Report of the meeting

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A. Introduction

1. The fourth ESCAP project support meeting on economic statistics was organized on 13-15 November 2017. The meeting included a workshop on informal sector statistics, in response to priorities identified at earlier project support meetings. The meeting was co-organized by ESCAP's Statistics Division and ESCAP-SIAP, with the support of ADB.

2. The meeting was attended by project focal points from the national statistical offices of Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam as well as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Department for International Development (DFID). The list of participants is included in Annex II.

3. The project support meeting had the following objectives:
   a. Update on the progress of project implementation,
   b. Identification of ideas to progress project implementation
   c. Awareness of the training component of the project; recommendations on priority resources to develop and approaches to rolling out the training component.

4. The workshop on informal sector statistics had the following objectives;
   a. To enhance the understanding of informal sector statistics of the participants
   b. For participants to develop knowledge of practices used in informal statistics in other countries


6. A summary of participants’ feedback on the meeting is included in Annex III.

7. The fifth project support meeting is planned to be held during the Asia Pacific Economic Statistics Week in May 2018.
B. General Guidance for project implementation

8. Presentations by countries and ensuing discussions identified the following issues or lessons for general guidance:

9. Political support is essential for the effective development of a national statistical system. It’s necessary for; statistical legislation to be enacted, to enable gain access and improve administrative data sources and to ensure NSOs have sufficient resources for production of high quality statistics. High level support and engagement is a pre-requisite for the successful implementation and follow-up to system-wide reviews of national statistical systems, which are part of the package of support available within the RPES. As such it is important that NSOs, prior to the start of the NSS reviews, engage with key decision makers to ensure that support.

10. The dissemination and use of official statistics is below the level required for effective evidence based policy formulation and implementation. This is caused by a variety of factors. These include; lack of high quality data relevant to policymakers, limited understanding of data available and limited skills of policy makers to analyse and utilize this data. Fundamental to resolving some of these issues is improved engagement between NSOs and stakeholders. This should be focused on developing mutual understanding regarding; data availability, data needs and policy priorities.

11. ESCAP, as the coordinator and manager of DFID-funded activities within the RPES emphasized the importance of adhering to the responsibilities and activities laid out in collaboration agreements under the project. These agreements take the form of:

(a). Exchange of formal letter between the heads of the NSO and the head of ESCAP’s Statistics Division. The letter (or an attached concept note) outlines activities, timelines and responsibilities by ESCAP and the NSO.

(b). A Letter of Agreement between the NSO and ESCAP. The Letter of Agreement is used in case funds are transferred to the NSO and includes in addition to the elements above, also payment schedule and requirements for financial statements etc.

In several instances, project implementation had come to a halt due to non-delivery of obligations on the part of the NSO. This complicates project and resource management resulting in delays or inability by ESCAP to extend support to all project countries.
12. Improving coordination between development partners (DPs) and NSOs is a priority. Both DPs and NSOs must improve in this regard. There have been projects competing for limited resources (predominantly NSOs staff time) or that have substantial overlap or duplication with other projects. This leads to DP resources and NSO staff time being wasted. Both NSOs and DPs have an important role in reducing these issues.
C. Country-specific guidance for project implementation

13. The following paragraphs summarize the meeting conclusions for each participating country under the headings: (i) Summary of presentation; (ii) follow-up actions by the national statistical office or ESCAP.

Bhutan

14. Presentation: The NSB presented on the progress of the development of Export and Import Price Indices (XMPI) and introduced another priority under RPES, namely the development of a Bhutan System of Industrial Classification (BSIC). Under the projected timeline the first (internal) release of the XMPI will occur in July 2018. This will initially be used as part of a rebasing exercise for the National Accounts with public release of XMPI once a sufficient time series is available. Other priorities will be considered once the XMPI project is completed.

15. Follow-up actions: NSB to continue to develop the XMPI with the assistance of the international consultant provided under the RPES by ESCAP. Key remaining tasks for the consultant are: To provide training to the XMPI team, assist in the development of the processes and to advise on the first XMPI publication. Following the completion of the XMPI, NSB and ESCAP will discuss collaboration to develop the BSIC based on the International System of Industrial Classification (ISIC) Rev 4.

Cambodia

16. Presentation: The NIS presented on two main topics. The first was on the development of a NSDS in collaboration with the World Bank including relevant impacts for the implementation of the RPES in Cambodia. The second topic was on the progress of the RPES technical assistance activity to enhance the National Accounts in Cambodia. The aim is to develop a new baseline for GDP using the framework of a Supply Use Tables (SUT). This will be based on the 2011 Economic Census, the 2014 Inter-Censal Survey (both which haven’t been incorporated into the National Accounts yet) as well as all other economic data sets available.

17. Follow-up actions: (a) It was noted that the ongoing collaboration focused on only one aspect of the earlier agreed collaboration under the project (as per exchange of formal letters). Due to lack of organizational/policy support for the earlier agreed collaboration on a review of economic statistics, combined with the recent development of an NSDS, this activity will not be implemented under RPES and collaboration will focus on strengthening national accounts. (b) NIS to support the National Accounts collaboration by ensuring that both staff and key datasets are available for the in-country workshops. This includes ensuring that the staffs have sufficient time to complete the preparatory work for these workshops. ESCAP to continue to
provide the international expert on National Accounts. The expert to provide advice on the compilation of SUT given the data available in Cambodia. This compilation exercise will be used to both develop a new baseline for GDP and train NIS staff in the compilation of SUT. This will be done in close cooperation with SIDA and Statistics Sweden.

Lao PDR

18. Presentation: The LSB presented on their collaboration with the WB ‘LAO Stat; Strengthening the Lao Statistical System’. This collaboration included reviews of the economic NSS, development of an NSDS, training and support for the development of a new office including IT infrastructure. The LSB presentation included key learnings for project countries undergoing similar projects as well as key priorities for in-country activities with ESCAP. These included: training of staff, development of real estate price index and possible research studies.

19. Follow-up actions: It was noted that the listed priorities for collaboration with ESCAP differed substantially from the earlier agreed collaboration (as per exchange of formal letter). Given the priorities presented by the LSB and available ESCAP resources, collaboration on the training component of the project was identified as feasible. Details of this collaboration to be further discussed between ESCAP and LSB.

Maldives

20. Presentation: The NBS presented on the two recently completed activities under RPES. The NSS review of the Maldives, which was launched in August 2018, and a technical assistance project to review and provide detailed recommendations for the improvement of the National Accounts. Both identified the implementation of statistics law, access to administrative data and the development of proper institutional frameworks as essential. The NSS review is to be used as part of the development of an NSDS (2019 to 2029) with the support of PARIS 21.

21. Follow-up actions: ESCAP and NBS to discuss follow-up technical assistance to support the implementation of recommendations from the review.

Myanmar

22. Presentation: The CSO presented on the plan to develop a Statistical Business Register (SBR) in Myanmar. This included why an SBR is required for the development of a sustainable economic survey program, the issues faced and the planned collaboration with ESCAP to support the CSO in developing a SBR. This support includes funding a consultant to work in Myanmar, additional external expert advice on SBR and training of CSO SBR team.
23. Follow-up actions: The CSO to identify the SBR team with the required skills and ensure that they are available for the length of the project. CSO and ESCAP to agree and formalize the details of the collaboration.

Nepal

24. Presentation: The CBS presented on the ‘Evidence for Development’ (E4D) a DFID funded project to support the use of evidence based policy. This project has a substantial component dedicated to developing the statistical capacity of Nepal. The presentation included how ESCAP, under the RPES, could support the implementation of this project by providing strategic advice on strengthening legal and institutional set-up of the NSS of Nepal, including for improved economic statistics.

25. Follow-up actions: It was noted that the presented priorities were well-aligned with an earlier request which ESCAP had not been able to honor at the time. It was agreed that ESCAP would send a senior advisor to a strategy meeting of CBS management, planned to be held in early 2018. During the meeting, ESCAP would provide advice on options for adjusting the legal and institutional setup of the NSS and establish priorities for further support by ESCAP to CBS within RPES. The CBS and DFID to finalise meeting details and agenda and invite ESCAP.

Sri Lanka

26. Presentation: The DCS presented on the NSS review, supported by ESCAP and PARIS 21, mentioning that a NSS review team had already been established within DCS. The presentation focused on the key issues to be addressed by the review as well as the required tasks for the DCS to progress the review.

27. Follow-up actions: DCS to respond to the proposal for the conduct of the review (timelines, activities and responsibilities), which had been prepared earlier by ESCAP and PARIS21. Initial activities by DCS would include informing other stakeholders of the NSS within and beyond DCS of the NSS review and coordinate the completion of the NSS review tool questionnaire.

Timor-Leste

28. Presentation: The GDS presented on their economic statistics development plan, which receives substantial support from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This plan includes being able to produce key economic statistics independently by 2018 with full independent production of economic statistics by 2020.

29. Follow-up actions: Taking into account ongoing and future ABS support, Timor-Leste would henceforward benefit primarily from regional or group
activities (project support meetings, trainings, Asia-Pacific Economic Statistics Week, etc) of RPES.

*Viet Nam*

30. Presentation: The GSO presented on the development of energy statistics and balances. This included how the ESCAP / GSO collaboration, under discussion, will address these issues with a goal of publishing improved energy balance statistics by September 2018.

31. Follow-up actions: The LOA for the energy balance project, jointly drafted by ESCAP and the GSO, is currently being reviewed by the ESCAP grants committee and once cleared ESCAP will forward to GSO to sign.
D. Strengthening national training capacity on economic statistics

32. ESCAP provided a presentation on the Training Component of the Regional Programme for Economic Statistics. The purpose of these activities is to increase the institutional capacity of national statistical systems to deliver foundational statistical training.

33. RPES activities in this area will include development of a recommended training curriculum for the Core Set of Economic Statistics, corresponding materials for trainees and trainers, and guidance on setting up and running national training programmes in selected countries that express interest.

34. Meeting participants also gave feedback on the needs of their organizations and priority considerations for project implementation. Participants were requested to provide feedback on the training opportunities available in their NSS, the most important obstacles for enhancing economic statistics training, what materials were lacking, and what resources are needed to enable NSOs to deliver training. In this regard a majority of project countries indicated that they are highly reliant on external donor support for their existing training programmes, which feature significant international components. Additionally, limited staff and funding were identified as common obstacles, while business registers, national accounts and survey methodologies were identified as priority training areas. Finally, the importance of training materials in national languages and effective use of online training were mentioned by several attendees.
E. Other priorities for collaboration and support

35. The following specific topics emerged as priorities for future collaboration (seminars, case studies, exchange of experience, south-south cooperation, training, project support meetings, etc.) within the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics or other regional capacity development programmes:

36. The capacity to manage (staff, development partners, projects, stakeholders and other aspects of running a national statistical system) was identified as a development need. Management skills are fundamental to the effective development of a NSS and thus training to enhance these skills could be considered within the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics or other regional statistics capacity development initiatives.

37. Human resources development was identified as a general concern, with challenges related to recruiting the right staff, providing development opportunities to staff, and retaining staff. Strengthening human resources would involve expanded provision of training to staff by the national statistical office, or other appropriate national institutions. Capacity development in this area may therefore be considered within the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics or other regional statistics capacity development initiatives.

38. The effective implementation and harmonization of standard classifications across a national statistical system, notably industry classifications, are important for the development of coherent economic statistics. Support in this area could be in the form of in-country technical advice as well as sharing of examples of how countries have tailored international classifications to meet their specific needs, have assured quality and have ensured system-wide implementation of standard classifications, also by administrative data providers.

39. Energy and natural resources statistics have been identified as a priority by policy makers. This includes statistics such as energy balances, energy accounts and environmental accounts. Expert advice and examples of the development of these statistics in a developing country context would be most beneficial.

40. A majority of project support countries do not produce Export and Import Price Indices (XMPI); which is a core economic indicator. As such there was substantial interest in the collaboration between Bhutan and ESCAP on the development of XMPI in Bhutan. As such there may be benefits in presenting the collaboration in greater detail or expanding the work to include other project countries.
41. During the workshop on informal sector statistics there was an interest in the documentation of the estimation practices for the informal sectors contribution to GDP. The project countries all have substantial informal sectors, and these can be a substantial source of error for GDP and other key economic indicators. This is also a topic where more developed economics have little relevant experience. As such south-south cooperation is essential for improving the quality of informal sector statistics. ESCAP could approach some of the project countries and work with them to document their estimation practices.

42. There is a substantial opportunity to leverage the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals to gain high level support and additional resources for statistics. For this opportunity to be leveraged NSOs and development partners need to better communicate and demonstrate how additional resources and reforms would improve monitoring of SDG indicators. This is not least the case for economic statistics which receives comparatively little attention in debates about data and statistics for the 2030 Agenda.
Regional Programme on Economic Statistics in Asia-Pacific
Fourth Project Support Meeting, 13 – 15 November 2017

Annex I. Meeting agenda

PROGRAMME

Meeting Rooms C & D UNCC
Bangkok Thailand
08:30 – 17:00 | 13 November 2017

Expected outcomes:
1. Update on the progress of project implementation.
2. Identification of ideas to progress project implementation.
3. Awareness of the training component of the project; recommendations on priority resources to develop and approaches to rolling out the training component.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA – Day 1</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 November 2017</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:30 – 09:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 09:00 – 09:15  | Introduction
|                | *Ms Rikke Munk Hansen, Statistics Division, ESCAP*                      |
| 09:15 – 10:30  | Updates on progress of project implementation
|                | *Each project country presents on their topic, followed by feedback from a selected country (see details in the concept note)* |
|                | *Representatives from: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.* |
| 10:30 – 10:50  | Morning Tea                                                              |
| 10:50 – 12:00  | Updates on progress of project implementation, cont’d                    |
| 12:00 – 13:00  | Lunch Break                                                              |
| 13:00 – 14:30  | Updates on progress of project implementation, cont’d                    |
| 14:30 – 15:00  | Plenary discussion
|                | *Summary of lessons and identification of shared priorities for future regional capacity support*
|                | *Led by Ms Rikke Munk Hansen, Statistics Division, ESCAP*               |
### Regional Programme on Economic Statistics in Asia-Pacific

**Fourth Project Support Meeting, 13 – 15 November 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15:00 – 15:15</td>
<td><strong>Afternoon Tea</strong></td>
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</table>
| 15:15 – 15:45 | **Presentation & Discussion: Overview of the Training Component of the Regional Programme for Economic Statistics**  
“RPES: Enabling National Training Capacities”, Matthew Perkins, Statistics Division, ESCAP  
“Regional Training Resources”, Alick Mjuma Nyasulu, SIAP, ESCAP  
For discussion:  
- How can RPES best support sustainable, national training on economic statistics?  
**Expected Outcome:**  
- Awareness of training resources available and opportunities to support national training with RPES. |
| 15:45 – 17:00 | **Group Discussion and Presentation**  
- What are priority resources to develop under the RPES training component: Training materials? Training of trainers’ materials? Standard curriculum? Guidance for establishing regular training programmes? Other?  
**Expected Outcomes:**  
- Identification of common training priorities for producing the Core Set of Economic Statistics  
- Description of the scope and types of support that could be helpful for establishing sustainable training programmes at the country level  
- Recommendations on support (resources, approaches, topics, and activities) to be implemented within RPES. |
| 17:00 – 17:05 | **Wrap up and information for next day**  
*Facilitated by ESCAP* |
Regional Programme on Economic Statistics in Asia-Pacific
Fourth Project Support Meeting, 13 – 15 November 2017

PROGRAMME
Meeting Room C & D UNCC
Bangkok Thailand
09:00 – 17:00 | 14-15 November 2017

Expected outcomes:
1. Enhanced understanding of Informal Sector Statistics
2. Knowledge of practices in other countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA – Day 2</th>
<th>14 November 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 09:15</td>
<td>Importance of Informal Sector Statistics and Introduction to Informal Sector Statistics Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Joseph Mariasingham, Asian Development Bank (ADB)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:15 – 10:15</td>
<td>Data sources for Informal Sector Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Presentation and facilitation by Margarita Guerrero, ESCAP, Consultant</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The session will continue throughout the day, with alternating country presentations and presentation and commentary by the facilitator. Five countries will present during the day, and they will be selected and informed before the meeting. Further detail in the concept note.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 – 10:30</td>
<td>Morning Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:20 – 12:00</td>
<td>Data sources for Informal Sector Statistics, cont’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00 – 14:30</td>
<td>Data sources for Informal Sector Statistics, cont’d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30 – 14:45</td>
<td>Afternoon Tea</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plenary discussion with questions and comments by countries and experts; <em>led by Joseph Mariasingham (ADB), Margarita Guerrero (ESCAP) &amp; Alick Mjuma Nyasulu, SIAP</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>16:55 – 17:00</td>
<td>Conclusion of Day 2 and introduction to Day 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Facilitated by ESCAP</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Informal Sector Statistics and National Accounts  &lt;br&gt; <em>Presentation and facilitation by Alick Mjuma Nyasulu, SIAP, Lecturer</em>  &lt;br&gt; <em>Presentation will have breaks, for 12-15 minutes, for countries to present as specified in concept note. The five countries that did not present during day 2 will present and will focus more on Informal Sector in the National Accounts.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 10:45</td>
<td>Morning Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 – 12:00</td>
<td>Informal Sector Statistics and National Accounts, cont’d  &lt;br&gt; <em>Presentation and country presentations to continue.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00 – 14:30</td>
<td>Informal Sector Statistics and National Accounts, cont’d  &lt;br&gt; <em>Presentation and country presentations to continue.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30 – 14:45</td>
<td>Afternoon Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:45 – 16:30</td>
<td>Informal Sector Statistics and National Accounts, cont’d  &lt;br&gt; <em>End of presentation and country presentations. Plenary discussion with questions and comments by countries and experts.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>16:30 – 17:00</td>
<td>Wrap up of Event  &lt;br&gt; <em>ESCAP</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Annex II. List of participants

MEMBERS

Bhutan

Mr Ugyen Norbu, Chief, National Statistics Bureau
Mr Tashi Namgay, Senior Statistical Officer, National Statistics Bureau

Cambodia

Mr Sovorlak Khin, Deputy Director General, National Institute of Statistics (NIS)
Mr Chettra Keo, Director, National Institute of Statistics (NIS)

Lao PDR

Ms Salika Chanthalavong, Division Chief, National Account Division, Economics Statistics Department, Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB)
Ms Nittaya Phyathep, Technical Staff, National Account Division, Economics Statistics Department, Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB)

Maldives

Ms Ashiyath Shazna, Statistician, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
Ms Aishath Laila, Statistician, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)

Myanmar

Ms Thet Htar Nwe, Assistant Director, Central Statistical Organization (CSO)

Nepal

Mr Nebin Lal Shrestha, Deputy Director General, Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)
Mr Mahesh Chand Pradhan, Director, Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)

Sri Lanka

Ms Maheswaran Uthayakumary, Director (Statistics), Department of Census and Statistics (DCS)
Mr J S Priyadarshana Dharmawardena, Senior Statistician Industry, Trade and Services Division, Department of Census and Statistics (DCS)

Timor-Leste

Mr Rodolfo Soares, Chief, Department of National Account, General Directorate of Statistics (GDS), Ministry of Planning and Finance

Ms Lucrécia De Jesus Sousa, Staff of National Directorate Economic and Social Statistics, General Directorate of Statistics (GDS), Ministry of Planning and Finance

Viet Nam

Mr Huy Minh Nguyen, Deputy Director, Industrial Statistics Department, General Statistics Office (GSO)

Ms Dieu Huyen Nguyen, Statistician, National Account Department, General Statistics Office (GSO)

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Mr Mahinthan Joseph Mariasingham, Statistician and Project Officer, Development Indicator and Policy Research Division (ERDI), Asian Development Bank

Department for International Development (DFID)

Mr Graig Irwin, Statistician, Department for International Development

SECRETARIAT

Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), ESCAP

Mr Alick Mjuma Nyasulu, Statistician/Lecturer, SIAP
Regional Programme on Economic Statistics in Asia-Pacific

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Statistics Division (SD), ESCAP

Ms Rikke M Hansen, Chief, Economic and Environment Statistics Section

Mr Matthew Perkins, Statistician

Mr Michael Biddington, Statistician

Ms Supaporn Chatwanichkul, Programme Assistant

Ms Nixie Abarquez, Statistics Assistant

Ms Margarita Guerrero, Expert/Consultant

Mr Timothy Jones, Expert/Consultant
Regional Programme on Economic Statistics in Asia-Pacific

Fourth Project Support Meeting, 13 – 15 November 2017

Annex III. Summary meeting evaluations

17 country participants completed the evaluation questionnaire that was circulated on the last day of the meeting. The table below summarizes the received responses.

**Project support meeting (Day1 - 13 November)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization of meeting</th>
<th>appropriate</th>
<th>too short</th>
<th>too long</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration of the meeting</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time allotment for country presentations</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of meeting documents (invitation, concept note, etc)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely distribution of meeting documents</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting facilities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content of the meeting</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The meeting helps identifying and resolving issues that are stalling in-country activities</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting effectively identifies common issues in need of further development</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where applicable, the meeting adequately addresses relevant gender considerations</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES)</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your country has received technical assistance from the RPES?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, the assistance received from the RPES targets national priorities for the development of economic statistics</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, assistance received from the RPES helps improve national capacity for production of economic statistics</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional comments or suggestions for improvement**

- RPES has included the country in the focus of the project support which is at the position if formalization and implementation. RPES needs to support the countries in capacity development of NSO either abroad or conducting thematic country base training on the subject of economic statistics. For the developing countries, the resource is held by policy makers/decision makers to whom also needed to have capacity development workshop so they can understand the sense of economic statistics and the decision making of economic statistics development be fully implemented.
- Every country needs to develop every economic statistics area. Therefore, ESCAP should support their needed area.
Regional Programme on Economic Statistics in Asia-Pacific

Fourth Project Support Meeting, 13 – 15 November 2017

- This workshop improves my knowledge to informal sector statistics
- Just started working with RPES in reviewing NSS. We need support for service sector data analysis in informal sector statistics.
- Please consider the country was not yet received technical assistance from RPES
- The Industrial Department of GSO has received the technical assistance form RPES in compilation of energy balance but the National Account Department has gotten no assistance.

**Workshop on informal sector statistics (Day 2 and 3 – 14-15 November)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization of workshop</th>
<th>Duration of the workshop</th>
<th>appropriate</th>
<th>too short</th>
<th>too long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time allotment for country presentations</td>
<td>appropriate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of workshop documents (invitation, concept note, etc)</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>okay</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely distribution of workshop documents</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>okay</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop facilities</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>okay</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevance of content</th>
<th>Is informal sector statistics a priority area for development in your country?</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is informal sector statistics a priority area for development in your country?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the workshop adequately addresses relevant gender considerations?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Did the workshop improve your understanding of Informal Sector Statistics?</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the workshop improve your ability to produce, disseminate or use statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Additional comments or suggestions for improvement |
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- Till now, the left part of economic statistics is informal sector statistics, so it should be focused via international as well as national programmes to enhance the informal sector statistics. Current practices of incorporating informal statistics in national accounting system be useful to know.

- For the informal sector statistics, there should be more time because informal sector statistics is national account is very complicated.

- The informal sector statistics is not yet priority for our country because of policy maker and public awareness. The government concerns only high revenue enterprises, therefore, to raise this issue, we need to have some research or study of statistics indicator to show the importance of this informal sector. The workshop is not yet can help me produce informal sector statistics because I think I need to learn more, and improve the data sources first. (It is not because of the workshop.). I need to study more in depth, before I would say I have ability to disseminate of use statistics to standards and practices.

- Hope equity in support for developing economic statistics.

- Continue monitoring the implementation of economic statistics.

- Viet nam is planning to measure Non-observed economy as the requirement of our government. All staff in National Account Department has no experiences. Thus, we need the assistance to do the work.

- The priority given to the area of informal sector to strengthen the national account from the NSO is high, but the policy priority needs to be aligned.

- It would be great if you can include how to compile the informal statistics with practical examples.
Annex IV. Concept note

Fourth Project Support Meeting
UNCC, Bangkok, Thailand
13 - 15 November 2017

Background

The implementation of the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics (RPES) in Asia and the Pacific is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), including with technical assistance focused on South and South-East Asia.

The objective of the support is to increase the availability of high quality economic statistics and improve the capacity of national statistical systems to produce quality economic statistics. At the country level, this objective is pursued through in-depth institutional reviews and customized technical assistance.

Three project support meetings have been held so far with participation by the project countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam. The meetings have benefited from the participation of representatives from Japan, the Russian Federation, DFID, SIDA, the Asian Development Bank, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Statistics Division.

The project support meetings are focused on exchanging experiences and ideas among project countries to facilitate project implementation.

The meetings also serve to identify and address common issues in need of further development and support. Issues identified during the first three meetings include; improvement of statistical legislation, reviews of economic statistics programmes, statistical business registers, use of administrative statistics and informal sector statistics.

During the third project support meeting, demand was expressed for technical support on informal sector statistics. As such the fourth project support meeting will include two days workshop on informal sector statistics; including relevant data sources and the incorporation of the informal sector in the National Accounts. The workshop will benefit from presentations by project countries on current practises related to informal sector data sources and their use in National Accounts compilation.

The third project support meeting will also include presentations and discussions on opportunities for supporting national training within RPES, aiming to generate recommendations for specific outputs (activities, materials, etc.) to be delivered through the project.

Participants:

One Project focal point and one expert / manager involved in informal sector estimation from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka,
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Timor Leste, and Viet Nam. The ESCAP project team, a lecturer from SIAP and relevant national, regional and international partners and resource persons.

Day 1 – Project Support Meeting

Day one of the meeting will focus on the status of RPES project implementation. Each project country will share progress and lessons and receive feedback from other countries and resource persons. In addition there will be a presentation and discussion on the training component of RPES with the goal of defining topics and identifying pilot countries.

Country presentations: Each project country will present for 15-18 minutes on a topic, as indicated in the table below. The presentation will use the template provided. Feedback will be provided by another project country – also as indicated in the table. Feedback should be constructive, pointing to alternative approaches or sharing other reflections that may be of benefit to further implementation.

Preparations Topics by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Presentation Topic</th>
<th>To review and provide Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Present on planned the “Informal Sector Study”, key lessons and how it relates to the RPES.</td>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Present on progress of Import and Export Price Indices and need for development of Bhutan System of Industrial Classifications (BSIC).</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>The new NSDS developed in collaboration with the WB and how this relates to planned RPES project activities. Also present on plans for National Accounts development with ESCAP / SIDA.</td>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>The World Bank collaboration with Lao PDR project – LAO Stat ‘Strengthening the Lao Statistics System’. Also, key learnings from the project that are relevant to the RPES.</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>Key learnings and experiences from the NSS review and National Account developments.</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Present on planned collaboration with ESCAP on the development of a statistical business register.</td>
<td>Bhutan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Present on the economic component of the “Evidence for Development (E4D) Programme” supported by DFID. Include possible areas for value-addition by RPES project activities.</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Present on the plan to conduct a NSS review with ESCAP and PARIS 21.</td>
<td>Maldives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>Update on development plans and progress for economic statistics.</td>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viet Nam</th>
<th>Present on the development of energy statistics and balances and collaboration with ESCAP.</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Objective

For project country representatives to learn about best practice in informal sector statistics; from both a data source and National Accounts perspective. This will be achieved by presentations from international informal sector statistics experts and from countries on their informal sector data sources and statistics. This will enable countries to receive feedback from the experts and each other as well as seeing examples of what other countries have achieved.

It is important for other country participants and experts to properly understand the informal sector statistics for all participating countries. As such, all participating countries are required to submit a report (maximum 8 pages) informal sector statistics. A detailed guide will be provided.

Day 2 – Informal Sector Data Sources

_Expert Presentation:_ The day will open with an expert presenting on informal sector data sources. This presentation will include details on various survey types, data uses and the importance of informal sector data sources and statistics in SDG monitoring and policy implementation.

_Country Presentations:_
- Presentation from five counties on their informal sector statistics (template will be provided)
- Each presentation will be 12-15 minutes
- The presentations will include details on the informal sector in that country, data sources and inclusion of the informal sector in National Accounts. For day two presenters will be asked to focus more on data sources.
- Feedback and questions from the experts and from other countries after each presentation

_Plenary Discussion:_ After country presentations and discussions, there will be a plenary discussion to summarize key learnings from the day and identify areas of interest of the project countries in informal sector data sources.

Day 3 – Informal Sector in National Accounts:

_Expert Presentation:_ The day will open with an expert presenting on informal sector in the National Accounts. This presentation will include details on how nations include / adjust for the informal sector in the National Accounts and key concepts from a National Accounts perspective.

_Country Presentations:_
- Presentation form other five counties that have not presented on day 2. These presenters will be asked to focus more on National Accounts compared to day 2.
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- Each presentation will be 12-15 minutes
- Feedback and questions from the experts and other countries after the presentations.

*Plenary Discussion:* After country presentations and discussions, there will be a plenary discussion to summarize key learnings from the day and identify areas of interest of the project countries in informal sector statistics.

*End of the Fourth Project Support Meeting:* An ESCAP representative will conclude the meeting.

**Other Details**

The PowerPoint templates and report guidelines are prepared for guidance purposes. They can be amended by participating countries if needed.

The final agenda and PowerPoint templates will be provided closer to the start of the project support meeting, once attendance is confirmed.