CONCEPT NOTE BY INDIA

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF LIAISON OFFICE OF SAARCSTAT AT SAARC SECRETARIAT, KATHMANDU

1. **Background:** As a significant off-shoot of the first Meeting of the Heads of Statistical Organisation of SAARC Member States held at Kolkata in May, 2005, a permanent SAARC Group on Statistics namely SAARCSTAT was formed with the following major objectives:-

   - Support regional cooperation and initiatives in Statistics
   - Plan and undertake policy initiatives for comparable and timely Statistics
   - Harmonize classification concepts, definition;
   - Adopt international good practices
   - Promote improvement in the official statistics and
   - Promote human resource development.

The SAARCSTAT is envisaged to be a body responsible for promoting international standards, methods and practices including the Fundamental Principle of Official Statistics among member states. It will also monitor and guide the SAARC member Countries states on Statistical information needs to enable comparison among the states and also with other regions like EUROSTAT of EU. Its role would be to ensure comparability to process Statistics from various sectors, publish comparable statistical information, develop and publish manuals on identified subject areas for the SAARC region. However it would not engage in collecting any data which would be the sole responsibility of the individual member country. It should also represent all SAARC technical/administrative groups to understand the data needs.

Consistent with the objectives and the envisaged role of SAARCSTAT, the Heads of Statistical Organisation in the SAARC Member States during the second meeting of SAARCSTAT held at Dhaka, Bangladesh on 17th April, 2008, unanimously agreed for establishment of a Liaison Office of SAARCSTAT at SAARC Secretariat Kathmandu to be headed by a Statistical Adviser for enhancing and accelerating the pace of cooperation in the statistical matters.

2. **Need for setting up a separate Liaison Office:**

   In view of challenges of collection of statistical information in the new emerging areas due to enhanced demand for improvement of the socio-economic status of its people, it becomes imperative that the meetings of Heads of Statistical Organisations in SAARC Member States as well as the meetings of Technical Sub Groups to be set up on identified diversifying subjects are held on a regular basis. As per the major decision taken earlier, though the Chairmanship of SAARCSTAT may move from one Member State to another on a rotation basis starting from Bangladesh, in an alphabetic order, in order to ensure continuity of work, it is essential to have an exclusive permanent set up in the form of a of Liaison Office to look after the work of the SAAARCSTAT matters in the SAARC Secretariat.
3. **Duties and Functions of SAARCSTAT Liaison office**

The Liaison Office of SAARCSTAT to be located within SAARC Secretariat at Kathmandu will handle all statistical matters relating to planning, implementation, coordination, organization of meetings, review and follow up of recommendations of SAARCSTAT and various TSGs set up by SAARCSTAT etc. towards fulfilling the SAARCSTAT objectives.

The main functions of SAARCSTAT Liaison office inter-alia include

- To carry out the tasks assigned by the SAARCSTAT and submit report thereon;
- Function as a secretariat to the SAARCSTAT;
- Responsible for inter-sectoral prioritization of activities;
- Represent SAARCSTAT, promote its objectives and role of SAARCSTAT in various international/regional organizations including participation in their meetings;
- Facilitate sharing of experience and information, continuous dialogue, collaborative networking, building trust, strengthening and endeavouring improving statistical systems in SAARC Member Countries.
- Facilitate the SAARC Sectt. with Information on various developments of SAARCSTAT on a continuous regular basis.
- Identification of priority activities, monitoring and coordinating the implementation of various recommendations as a result of the SAARCSTAT meetings.
- Provide requisite regular and consistent support to member countries in implementation of SAARCSTAT recommendations.
- Bringing newsletters, publications, periodicals on various statistical subjects of concern and interest to SAARC member countries.
- Maintenance and updating of SAARC Website.
- Preparation of agenda items and organization of meetings of SAARCSTAT and Technical Sub-Groups (TSG)
- Coordination with international organizations for identification of new subjects and activities and bringing them to SAARCSTAAT forum for their consideration.

4. **Need for SAARCSTAT Liaison office to be headed by a Statistical Adviser**

On the matters of reliable statistics gathering, compilation and dissemination, the SAARC member countries are facing more or less similar nature of challenges because of growing and diversifying stakeholders, enhanced demand of reliable and accessible official statistics, and due to advancement in information technology etc. In order to facilitate Liaison office to discharge its functions as set out above so as to meet the objectives and as per the decision taken in the second meeting of heads of SAARCSTAT organisation at Dhaka, the Liaison Office in SAARCSTAT should be headed by an experienced statistician designated as Statistical Adviser (SAARC), supported by a set of support staff. Keeping in view the nature and quantum of work requiring continuous follow up and coordination not only with the member countries but with other organizations at international and regional
levels, it becomes imperative that the Statistical Adviser is provided support both, in areas of technicality as well as for secretarial support, through the requisite manpower for which the details need to be worked out after obtaining comments from member countries.

The Statistical Adviser, should be a national from one of the SAARC member states.

5. **Terms of Reference for the post of Statistical Adviser:**

The Statistical Adviser being the head of the SAARCSTAT Liaison Office will be responsible and accountable for all functions and duties of liaison office. The item-wise details are as under:

I. **Title of the Post:** Statistical Adviser (SAARCSTAT- Liaison Office).

II. **Duty Station:** SAARCSTAT liaison office, Kathmandu, Nepal

III. **Duration:** Two years fixed term – initially.

IV. **Post Type:** Non rotational

V. **Educational Qualification:**
   - (a) Advanced University Degree in Mathematical/Applied/theoretical Statistics or in Economics with sufficient experience in handling Statistical matters or a related field.
   - (b) Adequate IT related knowledge.
   - (c) Strong communication (oral and written) skills in English.

VI. **Work Experience:** Minimum of progressive 10 years of professional experience of handling official statistics matters at national/international level.

VII. **Core competencies:**
   - Commitment to the Organisation and its mandate,
   - Ability to identify and prioritize the problems/issues and suggesting solutions thereof,
   - Skills in data collection, processing and analysis.
   - Project formulation
   - Planning Coordination and monitoring,
   - Technological awareness.

VIII. **Functional competencies:**
   - Innovative in planning methodologies and processes of official statistics.
   - Resource mobilization
   - Result based policy development and management

IX. **Major Duties/functions:**

The Statistical Adviser being head of the Liaison office of SAARCSTAT has the responsibility of taking forward SAARCSTAT agenda by carrying out all the duties and functions of SAARCSTAT liaison office towards fulfillment of its objective. The major activities inter-alia include:-

- Planning, implementation, review and coordination of all activities in consultation with SAARC member countries and SAARC Sectt.
- Preparation of agenda, consolidated reports and organization of the meetings of SAARCSTAT (both heads of organizations and technical sub groups)
✓ Management of timely and quality information, ensuring timely availability of SAARCSTAT reports/periodicals/newsletters.
✓ Follow up action on SAARCSTAT recommendations
✓ Monitoring and providing support for development of reports, manuals and important programme documents
✓ Identifying sources of information and expertise to meet SAARC needs
✓ Foster a regional partnerships in the statistical areas
✓ Representing SAARCSTAT in various international/regional forums.
✓ Coordination with other international/regional organization for the provision of technical and programme assistance in SAARC region.
✓ Any other statistical matter arising out of the deliberations of SAARCSTAT meetings.

X. **Reporting:** Statistical Adviser with functional autonomy will report to Secretary General /Head of SAARC Sectt,

XI. **Remuneration:** Commensurate to Director of SAARC Sectt.

XII. **Appointing Authority:** As per SAARC guidelines

XIII. **Disqualification/removal:** As per SAARC guidelines

XIV. **Funding:** By SAARC Secretariat through annual contribution from SAARC Member Countries.

XV. **Terms and Conditions:** As applicable to Director of SAARC Sectt.