

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

**Training Course on
Communication and Advocacy for Agricultural and Rural Statistics**

20 – 24 April 2015

Beijing, China

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background & Rationale

The Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics (GSAR) 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 GSAR 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.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Global Strategy (RAP) addresses the recognized need for promoting awareness of the importance of using agricultural and rural statistics in policy making and in advocating for increased and sustained resources for data collection in this sector. This *Training Course on Communication and Advocacy for Agricultural and Rural Statistics* partly responds to this need as it aims to build the capacity of official statisticians to more effectively communicate agricultural and rural statistics to key agricultural and rural development policy makers and decision makers in government responsible for resource allocation directly or through media channels.

The course will run from 20 to 24 April 2015, in Beijing, China and will be conducted by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the implementing partners of the RAP and the National Bureau of Statistics of China.

Target participants are a country team consisting of a mix of trainers of national statistical training and research institutions, statistical experts-cum-managers, media and communications staff and statistical offices/units of ministries responsible for the production and dissemination of agricultural and rural statistics and agricultural policy researchers and analysts of ministries of agriculture.

II. Objectives

This training-of-trainers course is designed to contribute to the following expected outputs of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan of the Global Strategy:

- Improve political support by decision-makers for agricultural and rural statistics in terms of provision of budget and resources and

- Enhance capacity of national statistical systems to advocate for adequate resources for developing and compiling country-specific minimum set of agricultural and rural statistics on a sustainable basis.

The overall aim is to strengthen the communication and advocacy capacities of statistical offices and units by

- Increasing understanding of the communication issues between the data producer and user that have an impact on the effective use of data for policy research and analysis and policy formulation and monitoring;
- Providing guidance in developing a business case and communication and advocacy strategy for promoting awareness of the role of agricultural and rural statistics for policy making and evaluation and increasing appreciation by policy makers and decision makers in government of the importance of allocating resources for quality agricultural and rural statistics; and
- Equipping participants with the knowledge and tools on effective presentation and dissemination of agricultural statistics techniques in order to maximize the chances of uptake by their intended users.

III. Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

- Assess the effectiveness of their current dissemination and communication strategies in facilitating the use of official data and statistics in agricultural policy analysis and formulation and planning and monitoring their implementation;
- Develop a business case for allocating resources on a sustainable basis for improving agricultural and rural statistics;
- Develop a communication and advocacy strategy, based on the business case, for increasing the use of agricultural and rural statistics for policy making and evaluation and increasing appreciation by policy makers and decision makers in government of the importance of allocating resources for quality agricultural and rural statistics
- Implement a media strategy to reach advocacy objectives; and
- Design effective and persuasive tools that effectively disseminate and communicate agricultural statistics to its key users.

V. Course Design and Content

The course will bring together producers and users of agricultural statistics data to discuss and reach a shared understanding of how communication factors affect the use of data in policy analysis and formulation. Through a country team approach that includes producers and users, the course will facilitate the development of a business case and communication and advocacy strategy for addressing the identified gaps. Training activities will consist of a judicious mix of expert lectures, country presentations and workshops sessions for presenting theory, applying

tools and providing opportunities for practicing effective techniques for crafting and communicating appropriate messages. The training topics will cover:

- **Theory:** dissemination and communication practices for statistics producers that facilitate use of data; business case development; advocacy strategies and the media as an advocacy partner
- **Analysis:** assessing effectiveness of current dissemination and communication strategies; examining a national policy and assessing gaps in its reliance on agricultural statistics
- **Tools:** understanding target audiences; preparing effective messages that promote use of data; advocating for resource allocation; developing business case; developing media strategy; persuasive speaking
- **Practice:** preparing effective messages based on available data; preparing press releases; working with media; 'elevator' speech

IV. Target Participants

Target participants are:

- trainers of national statistical training and research institutions
- statistical experts-cum-managers, media and communications staff and statistical offices/units of ministries responsible for the production and dissemination of agricultural and rural statistics, and
- agricultural policy researchers and analysts of ministries of agriculture.

About 25 participants from selected countries will be selected to attend the course. The participants should be able to communicate well in English, in both verbal and written form.

VI. Requirements from Participants

Prior to the training, each country team should:

- Prepare and submit a country paper to SIAP (staff@unsiap.or.id) that: (a) describes dissemination and communication strategies and practices, including medial relationships, on agricultural and rural statistics in their agencies; (b) illustrates through 1-2 examples the use of data and statistics in agricultural policy making; and (c) highlights how country action plans developed or being developed through the in-depth country assessment (IdCA) or SPARS or NSDS process advocate for improving agricultural and rural statistics. The paper should be received by SIAP no later than 10 April 2015.

The country team should also prepare and bring with them to the training venue relevant documentation on specific national policies related to agriculture and rural development; samples of data dissemination products, especially press releases on agricultural and rural statistics, and samples of media releases (print and online).