



First Meeting of the Heads of Statistical Organisations of SAARC Member States

Kolkata, India, 26-27 May 2005

SAARC Group on Statistics (SAARCSTAT)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. STRUCTURE

- (i) The SAARC Group on Statistics (SAARCSTAT) will comprise of Secretaries / Heads of Statistical Offices/Organisations.
- (ii) A SAARCSTAT Cell may be established in the SAARC Secretariat. Pending its establishment, the Chairperson of SAARCSTAT will coordinate its activities.
- (iii) Each Member State will have a designated officer as a Focal point on SAARCSTAT.
- (iv) The SAARCSTAT will submit its report to the Council of Ministers through the Committee on Economic Cooperation (CEC).
- (v) The SAARCSTAT should meet at least once in a year.
- (vi) The Meetings of the SAARCSTAT shall be held in the Member States in alphabetical order.

B. OBJECTIVES

SAARCSTAT will have the following objectives:

- i. Support regional cooperation and initiatives in statistics;
- ii. Plan and undertake policy initiatives for comparable and timely statistics;
- iii. Harmonise classifications, concepts, definitions;
- iv. Adopt international good practices;
- v. Promote improvement in the official statistics; and
- vi. Promote human resource development.

C. FUNCTIONS

- i. Initiate regional cooperation on Statistics among the Member States;
- ii. Develop common concepts, definitions, classifications, standards, measurements and codes in statistics and harmonise the same to promote the production of comparable statistics and indicators in the region;
- iii. Adhere to the basic principles of Official Statistics developed/adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission;
- iv. Promote human resource development in the field of statistics for improving the technical and management capabilities of Statisticians;
- v. Provide technical support to Statistical Institutions and Organizations of Member States to enable them to become Centres of Excellence;
- vi. Advocate support to the priority statistical programmes, projects and activities at the regional level;
- vii. Promote improvements in the official statistics generated by the Member States;
- viii. Coordinate in the development of SAARC position on statistical issues of common interest in the international fora.

D. PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES:

(i) Collaboration on Regional Projects and Activities

To collaborate in the regional statistical projects and activities with a view to generating statistics with common concepts, definitions, standards, classification and methodology.

(ii) Exchange of Expertise

To promote exchange of expertise among Statistical Offices of Member States.

(iii) Capacity Building and Human Resource Development

To identify institutes for training programmes in Statistics and to undertake the training thereon.

(iv) Statistical Institutes needing support

To identify and provide technical support to Statistical Institutions and Organizations of Member States.

(v) Cooperation with International Agencies

To cooperate with other regional/international statistical organisations for improvement of Statistics.

(vi) **Other Areas of Cooperation**

To explore other specific areas of cooperation on statistics enshrined in the objectives of SAARCSTAT.
