frameworks (statistical standards)
- capacity assessment
- results-based management
- leveraging of the strengths and mandates of different partners
- clear and strong demand from countries; and
- the delivery of training through a the most appropriate modalities.

**Finding 2:** Strategic objectives and interventions in support of networking need consideration given that the main activity supporting networking, the Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific, has recommended to be discontinued. For example, consider a task team to support capacity development and networking for national statistical training institutes.

*“The training programs, technical assistance, and knowledge sharing provided by UNSIAP are essential for improving the quality and timeliness of statistical data. Somehow, the programs offered set the tone for the NSO as to what statistics need to be prioritized at the regional level.”*

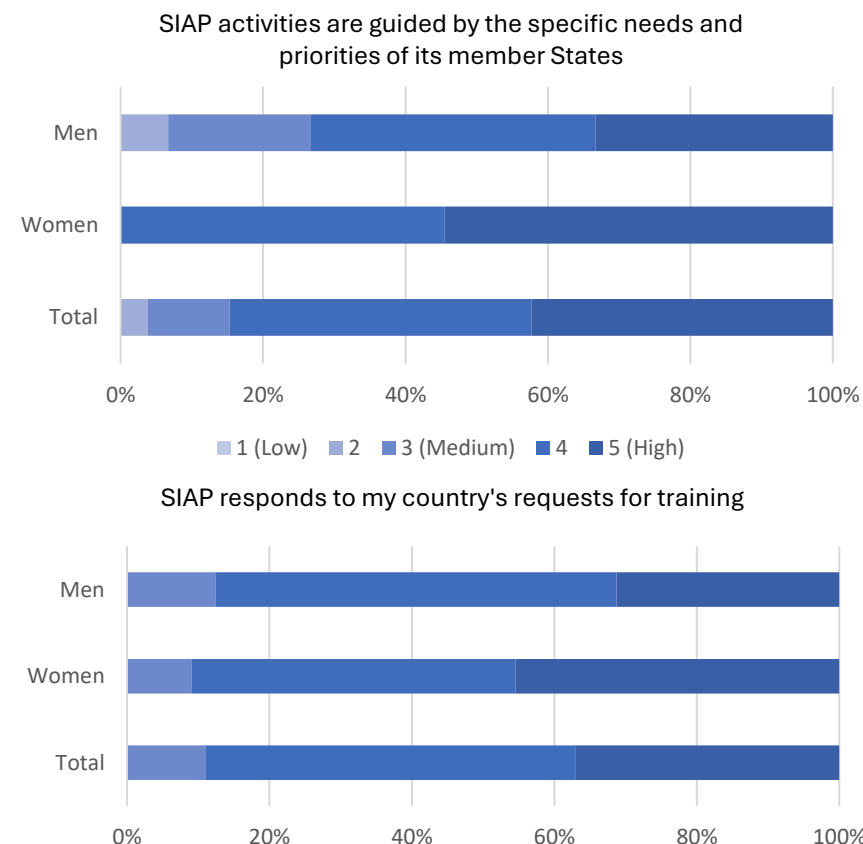
- NSO response to interview questions

# Key findings – Relevance

**Finding 3:** A core area of strength of SIAP is its high relevance which is supported by SIAP’s clear mandate and functions in responding to training needs of national statistical systems of ESCAP member States in the overall context of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

**Finding 4:** The strategic planning process of SIAP can be further strengthened by refining its results framework and better aligning evaluation and learning with the development (and review) of its Strategic Plan.

**Finding 5:** In support of strategic planning, the needs assessment process can be streamlined and strengthened, leveraging the supportive governance structure for the institute and existing inter-governmental and inter-agency processes.



*“From the side of the NSO, perhaps there can be feedback as to what responses in the training needs assessment survey were considered so the NSO can also plan out its participation. Maybe, training to be implemented can be planned out in the medium term as a reference for the NSOs in their work program.” - NSO response to interview questions*

## Key findings – Effectiveness

**Finding 6:** SIAP is effective in the delivery of its mandate and institutional mission, and a key dimension of this effectiveness is that SIAP professional staff understand capacity development, bringing technical expertise, a strong appreciation for the challenges faced by NSS staff and teaching (pedagogical) experience.

*“E-learning platforms have made **crucial statistical training easily accessible** not only to our National Statistics Office but also to our stakeholders in the National Statistical System.”*

– Survey response from NSO

*“While UNSIAP provides valuable training and technical assistance, there is a need **for sustained capacity-building at the national level** to ensure the effective implementation of new methodologies and technologies.”*

- NSO response to interview questions

**Finding 7:** The continued enhancement of e-learning will be increasingly important, based on evidence of where e-learning functions best as a modality

## Key findings – Efficiency and Sustainability

**Finding 8:** Overall, SIAP's staffing and financial resources are 'fit for purpose' given its current positioning and approach to statistical capacity development in the region (as reflected in the RM strategy). This is particularly the case given the extensive in-kind support provided to SIAP from the host government.

**Finding 9:** Existing processes at the global and regional level can continue to be leveraged and strengthened to enhance coordination and alignment (which is critically important when viewed from the perspective of NSOs).

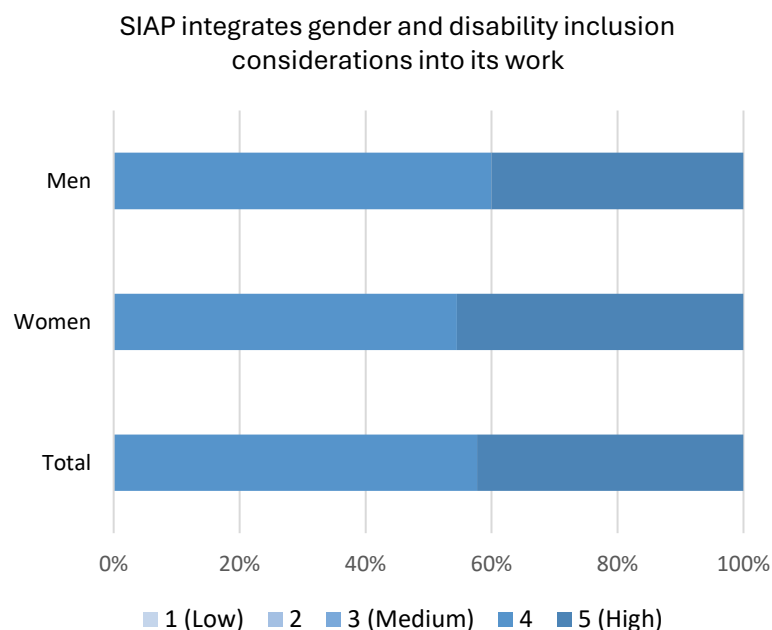
**Finding 10:** Cooperation with the ESCAP Substantive Divisions and Regional Institutes through the Statistics Division should continue to be enhanced and institutionalized.

**Finding 11:** SIAP's overall resource and funding position is an important strength and there is good reason to believe that this support will continue, providing reliable support that allows SIAP to confidently plan into the future.



## Key finding - GEDI

**Finding 12:** Gender statistics and disability statistics are important areas of work that SIAP should continue to prioritise based on UN guidance and regional frameworks, with relevant ESCAP partners (such as SDD) and other implementing partners.



- Promoting gender statistics has been a key dimension of SIAP's work programme over the 2020-24 period, a key towards addressing gender inequality and evidence-based policy for 'leaving no one behind'
- Disability inclusion is an important priority across UN programming (for example, Incheon Strategy and Jakarta Declaration) and has become an important emerging priority for SIAP.
- An important area for continued collaboration between SIAP, the Statistics Division and Social Development Division, and could be expanded on to include disability inclusive disaster risk reduction.

# Recommendations

## **A. Strategic planning and priority setting are critically important to SIAP and should continue to be strengthened and streamlined**

### *Proposed Actions*

1. Consider use of project document (2-year) of other Ris developed after the joint GC and Committee meeting
2. Align strategic planning with the evaluation cycle
3. MRT (peer) review of Strategic Plan (e.g., with SPMD and SD) as an official Governing Council agenda

## **B. SIAP and the Statistics Divisions should continue to find practical ways to expand and institutionalize collaboration**

### *Proposed Actions*

1. Joint planning for the development of the Strategic Plan and Project Document (2-year)
2. Management follow-up to Governing Council meeting (with DES/OES) to agree actions

# Recommendations

**C. Use existing platforms to help set regional, sub-regional and country level training priorities to bring the collective programming strengths of the UN and development partners to National Statistical Systems.**

## *Proposed Actions*

1. Continue active involvement in the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training (GIST)
2. Continue strong emphasis on networking and partnership development with training institutes (include academic organizations) and other training providers (UN, IMF/PFTAC, PARIS 21 etc).
3. Consider SIAP membership and revisit approach to the Data and Statistics Working Group with a view to expand its support for “a coordinated approach to statistical capacity development of national statistical systems and stakeholders of the national data ecosystem” (from TOR)

# Recommendations

## **D. Continue to foster comprehensive approach to capacity development by building on good practices and opportunities to increase SIAP multiplier effect**

### *Proposed Actions*

1. Joint project development with key ESCAP substantive divisions and implementing partners to ensure sustained capacity development
2. Support capacity of national statistical training institutes including for networking and strategic partnerships (promoting SSC) at the regional and sub-regional levels.
3. Continue to refine the approach to targeting specific sub-regions and CSN using a cluster approach for countries with similar challenges and context
4. Seek clear capacity development expectations and ongoing support from SPMD



**Thank you**

