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Committee on Poverty Reduction

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**STATISTICS: SELECTED ISSUES ARISING FROM THE FIRST SESSION
OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATISTICS**

(Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda)

**REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATISTICS
ON ITS FIRST SESSION**

SUMMARY

The first session of the Subcommittee on Statistics was held in Bangkok from 18 to 20 February 2004. It was attended by representatives of 30 members and associate members of ESCAP and 14 United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations.

The Subcommittee examined a report on the major statistical activities of the secretariat since the thirteenth session of the Committee on Statistics, and welcomed the secretariat's initiative to review its information services function. In taking up matters arising from the Committee on Poverty Reduction, the Subcommittee agreed that national statistical offices should be informed on all aspects of the methodology underlying international poverty estimates.

In the field of social statistics, the Subcommittee expressed strong support for the disability measurement efforts of ESCAP. It encouraged the secretariat to continue that work in partnership with other organizations and to include as many countries as possible in the training activities. The Subcommittee agreed that issues of coordination, including that between ministries of health and national statistical offices, were a serious concern in health statistics. In taking note of several aspects of engendering statistics, the Subcommittee expressed appreciation of ESCAP work in that field.

The Subcommittee discussed the utility of panel surveys for poverty measurement, and took note of presentations on the United Nations Statistics Division's *Handbook on Poverty Statistics: Concepts, Methods and Policy Use* and on a Pacific perspective on poverty measurement. It decided that the secretariat should develop a revised regional action plan on poverty statistics, with clearly identified priority activities, to be submitted to the Committee on Poverty Reduction at its second session.

In deliberating on various areas of economic statistics, the Subcommittee noted the serious difficulties that national statistical offices faced in estimating some components of the non-observed economy, and welcomed the possibility that other agencies might co-sponsor a secretariat workshop in that field. It also noted that despite a funding shortfall, Asia and the Pacific was the only region that was on track with regard to preparations for carrying out the International Comparison Programme, mainly due to the strong support that national statistical offices were providing; exploratory studies on poverty-related purchasing power parities were being carried out in six countries, including some in the region.

The Subcommittee observed that there was high interest in the region in work on statistics and indicators on the information society, and voiced the need for support by ESCAP to countries that were starting to explore those measurement issues, especially on e-readiness and e-usage. The Subcommittee agreed that composite indices in that field would only supplement, and not replace, an internationally agreed framework of indicators; any such framework should take into account policy issues.

In discussing statistical training, the Subcommittee noted with satisfaction that the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific had been expanding its programme of outreach courses and had embarked on its key statistical training coordination role in the region. It encouraged the Institute to be more active in pursuing the development of e-learning, and also urged countries to clearly express their demand for the Tokyo Metropolitan Area-based courses in responding to the annual training needs survey conducted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The Subcommittee reviewed a number of other significant global and regional issues in national statistics. Among other matters, it welcomed the positive impact that the Millennium Development Goals and their associated indicators had had on international and national statistics. It also recommended that each statistical office should consider establishing a separate classifications and standards unit.

On programme matters, the Subcommittee reviewed the statement of accomplishments of the Statistics subprogramme for 2002-2003 and noted that the proposed strategic framework for 2006-2007 was still at the preparatory stage. It endorsed a programme change for incorporation into the 2004-2005 programme of work to accommodate the high-level forum for Asia-Pacific statisticians (APEX 1).

The Subcommittee recalled that a strong need had been expressed by the Committee on Statistics for the maintenance of an apex forum of official statisticians to influence national decision-making as well as to provide a regional input into global discussions at the United Nations Statistical Commission. The Subcommittee agreed on the format and timing for the APEX forum, and requested ESCAP to provide meeting facilities and issue the invitations.

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I. PROCEEDINGS

A. Overview of significant global and regional issues in official statistics

1. Through document E/ESCAP/SOS/7 and a secretariat presentation, the Subcommittee considered global and regional issues in official statistics in areas that were not covered under dedicated agenda items. It noted that the format and the wealth of issues covered made the document a useful reference for the region and beyond. It also noted that the large number of manuals, handbooks and guidelines referred to in the document were an indication that the international and regional statistical community was seriously engaged in normative work.

2. The Subcommittee noted that the actions called for in the Plan of Action on Population and Poverty, as adopted by the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference held in December 2002, and those included in the planned United Nations support to the 2010 round of censuses, were closely related. It warmly welcomed the endorsement by the Statistical Commission at its thirty-fourth session that the support programme would include assistance related to making use of information technology, including the Internet, in census data collection, data capture and data dissemination.¹ The Subcommittee encouraged countries from the region to provide inputs and support for a resolution which the Statistical Commission was likely to prepare, at its thirty-fifth session in March 2004, for adoption by the Economic and Social Council in July 2004. The purpose of the resolution would be to assist in obtaining national and international support for the 2010 round of censuses. The Subcommittee emphasized that the senior-most management of the national statistical and census offices should be actively involved in census planning from its beginning.

3. In discussing how to respond to the increasing demand for migration statistics in the region, the Subcommittee noted that censuses were a potential source of migration data and that there was a linkage between migration and trade in services. It noted the interest of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations secretariat in improving migration statistics and statistics in trade in services in the wake of the planned liberalization, in the long term, of trade in services.

4. The Subcommittee welcomed the publication by the Inter-agency Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services of the *Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services*. It noted that the Task Force was now focusing on promotion of the Manual, inter alia through the development of compilation guidance material. It was also developing an appropriate framework and guidelines for the compilation of data related to the international movement of individuals to provide services (Mode 4 provision of services in the terminology of the General Agreement on Trade in Services), which was not well covered in the Manual.

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 4 (E/2003/24-E/CN.3/2003/34)*, chap. II, sect. A, para. 2(b)(i).

5. The Subcommittee welcomed the outcome of the Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians held in 2003, including the revision of the international standards on consumer price indexes (CPI) and household income and expenditure surveys (HIES). As HIES was the single most important collection vehicle for poverty statistics, the Subcommittee noted that the revision would facilitate better design and conduct of HIES, leading to better understanding of poverty. It further noted that the revision of CPI standards would contribute to more accurate measurement of the costs faced by different population groups, including the poor. In that connection, the Subcommittee noted with interest that the Philippine statistical system, spearheaded by the National Statistical Coordination Board, was organizing an International Conference on Official Poverty Statistics: Methodology and Comparability, to be held in Manila from 4 to 6 October 2004.

6. The Subcommittee noted, and welcomed, the positive impact that the Millennium Development Goals and their associated indicators had had on international and national statistics. International agencies, especially those responsible for monitoring the achievement of the Goals, were demonstrating improved collaboration and coordination and paying higher attention to statistical capacity-building. While the availability of data had improved for some Goal indicators, the process had exposed shortcomings in many indicators, especially those related to poverty, gender and the environment. It was generally agreed that complementary indicators were needed to better analyse progress on the Goals, such as those proposed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) for indicator 11, the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. The Subcommittee welcomed the recent publication by the secretariat of a wall chart on the availability of Goal indicator data in the region and recommended that it be used as a tool for advocating support and resources for statistical capacity-building.

7. The Subcommittee noted that any changes to Goal indicators would be held in abeyance until the Secretary-General had delivered his five-year progress report in 2005. However, with the availability of data remaining poor and technical and coordination issues abundant, continued global discussion and review of indicators was necessary. The Subcommittee was informed that the latest report of the Advisory Committee on Indicators to the United Nations Statistical Commission focused on commenting on Goal indicators that were particularly problematic and suggested alternative indicators. The Subcommittee noted that at the national level, the adjustment of monitoring of the Goals to suit local circumstances was another issue that required further attention.

8. In reviewing activities undertaken and progress made towards revising reference classifications, including the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities, the Central Product Classification, and the International Standard Classification of Occupations, the Subcommittee recommended that each statistical office consider establishing a separate classifications and standards unit, or at least nominate a classifications focal point to ensure continuity of work and to maintain contacts in that area between the country and responsible international agencies.

9. Noting that at its thirty-fourth session the Statistical Commission had endorsed the scope and principal mechanisms for updating the System of National Accounts (SNA) in 2008,² the Subcommittee emphasized that it was important that the process draw on the experiences of countries in the region in implementing the 1993 SNA.

B. Social statistics

1. Disability statistics

10. The Subcommittee considered the item on the basis of secretariat document E/ESCAP/SOS/2, which provided information on some global and regional developments in disability measurement and reviewed the problems connected with data on disability and their sources in the region. The presentation by the secretariat highlighted the strategies outlined in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific which specifically recommended that Governments in the region should develop their systems of disability-related data collection and adopt international standards for disability measurement. The two main sources of international standards, the United Nations Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics and the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) were as yet little known and applied in the region.

11. The Subcommittee noted that ICF, which had been adopted by all WHO member countries in 2002, provided a much-needed conceptual framework for disability and health which countries could use for disability statistics collection, research activities, social policy development and as a clinical tool for needs assessment and rehabilitation. The fact that it was a multi-purpose classification intended for a wide range of uses made it very complex and at the same time flexible. The ICF framework provided a standard language for the description and measurement of disability and health which enabled comparisons to be made across disciplines, countries and time.

12. The Subcommittee was informed about the Workshop on Improving Disability Data for Policy Use which the secretariat had organized in September 2003. One of the substantial outcomes was a new two-year project on improvement of disability statistics and measurement in support of the Biwako Millennium Framework, which had received funding from the Republic of Korea. The Subcommittee noted that the project, which was scheduled to begin in May 2004, aimed to improve disability statistics in a core number of countries by providing training in disability standards and measurement; by building awareness and promoting ICF at the national and subnational levels; by developing and testing ICF-based disability questions for application in survey instruments; and by developing training tools for use at the national level.

² Ibid., chap. III, sect. A, para. 2.

13. The Subcommittee expressed strong support for the disability measurement efforts undertaken by the secretariat, and several international and regional organizations, including WHO, ILO, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the United Nations Statistics Division offered their collaboration. The Subcommittee noted that the WHO South-East Asian Regional Office was trying to establish a WHO collaborating centre for the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems and ICF in its region and was intending to undertake an ICF inventory in member countries.

14. The United Nations Statistics Division welcomed the ESCAP disability project and informed the Subcommittee about its work in the field of disability measurement. A recent review, conducted by a United Nations expert group meeting on setting the scope of social statistics, had recommended that the collection and dissemination of disability statistics be included as part of the regular reporting done by national statistical authorities to the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*. ESCAP members were invited to take part in the first round of a trial data collection of disability statistics for the *Yearbook*. As an example of how social statistics frameworks could incorporate and mainstream issues such as poverty, disability and ageing into a unified whole, attention was drawn to the fact that poverty covered deprivation, which would have an impact on overall levels of human function, activity and participation. The disability concept proposed in ICF was also defined in terms of reduced function, limited activity and participation.

15. The Subcommittee discussed some of the difficulties that were experienced in countries for lack of a standard definition of disability, as a result of which data from different national sources could not be combined and used together. The fact that most countries in the region used an impairment concept as a basis for defining their disabled populations meant that often only the most severely disabled were counted and disability caused by ageing or chronic illness was not included. An ICF-based definition, with appropriate survey instruments, would help to ensure that all forms of disability were accounted for.

16. The most common sources of disability information, such as censuses, disability surveys and registers, were also discussed. The Subcommittee agreed that each source had advantages and disadvantages and that countries should consider using more than one source to meet their information needs and to check the reliability of data. It noted that while disability information collected through a census could never be very detailed it could provide prevalence measures for smaller areas. Dedicated household disability surveys, however, which focused on disability, participation, daily difficulties and caregivers, were able to provide more detailed and relevant information for policy use. Such data would also be more accurate, but the surveys were costly to carry out and might not provide subnational data. Disability information from registers tended to be very incomplete and usually only covered specific disabilities.

17. The Subcommittee was informed that undertaking disability surveys gave public recognition to the plight of disabled persons and contributed to awareness-raising. As a result of information obtained from such surveys, it was easier to convince public authorities to improve facilities and change public policy.

18. The Subcommittee also noted that ILO had undertaken a survey of the data collected in countries on disabled workers and was currently analysing their employment situation. The International Social Security Association based in ILO had a database which included disability among many other variables.

19. The Subcommittee noted the considerable need for training in disability concepts and in ICF. The secretariat was encouraged to continue its work on disability measurement, in partnership with other organizations, and to include as many countries as possible in the training activities.

2. Health statistics

20. The Subcommittee considered the item on the basis of document E/ESCAP/SOS/6, containing the report of the Friends of the Chair of the Statistical Commission on health statistics. The report was introduced by the representative of New Zealand, a member of the Friends of the Chair group. The Subcommittee was informed that the topic of coordination and cooperation on statistical matters between WHO and other international organizations had been under discussion in several inter-agency forums. While the prime focus of the report was on inter-agency collaboration and coordination between WHO and national statistical offices, the report also addressed the equally important issue of national cooperation and coordination of health statistics.

21. The Subcommittee was informed about the findings in the report and noted its three recommendations: that a WHO/Statistical Commission working group should develop a memorandum of understanding between the Statistical Commission and WHO to ensure that health statistics were better integrated into international mainstream statistics; that closer collaboration at the regional level should be encouraged between WHO regional offices and other regional organizations, national statistical offices and national ministries of health; and that a working group should explore the challenges of establishing international microdata sets on health for epidemiological studies. The Subcommittee was concerned that the draft memorandum of understanding, as currently presented, was far too detailed.

22. The Subcommittee agreed that coordination issues were a serious concern in health statistics, but was given to understand that the new WHO leadership had taken a proactive and positive stand in addressing that issue. The inadequate coordination and cooperation within countries between the ministries of health and the national statistical offices had thus emerged as a more urgent concern for many countries.

23. The representative of WHO agreed that there was a need to strengthen coordination at the national, regional and international levels, and suggested that the Millennium Development Goals were a good tool for developing partnerships, since the data for the many health indicators were provided by different institutions.

24. The Subcommittee was informed about new WHO Health Metrics Network, which would be launched in May 2004 and would bring together countries, international agencies, and bilateral and multilateral donors to meet the health challenges of the twenty-first century. Those challenges would require building stronger health information systems which were intended to enhance the availability, quality and use of health information at the local, national and global levels, thus bringing about improvements in health outcomes.

3. Integrating gender into statistics

25. The Subcommittee considered the item on the basis of two secretariat papers, a note on integrating unpaid work into national policies, E/ESCAP/SOS/4, which was prepared as an information brief about the new ESCAP handbook *Integrating Unpaid Work into National Policies* published in December 2003, and a note on the current and future work of ESCAP on engendering statistics (E/ESCAP/SOS/1). The handbook was available to Subcommittee participants at the session.

26. The Subcommittee heard that the Handbook had been prepared by ESCAP under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Asia-Pacific Gender Equality Network project in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and other partners. It noted that the Handbook provided a general framework for time-use data collection, drawing from country experiences. It also recognized that time-use data helped to measure the unpaid work performed within and outside the production boundary of the 1993 SNA.

27. The Subcommittee took note of the statistical activities on gender that had been implemented by ESCAP in 2003. It supported the secretariat's view that presenting statistical data by women and men was only a small part of the engendering process. In order to truly engender statistics, the process needed to start at the early stages of planning and go through the full review of data collection instruments from a gender perspective.

28. The Subcommittee was also informed that the secretariat was planning to prepare a new regional publication relating to gender in 2005 which would contain statistical gender profiles for each country. A similar publication prepared by the secretariat in 1999 had utilized the 1990 census round data, and had become outdated.

29. In expressing appreciation of the work of ESCAP on engendering statistics, the Subcommittee urged national statistical offices to support the publication by the secretariat of a regional gender

profile on the occasion of “Beijing+10”.³ The Subcommittee welcomed the intention of ECO to extend its full support to the work of ESCAP in that field.

30. The Subcommittee was informed about the various sources used and time-use surveys and other initiatives undertaken by some countries for engendering national statistics. In spite of the momentum created at the national level to produce sex-disaggregated statistical data, difficulties still existed. The Subcommittee agreed that engendering national statistics was not an end in itself but an ongoing process in which all stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels should collaborate. Given the high costs involved in time-use surveys, it suggested that ESCAP might need to explore lower-cost versions of time-use surveys, following the example of Eurostat.

31. The Subcommittee noted that the concept of economic activity introduced in the 1993 SNA, which recognized many unpaid production activities, had not been utilized in labour force surveys in many countries of the region; that could be one of the causes of inconsistencies between the data produced in labour force surveys and time-use surveys.

32. The Subcommittee was informed that the Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, held in 2003, had agreed on the principle of mainstreaming gender in labour force statistics, and had prepared a checklist of good practices to that end. ILO confirmed that it used the 1993 SNA production boundary as the basis for defining economic activity but that the revised boundary was still not universally applied.

C. Poverty statistics

1. Issues in poverty measurement

33. The Subcommittee considered the item on the basis of several inputs. A note by the secretariat, E/ESCAP/SOS/17, outlined the utility of panel surveys for poverty measurement and discussed selected issues of concern in their planning and design. The Subcommittee also heard presentations on a Pacific perspective on poverty measurement by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and a progress report on the *Handbook on Poverty Statistics: Concepts, Methods and Policy Use* by the United Nations Statistics Division.

Review of panel surveys

34. The Subcommittee noted that by adding the time dimension, the detailed and useful data at the individual level provided by panel surveys pushed poverty analysis to a broader and advanced frontier: analysing income and consumption dynamics, determining the causes of poverty and controlling for unobserved heterogeneity to obtain more accurate estimates.

³ Review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, held in 2000, conducted during the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York from 28 February to 11 March 2005.

35. The Subcommittee recognized that panel surveys would be more costly and complex than cross-section surveys, and thus imposed several challenges in their planning and design. Strategies and techniques to deal with the challenges included such planning and management elements as reconciling long-term needs and short-term resources, ensuring the comparability of measures from wave to wave, combining longitudinal analysis with cross-sectional analysis, documenting survey activities and disseminating outputs in a timely fashion. Design elements included minimizing the interview burden, instituting a rotating panel design and setting up rules to trace sample units. The Subcommittee noted, however, that those strategies and techniques had their own constraints and that solutions continued to require modification and improvement.

36. The Subcommittee observed that most existing panel surveys had been undertaken by academics or research institutions as research projects, partly because of the cost. It noted that the application of cohort analysis could achieve some of the benefits that panel surveys delivered, at lesser cost. The Subcommittee suggested that in view of the complexity of the methodology, countries that intended to conduct panel surveys in the near future should try to request advice from others which had already gained experience in that field.

Pacific perspective on poverty measurement

37. The Subcommittee heard a presentation on the Pacific perspective on poverty measurement. It was informed that if measured only by “food and shelter”, poverty was not considered a serious problem in the Pacific. That was because most Pacific island countries and territories were comparatively small with fertile land areas and beneficial climates, both supporting food production; had access to plentiful marine resources; and possessed a very strong culture of family support networks. As a result, households enjoyed relatively secure access to land and food and undertook significant non-market activities. There were poverty problems, however, if poverty was viewed from a multidimensional perspective. For example, taking into account such factors as life expectancy, health, the quality of life, and opportunities, issues of concern were poor diet, high rates of diabetes and obesity in some of the countries, the incidence of non-communicable diseases and lack of job opportunities. An additional relevant factor was vulnerability linked to the natural setting, such as cyclones and distance factors.

38. The Subcommittee was informed that much effort would be needed to resolve issues of international comparison with other parts of the world, as evidenced by the contradiction of obviously “well-fed” people who earned cash incomes of less than \$1 or \$2 a day. Measurement of the value of non-marketed (subsistence) consumption and adjustment for purchasing power parity relativities were two areas of high priority. While subsistence production was often undervalued in household income and expenditure surveys, purchasing power parities had not been calculated adequately for any Pacific country or territory. To date, Fiji was the only one enlisted in the International Comparison Programme (ICP), and continued to require sufficient funding support to participate fully.

Progress report on the handbook on poverty statistics project

39. The representative of the United Nations Statistics Division presented an update on the project of the Division, in collaboration with others, including the Expert Group on Poverty Statistics (the Rio Group), to draft a handbook on poverty statistics. The purpose of the handbook was to satisfy both national policy needs and international requirements for poverty statistics. Thus far, a Steering Committee had been formed, a provisional annotated outline of the handbook had been prepared, and a website had been set up to publicize current and future activities related to the handbook (<<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/poverty/default.htm>>).

40. The Subcommittee noted that the Steering Committee comprised 10 eminent experts who would guide the process of preparing the handbook. Their primary responsibilities were to ensure that it was useful to developing countries, scientifically sound and built on expertise from both academia and government institutions, especially statistical offices.

41. The Subcommittee heard that future plans for the production of the handbook included four regional workshops, including one for Asia and the Pacific. In addition, an expert group meeting would be conducted as part of the final review process.

2. Regional action plan on poverty statistics

42. The Subcommittee discussed the document: "Regional Action Plan on Poverty Statistics: Action Plan for Improving Poverty Statistics and Monitoring in the ESCAP Region" (E/ESCAP/SOS/9 and Corr.1), comprising a selection of ideas and activities that could form part of a Regional Action Plan on Poverty Statistics. The paper was a revised version of a similar one presented for discussion in the Committee on Poverty Reduction, which had suggested that the Subcommittee on Statistics be given the mandate to prepare such a plan.

43. The Subcommittee noted that, since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, there had been an increasing demand on national statistical systems to provide data output for indicators of well-being with greater frequency and at greater disaggregation. The Subcommittee recognized that capacity-building and technical cooperation were essential to enable countries to respond to those diverse requirements with very different resource bases. The Subcommittee welcomed the concept of an action plan that would help countries to build their capacity in measuring and monitoring the achievement of poverty reduction and other Millennium Development Goals.

44. The Subcommittee noted that various parallel action plans and programmes on poverty statistics, monitoring and analysis were being proposed by different international and regional bodies. It felt that those plans should be implemented in a coordinated fashion and considered that ESCAP could play a vital role as a coordination secretariat on poverty statistics and statistical capacity-building in the region. Such coordination might include an electronic information exchange centre,

initially with a clearing-house website to provide information on activities and plans of countries and donors and eventually providing links to databases and research reports.

45. The Subcommittee noted that the draft action plan was broad and ambitious, touching on numerous activities which, while valuable to member countries, would not be the agenda of ESCAP alone but should desirably involve other development agencies. The Subcommittee also noted that the viability of an action plan rested in large measure on the means of financing the activities and coordination of regional efforts. While ESCAP was not primarily a funding organization, it nevertheless had the capability to mobilize funds and could be effective in crystallizing a regional initiative, provided that member countries accorded it sufficient priority.

46. Several countries made clear the specific needs they faced that governed their expectations of ESCAP support. They expressed strong interest in learning how to use or revamp their household income/consumption surveys for poverty data collection and estimation, and in improving their skills to conduct analysis.

47. The Subcommittee pointed out that the gender dimension of poverty should be addressed. Gender should be built into the statistical system as a whole, and in particular it was noted that household income/consumption surveys would need some revision to incorporate gender dimensions.

48. The Subcommittee stressed that it was important conceptually to separate poverty measurement at the global and national levels. It noted that while the \$1 a day measure could serve as a useful proxy for the key poverty indicator of the Goal indicators at the global level, at the national level it was not generally as useful or used, in part because of the lack of full transparency of the international methodology.

49. The Subcommittee recalled that, as noted during the first session of the Committee on Poverty Reduction, the action plan was not one designed to monitor poverty alleviation efforts or measures at the national level.⁴ It was a capacity-building endeavour at the regional level to enable countries to take up tools for their own use, as they saw fit.

50. The Subcommittee welcomed the presentation made by the representative of the Philippines on the plan for the International Conference on Official Poverty Statistics, to be held in Manila in October 2004. The proposal for the Conference had arisen in response to the many approaches to poverty measurement and the range of measures used in different countries and institutions. The main objective of the Conference was to establish a convergence mechanism to enable countries to discuss and assess the preparedness of national statistical offices to generate official poverty measures; it would also attempt to formulate an integrated workplan to institutionalize the regular compilation of those statistics for the periodic assessment of progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

⁴ See E/ESCAP/1306, para. 8.

51. The Subcommittee decided that the ESCAP secretariat should develop a revised action plan and that the following steps should be taken:

(a) A Steering Group should be formed to oversee the elaboration of the action plan, and should include Subcommittee representatives from the various subregions of ESCAP;

(b) An Inter-Secretariat Working Group should be formed to help ESCAP to develop the Plan and its activities;

(c) The action plan, to be elaborated under the oversight of the Group, should clarify and coordinate the respective roles of the various players in the region with regard to capacity-building in poverty statistics and relevant Goal indicators. The various players should be consulted in the process of developing the plan;

(d) The Subcommittee should advise the Committee on Poverty Reduction of that decision, and should submit the action plan to the Committee prior to its second session.

52. The plan should clearly identify priority activities. Among those, the Subcommittee identified the following:

(a) Emphasizing the sharing of know-how, particularly on best practices in poverty measurement at the national level, to meet the needs of the varied approaches to the measurement of poverty that were employed by different countries, and even within large countries by subnational regions. That could be achieved through a number of means, including good practice manuals, workshops, conferences and the proposed website;

(b) Conducting a census of progress in compiling Goal indicators in each of the member countries;

(c) Fostering a series of technical meetings, seminars and workshops between users and producers, in collaboration with other regional, intergovernmental and specialized agencies, such as the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), UNDP, the World Bank Institute and its Poverty Analysis and Data Initiative programme, ECO, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) technical assistance programme in statistical capacity-building, and regional initiatives, including the International Conference on Official Poverty Statistics;

(d) Contributing to the United Nations Statistics Division's handbook on poverty statistics, particularly by providing insights into the regional experience, rather than by preparing an ESCAP handbook on the subject;

(e) Developing alternative measures and channelling discussion to adapt indicators to local requirements;

(f) Establishing a regional pool of "volunteer consultants" to facilitate the effective use of technical assistance funds;

(g) Studying and initiating collaboration on selected technical topics, including poverty mapping; the use of household surveys to estimate consumption based on subsistence activities; the analytical framework in which poverty indicators were to be used; and enhanced collaboration with analysts, including discussion of providing access to micro data.

D. Economic statistics

1. Statistics on the informal sector and the non-observed economy

53. The Subcommittee considered the topic on the basis of three presentations made by ILO, the Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (the Delhi Group) and the secretariat. The paper prepared by ILO (E/ESCAP/SOS/11) summarized the international statistical definition of the informal sector as adopted by the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1993 and incorporated in the revised 1993 SNA. That definition had been criticized on the grounds that it might omit certain categories of workers, such as casual workers, outworkers and subcontractors, thus missing important aspects of informalization. With a view to complementing measures of employment in the informal sector, ILO had developed the statistical definition of informal employment that had been endorsed by the Seventeenth Conference in 2003. The Subcommittee noted that the two concepts complemented each other, “informal sector” being enterprise-based and “informal employment” being job-based: all types of working activities could therefore be classified in a two-way matrix by type of production unit and type of job (according to status in employment). The possibilities and limitations of labour force surveys as a source of data on employment in the informal sector and informal employment were also discussed in the ILO paper and examples of possible survey questions were described to illustrate how the information could be obtained.

54. The Subcommittee was informed about the outcomes of the seventh meeting of the Delhi Group, which had been organized and hosted by the Government of India in New Delhi from 2 to 4 February 2004. In total 45 experts participated in the meeting, with representatives from six countries and delegates from international organizations and NGOs. The agenda had been articulated in three technical sessions: defining informal employment and methodologies for its measurement; improving the quality of informal sector statistics - country experiences; and measurement of the informal economy through income and expenditure surveys. A comprehensive review of national statistics on the informal sector had been provided to the Group, with an analysis of the definitions, characteristics of data sources and indicators for each country. At the national level and without taking establishment surveys into account, only 6 surveys in Asia and 32 worldwide had been conducted using definitions conforming to international standards. In addition, more than 10 years after the adoption of the international definition of the informal sector, the compilation and calculation of harmonized indicators and estimates remained difficult and hazardous.

55. The Subcommittee was also informed about the future work programme of the Delhi Group. The main activities foreseen included the identification, definition and development of a core set of indicators on informal sector and informal employment; the operationalization of the definition of informal employment adopted by the Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians; the development of a checklist for the evaluation of the data quality of surveys on the informal sector and informal employment; further work on the measurement of the contribution of informal sector/informal employment to GDP; and conceptual and analytical work on measuring the links between poverty and informal employment. The Subcommittee also considered that the development and use of the Trial International Classification of Activities for Time-use Statistics could help in the harmonization process between statistics on the formal and informal sectors.

56. The Subcommittee noted the secretariat's plans to hold a workshop on the non-observed economy jointly with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), tentatively scheduled to be held in Bangkok from 11 to 14 May 2004. The Subcommittee noted the collaboration of ECO in that workshop. The need for such a workshop was identified by the Committee on Statistics at its thirteenth session; in addition, it was one of the recommendations made at the Subregional Workshop on Implementation of the 1993 SNA, held in Ankara in October 2002. The Subcommittee welcomed the draft agenda and observed that the initiative was well-timed, especially as the share of the non-observed economy was estimated to exceed 35 per cent of total GDP in some countries. It noted with appreciation that the Australian Bureau of Statistics would provide as a resource person the editor of the joint OECD/ILO/International Monetary Fund/Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States publication *Measuring the Non-observed Economy: A Handbook*, which had become the main reference document on the topic. Other resource persons would be provided by OECD and the secretariat.

57. The Subcommittee noted that the secretariat had not yet secured sufficient funding for the workshop and that it might have to be postponed to a later date. In that connection, the number of countries to be invited and the possibility of holding a subregional session for the Pacific would depend on the amount of resources that became available. The Subcommittee welcomed the possibility that other regional agencies might co-sponsor the workshop and contribute to its financing.

58. The Subcommittee noted the serious difficulties that national statistical offices faced in estimating some components of the non-observed economy, especially illegal production. In fact, some members expressed significant reservations about the inclusion of illegal activities within GDP, although they would not necessarily object to trying to obtain some estimates of the extent of those activities in their own right. The Subcommittee also expressed the view that greater collaboration with tax authorities on statistical matters would contribute to enhancing the quality and coverage of national accounts.

2. Small business surveys

59. The Subcommittee had before it an invited document, E/ESCAP/SOS/15, prepared by the General Statistical Office of Viet Nam. It was informed that in response to requirements of policymakers who had adopted measures for supporting the growth of small and medium enterprises, the Office had included the improvement of business surveys in the long-term programme for the development of Vietnamese statistics. From 2001, a regular business survey had been conducted on a yearly basis covering the whole economy except agriculture. Data collection had been carried out in two ways, according to the size of the enterprise: self-reporting had been used for large enterprises, whereas personal interviews had been conducted for smaller enterprises, in view of the fact that they were less likely to be able to fill in the questionnaire correctly on their own. One of the major problems encountered in conducting the business survey concerned the insufficient accuracy of the data collected, partly due to misunderstanding of the questions and partly to statistical fatigue in answering a long questionnaire. In that respect, appropriate methodologies for editing as well as for imputation of non-responses had to be developed. Difficulties also arose in keeping the business register up to date. The Subcommittee invited the countries of the region to share good practices in the design and implementation of business surveys.

3. International Comparison Programme

60. The representative of ADB briefed the Subcommittee on the activities that were being conducted in preparation for ICP for Asia and the Pacific. Globally, 158 countries were participating in the current round of ICP, including 36 from the ESCAP region. In the Asia-Pacific comparison coordinated by ADB, there were 23 participating countries which had completed their respective product lists for food, clothing and footwear, with the assistance of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. They would begin collecting prices on those items in July 2004 and on the rest of household consumption items by October 2004, with the exception of housing, health and education which, together with government consumption and capital formation, would be compiled by mid-2005, resources permitting.

61. The Subcommittee noted that Asia and the Pacific was the only region that was on track with regard to preparations for carrying out ICP, mainly due to the strong support that national statistical offices in the region were providing. The progress of ICP preparations had been achieved with limited resources and the Subcommittee noted that the funding shortfall was highest in the Asian and Pacific region. The Subcommittee appreciated the fact that the World Bank was making efforts to secure additional resources for ICP work. The Subcommittee also noted that the drafts of the first six of the nine chapters of the *ICP Handbook* were ready, but questioned whether it would cover imports and exports of goods and services. It also expressed concern that Toolpak, the software for handling ICP data, might not be ready on time. In that regard, it welcomed the fact that Toolpak would be tested in a number of countries and that participating countries would be introduced to Toolpak in the

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subregional workshops for trainers of price collectors to be held shortly in Kuala Lumpur and in Goa, India.

62. The Subcommittee also noted that exploratory studies on poverty PPPs were being carried out in six countries, including some in the region, and that the ICP Executive Board had endorsed the inclusion of Pacific island countries in ICP with a reduced consumption list, subject to the availability of additional funding. It also observed with satisfaction that ICP would lead to capacity-building in the areas of CPI and national accounts.

4. Measuring the information society

63. The Subcommittee considered the item on the basis of document E/ESCAP/SOS/14, entitled “Statistical implications for the Asia-Pacific region of the World Summit on the Information Society”. It noted that OECD had taken the lead in the measurement of the information society but affirmed that work in that area should go beyond the OECD membership and involve all countries. The Subcommittee agreed that any framework of indicators designed to measure the information society should take into account policy issues so as to give higher country relevance to the selected indicators. In commenting on the possible use of composite indices in measuring the information society, and recalling earlier discussions on the use of composite indices in other fields of measurement, the Subcommittee agreed that composite indices would only supplement, and not replace, an internationally agreed framework of indicators.

64. The Subcommittee noted that the issue of a digital divide within a society applied not only to different socio-economic groups of the population but also to the business sector, where, for example, a small rural business might have fewer connectivity opportunities than a large urban business. The Subcommittee suggested that proposals for a framework might include appropriate indicators that could capture that dimension of the divide also. It further noted that security issues would be important considerations, since the economic life and human activities of an information society were vulnerable to threats such as computer viruses, junk mail and other undesirable “electronic diseases”. Accordingly, statistical activities might have to be organized to provide information that could assist policy and operational matters in such respects.

65. The Subcommittee noted that there was high interest in the region in doing work in that area of statistics, and voiced the need for support by ESCAP to countries that were starting to explore those measurement issues. In particular, support was needed because any information society was affected by rapid technological changes as it evolved, and consequently, statistical tools such as classifications had to be adjusted to keep pace with those changes. In that regard, considering the overall level of development of information and communication technology (ICT) in the region, it was felt that work should concentrate on measures of e-readiness and e-usage. Particular support as well as the sharing of know-how and country practices was felt to be needed in the area of the

measurement of e-commerce. The Subcommittee's attention was also drawn to some valuation issues related to software.

66. The Subcommittee was informed by the ASEAN secretariat that it had already started work, through a dedicated ICT unit, on the construction of a framework of indicators. That work had been initiated following requests coming from policymakers. The Subcommittee noted also that in the ASEAN context it was felt that statisticians and policymakers should work together in order to identify and delimit relevant areas for measurement from what was potentially measurable, and that a workshop involving both producers and users of ICT statistics was being organized. The Subcommittee was informed that ESCAP plans in the field of ICT and information society measurement included the organization of an ICT-related interdivisional technical workshop, as recommended at the statistical side event at the World Summit on the Information Society. However, funding would need to be secured for that activity.

E. Statistical training, including the role of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

67. The Subcommittee had before it document E/ESCAP/SOS/10 on the overall strategies and approaches to training in official statistics of SIAP and its training activities in the academic years 2004-2009.

68. The Subcommittee was informed that given the increasing demands for the SIAP training courses and its limited staff resources, the Institute was endeavouring to effectively prioritize its activities in line with the thematic focuses of ESCAP, pressing requirements from global and regional conferences and the expressed needs of countries in the region. It noted with satisfaction that SIAP had been expanding its programme of outreach courses and had also been increasingly strengthening partnerships with other international agencies and national statistical offices which provided resource persons and in-kind support to SIAP courses.

69. The Subcommittee expressed appreciation of the fact that SIAP had embarked on its key statistical training coordination role in the region, in close collaboration with national training institutes and international agencies.

70. The Subcommittee expressed deep gratitude to the Government of Japan for its generous and continuing contribution to SIAP, both in cash and in kind, including the awarding of fellowships for training courses in Japan. While recognizing that the approach of conducting training by the Institute complemented by technical assistance from the ESCAP Statistics Division and multilateral organizations was effective, it congratulated SIAP on having continuously developed strategies to respond optimally to the training needs of national statistical offices in the region.

71. The Subcommittee acknowledged the importance of SIAP in building skills on analysis and interpretation while continuing its delivery of training on wide-ranging, foundational courses on

statistics. It also pointed to the need for the Institute to articulate more effectively its ongoing efforts on engendering statistics in its training activities.

72. With respect to the annual training needs survey conducted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Subcommittee urged countries to express their demand for the Tokyo Metropolitan Area-based courses clearly through their ministries of foreign affairs and other agencies involved in coordinating overseas development assistance funds.

73. The Subcommittee welcomed the expressions of support and cooperation with regard to training activities from international and regional institutions, including ILO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, WHO, ECO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, for the Institute and ESCAP. Common to the modalities of support was the provision of technical expertise and materials.

74. The Subcommittee expressed the view that building capacity for the Millennium Development Goals had to extend not only to the development of national statistical offices but also to the line ministries, such as those concerned with health and education. It urged the Institute to be more active in pursuing the development of e-learning, while accepting the technical difficulties present in several countries in the region.

F. Reports for the attention of the Subcommittee

1. Matters arising from the first session of the Committee on Poverty Reduction

75. The Subcommittee considered the item on the basis of secretariat document E/ESCAP/SOS/12, which summarized the main substantive points arising from the first session of the Committee of Poverty Reduction. The report contained several recommendations broadly relating to poverty measurement and also laid out some other points for the Subcommittee's consideration, regarding data requirements, coordination and comparability.

76. The Subcommittee discussed the use of the \$1 a day poverty measure versus national poverty lines. It was recalled that the Committee, in the report on its first session, had clearly stated that "the national poverty line used by Governments in their poverty eradication efforts was considered to have more operational validity than the international line, which had been created simply for international comparison and as part of the international endeavour to mobilize international resources to assist the poor countries". Countries were advised not to view the international poverty line as being in conflict with a variety of national measures which would provide a more comprehensive picture of poverty in the country concerned.

77. The view was also expressed that the international \$1 a day measure was a reality which could not be changed easily. The Subcommittee nevertheless agreed that since the national statistical offices did not take part in the calculation of the international poverty estimates carried out by the World Bank, they should be informed about how those were calculated. Full transparency on all

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aspects of the international methodology would enable statistical offices to be able to explain how a given estimate was arrived at.

78. The representative of the United Nations Development Fund for Women requested that the Subcommittee, in view of its technical expertise and capability, address the issues involved in measuring the feminization of poverty. The Subcommittee's attention was also called to a problem, often encountered, whereby research institutions carried out subnational surveys with suspect sample designs. The problem was not limited to developing countries and should be brought to the attention of both the national and international statistical communities. The Subcommittee noted that donors funding that kind of research should seek the advice of the national statistical offices before embarking on statistical surveys.

2. Report on major statistical activities of the secretariat

79. The Subcommittee took note of the activities, outputs and resource utilization of the secretariat since the thirteenth session of the Committee on Statistics, as contained in document E/ESCAP/SOS/5.

80. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction that the current post occupancy in the Statistics Division was better than it had been for many years. The availability since August 2003 of a second regional adviser, in economic statistics, and the provision in the 2004-2005 budget of an additional junior Professional post had helped the resource situation.

81. In contrast with those positive developments, the resource base had been decaying in some other areas. The Subcommittee expressed regret at the strategic funding decision of the United Nations Population Fund to withdraw the ESCAP advisory posts in demographic statistics and data processing. It expressed the hope that a position covering those basic areas could be reconsidered as the 2010 round of censuses drew closer. The Subcommittee expressed further concern regarding the general steady decline in extrabudgetary technical cooperation funds that had been available for statistics since 1998, although some of the reduction in bilateral funding had been compensated for to some extent by multilateral and regular budget technical cooperation funds.

82. The Subcommittee welcomed the initiative of the secretariat to review its information services function and looked forward to seeing improved statistical data products and delivery systems. Noting that the conventional readership surveys attached to publications were no longer the best instrument for gauging client feedback, the Subcommittee suggested that the secretariat should use direct contacts with users, new technology and other means to obtain more reliable and unbiased reader feedback. It encouraged the secretariat to explore what other kinds of value-adding information services it could provide within its existing resources. Those might include web-based services providing information about activities, meeting calendars, and contact and other information about statistical organizations in the region.

3. Report on major statistical activities of regional and international institutions

83. The Subcommittee noted that the major statistical activities of regional and international institutions had been examined under previous items of the agenda.

G. Programme matters

Review of programme performance for 2002-2003; proposed programme changes for 2004-2005; and proposed strategic framework for 2006-2007

84. The Subcommittee had before it document E/ESCAP/SOS/16. It noted that the recently ended biennium was the first to take account of the results-based management initiative launched as part of the reforms introduced by the Secretary-General. It took note of the consolidated statement of accomplishments for the Statistics subprogramme in 2002-2003 along with the full accomplishment accounts for each of the four expected accomplishments in the biennium. The Subcommittee also endorsed a programme change for incorporation into the programme of work, 2004-2005, to accommodate the envisaged High-level Conference of Asia-Pacific Statisticians (APEX 1), tentatively scheduled for January 2005.

85. In considering the proposed strategic framework for 2006-2007, the Subcommittee noted that the document was still at the preparatory stage. It was suggested that the envisaged Bureau of the Subcommittee provide comments on the overall objective, strategy and expected accomplishments as well as indicate possible priority areas of substantive work within the context of the overall strategic framework.

86. It was suggested that for the implementation of the strategic framework for 2006-2007, ESCAP should work closely with ECO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, in addition to the other agencies mentioned.

H. Arrangements for future sessions of the Subcommittee

87. Arrangements for future sessions of the Subcommittee were reviewed on the basis of a note by the secretariat, E/ESCAP/SOS/3. The document discussed the issues of the periodicity of the Subcommittee and the desirability of establishing a Bureau to address the question of governance between sessions of the Subcommittee. The Committee on Poverty Reduction, with support from national statistical offices, decided on biennial meetings for the Subcommittee, as the organization of annual sessions would entail logistical and reporting difficulties and alternative forums were available in which official statisticians in Asia and the Pacific could meet (notably the envisaged APEX conferences). The second session of the Subcommittee was thus expected to be held in 2006.

88. The Subcommittee agreed on the constitution of a Bureau to review programme matters, to follow up on recommendations between Subcommittee sessions, to provide guidance to the secretariat's work and also to function as the steering committee for the envisaged APEX 1

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Conference. The Subcommittee felt that the membership should be maintained at six, so as to facilitate balanced representation of all subregions. The officers of the Subcommittee session agreed to take the matter forward.

I. Other matters

89. Under the above item, the Subcommittee reviewed document E/ESCAP/SOS/13, entitled "Forum for Asia/Pacific Statisticians", prepared by the former Chairperson of the Committee on Statistics. The note proposed an "APEX" forum in which chief statisticians from the region would be able to work collaboratively and discuss statistical issues of common interest.

90. The Subcommittee recalled that at the thirteenth session of the Committee on Statistics, members had been concerned that the new ESCAP conference structure might not provide adequately for collaborative work on a range of statistical issues of common interest. They felt that there was a strong need for the maintenance of an "APEX" forum of official statisticians in the region to influence national decision-making as well as to provide regional input into global discussions at the United Nations Statistical Commission. Subsequently, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP had agreed in principle that ESCAP would host such an "APEX" forum.

91. The Subcommittee agreed to the proposal that the format for the conference should be similar to that being used by the Conference of European Statisticians, that is, a series of seminars on selected topics. In order to contain costs, the proceedings would be in English only. The Subcommittee agreed that the first conference would be held back to back with the 2005 SIAP/ESCAP management seminar to be held in Bangkok in January 2005. The target audience would be heads of national statistical offices or their deputies. The Subcommittee requested ESCAP to provide meeting facilities for the conference, to issue the invitations and to utilize its website to provide a repository for discussion papers and information about the conference.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening and duration of the session

92. The Subcommittee on Statistics held its first session in Bangkok from 18 to 20 February 2004.

93. The session was opened by Mr. Surapong Suebwonglee, Minister of Information, Communication and Technology of Thailand.

94. The Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer-in-Charge, a.i. of the secretariat, and the Minister of Information, Communication and Technology addressed the Subcommittee.

95. On 20 February 2004, the Subcommittee held a panel discussion on the theme "Towards more service-oriented national statistical offices". The discussion focused on three topics:

- (1) How to cater for researchers who need access to microdata
- (2) How to make statistical products more accessible to users by including analysis, textual highlights and graphical material
- (3) How to partner with the information media and how to provide them with data in easily usable formats

B. Attendance

96. The session was attended by representatives of the following 30 members and associate members of ESCAP: Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Fiji; France; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Mongolia; New Zealand; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Turkey; Viet Nam; Hong Kong, China; Macao, China; and New Caledonia.

97. The session was also attended by officials of the United Nations Secretariat, representing the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

98. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies attended: United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Fund for Women and United Nations Population Fund.

99. Representatives of the following United Nations specialized agencies attended: International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

100. Representatives of the Asian Development Bank, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Economic Cooperation Organization and Secretariat of the Pacific Community also participated.

101. A representative of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific also attended.

C. Officers

102. The Subcommittee elected Mr. Dennis Trewin (Australia), Chairperson, Mr Timoci Bainimarama (Fiji) and Mr. A.G.W. Nanayakkara (Sri Lanka), Vice-Chairpersons, and Mr. Frederick W.H. Ho (Hong Kong, China), Rapporteur.

D. Agenda and organization of work

103. The Subcommittee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Overview of significant global and regional issues in official statistics.

5. Social statistics:
 - (a) Disability statistics;
 - (b) Health statistics;
 - (c) Integrating gender into statistics.
6. Poverty statistics:
 - (a) Issues in poverty measurement;
 - (b) Regional action plan on poverty statistics.
7. Economic statistics:
 - (a) Statistics on the informal sector and the non-observed economy;
 - (b) Small business surveys;
 - (c) International Comparison Programme;
 - (d) Measuring the information society.
8. Statistical training, including the role of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.
9. Reports for the attention of the Subcommittee:
 - (a) Matters arising from the first session of the Committee on Poverty Reduction;
 - (b) Report on major statistical activities of the secretariat;
 - (c) Report on major statistical activities of regional and international institutions.
10. Programme matters:
 - (a) Review of programme performance for 2002-2003;
 - (b) Proposed programme changes for 2004-2005;
 - (c) Proposed strategic framework for 2006-2007.
11. Arrangements for future sessions of the Subcommittee.
12. Other matters.
13. Adoption of the report.

E. Documentation

104. The documents that were before the Subcommittee at its first session are listed in the annex to the present report.

F. Adoption of the report

105. The Subcommittee adopted the report on its first session on 20 February 2004.

Annex

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title
E/ESCAP/SOS/L.1/Rev.2	Provisional agenda
E/ESCAP/SOS/L.2	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ESCAP/SOS/1	Engendering statistics: current and future work
E/ESCAP/SOS/2	Social statistics: disability statistics
E/ESCAP/SOS/3	Arrangements for future sessions of the Subcommittee
E/ESCAP/SOS/4	Integrating unpaid work into national policies
E/ESCAP/SOS/5	Secretariat activities since the thirteenth session of the Committee on Statistics
E/ESCAP/SOS/6	Report of the Friends of the Chair of the Statistical Commission on Health Statistics
E/ESCAP/SOS/7	Overview of significant global and regional issues in official statistics
E/ESCAP/SOS/8	Measurement of the non-observed economy and production of exhaustive GDP estimates
E/ESCAP/SOS/9 and Corr.1	Action plan for improving poverty statistics and monitoring in the ESCAP region
E/ESCAP/SOS/10	Training in official statistics and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
E/ESCAP/SOS/11	Defining and measuring informal employment
E/ESCAP/SOS/12	Matters arising from the first session of the Committee on Poverty Reduction
E/ESCAP/SOS/13	Forum for Asia/Pacific Statisticians
E/ESCAP/SOS/14	Statistical implications for the Asia-Pacific region of the World Summit on the Information Society
E/ESCAP/SOS/15	Business statistics in Viet Nam
E/ESCAP/SOS/16	Programme matters: review of programme performance for 2002-2003; proposed programme changes for 2004-2005; and proposed strategic framework for 2006-2007
E/ESCAP/SOS/17	Planning and design of household panel surveys for enhancing poverty statistics

Country papers

Australia
Azerbaijan
Bangladesh
Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia
China
Fiji
Georgia
Hong Kong, China
India
Indonesia
Japan
Kyrgyzstan
Macao, China
Malaysia
Mongolia
New Zealand
Philippines
Republic of Korea
Russian Federation

- Russian Federation implementation of the System of National Accounts into the state statistics of the Russian Federation
- Information on the progress of implementation of the project on enhancing the measurement, monitoring and analysis of poverty in Russia
- Russian Federation in the International Comparison Programme

Sri Lanka
Thailand
Turkey
Viet Nam

Background documents

E/ESCAP/CPR/Rep. - Report of the Committee on Poverty Reduction on its first session, Bangkok, 8-10 October 2003

E/CN.3/2004/2 - Report of the Secretary-General on social statistics

E/CN.3/2004/8 - Report of the Secretary-General on poverty statistics

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