

Editorial Address: Dr. Anne Hawkins, 64 Bedford Court Mansions, Bedford Ave, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 3AD, UK. [E-mail: teexash@ioe.ac.uk, Tel/Fax: (0)71-636-0058]

President of the Association: Prof. David Moore, Statistics, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907-1399, USA. [E-mail: dsm@stat.purdue.edu, Tel: 1-317-494-6050, Fax: 1-317-494-0558]

In this issue, we hear of a number of initiatives designed to overcome difficulties in ensuring a flow of competent statisticians. Readers are invited to send in short reports and news items so that a truly international perspective may be maintained on such initiatives. Longer articles and reviews may be published in IASE matters or IASE Review.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

IASEactivities

The 4th International Conference on Teaching Statistics (ICOTS-4) takes place in Marrakech, Morocco, 25-30 July 1994. [Mr M. Mahfoud, Secretary to the Local Organising Committee, ICOTS-4, INSEA, P.O. Box 6217, Rabat-Instituts, Rabat, Morocco. Fax: 212-7-779457].

It will be preceded by an Arabic-language satellite meeting on teaching statistics and informatics at all levels in Cairo, Egypt, 20-21 July 1994. [Prof A Farrag, President Office, Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, P.O. Box 2086, Cairo. Fax: 202-604099]

With ICOTS-4 only a matter of weeks away, thoughts have already turned to arrangements for IASE's sessions in the ISI Congress in Beijing, 1995, plus a further satellite meeting dedicated to statistical education.

The next IASE Round-table conference will be held at the University of Granada, Spain, in July 1996. As usual, the venue has been chosen so as to enable delegates also to attend ICME-8 (the International Conference on Mathematical Education) that year. [Details to follow]

A second issue of IASE Review is expected to reach members of IASE later this year. Among other things, it should carry news and reports of ICOTS-4 events.

1995 Royal Statistical Society Conference,

Communicating Statistics,

University of Wolverhampton, UK, 12-14 July

The programme will consist of plenary sessions given by invited speakers (including David Moore, President of IASE). In addition, there will be three parallel sessions for contributed papers, targeted respectively at Higher and Further Education, users of statistics, and school teachers. The main conference will be preceded by short courses on Practical Statistics in Schools (Mary Rouncefield) and Problem-solving and Consultancy Skills (Chris Chatfield) on 10 and 11 July. [More details and the call for papers are expected in November 1994].

PUBLICATIONS

Teaching Statistics at its Best - This sequel to the successful publication, The Best of Teaching Statistics, is now in preparation and should be ready in time for copies to be available at ICOTS-4. It will include re-prints of selected articles spanning the period 1984 - 1992. [Contact Dr. David Green, Mathematical Sciences,

Loughborough University, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: (0509)-222864, Fax: (0509)-211869, E-mail: D.R.Green@lut.ac.uk]

Proceedings of the First Scientific Meeting of IASE, Perugia, Italy, 1993, will shortly be available, free of charge. [Contact the editors, L. Brunelli and G. Cicchitelli, Dipartimento di Scienze Statistiche, Universita di Perugia, Via A Pascoli, C P 1315 Succ 1, 06100 Perugia, Italy. Tel: 39-75-5855242, Fax: 39-75-43242, E-mail: statli@ipguniv.unipg.it]

TRAINING WOMEN STATISTICIANS OF AFRICA

This report (submitted by the United Nations Statistical Division, New York) tells of a workshop held in July 1993 at the University of Botswana, Gaborone.

The Sixth Meeting of the Directors of the Centres associated with the Statistical Training Programme for Africa, held in Addis Ababa in December 1991, expressed serious concern about the lack of women trainees in the African schools of statistics. Among the principal factors identified as causing this situation was the inability of the women applicants to pass the admission tests set by the training schools. The Meeting recommended inter alia that the level of admission requirements should not be lowered to allow otherwise ineligible candidates to enter the training institutes. Rather, possibilities should be explored to organise preparatory training workshops for potential women applicants. In accordance with the United Nations policy to promote the development of women, and in close consultation with the Statistics Division of the UN Economic Commission for Africa

(ECA), the UN Statistical Division (UNSTAT) wanted to act upon this important recommendation by initiating the organisation and conduct of such workshops in basic statistics to train women statisticians of Africa. It was decided to sponsor two workshops in 1993, one for the English-speaking and the other for the French-speaking countries of Africa, under the United Nations regular programme of technical co-operation, and in particular, under the project INT/92/R91 titled "On-the-job training for junior statisticians and programmers", funded from the regular programme. The United Nations Statistical Division (UNSTAT) implements this project. It promotes the theme of technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC), and as such, it was necessary to locate a Centre in a developing country that would be willing to provide the envisaged training without any local costs charged to the project. The project would bear the costs of travel and the fellowship stipends for the international participants attending the Workshop. The local costs, if any, including those for the participating national trainees must be met from some other sources.

These ideas were communicated to the Department of Statistics of the University of Botswana (DSUB), which came forward with the true spirit of collaboration to organise and conduct the first of the two proposed Workshops. UNSTAT contacted the countries requesting nomination forms for eligible participants, and the United Nations Fellowships and Training Section

arranged for their travel to Gaborone. The DSUB arranged for the lecture rooms and hostels for the international trainees. The Central Statistical Office of the Government of Botswana took the financial responsibility for the nationals who were eligible to attend the Workshop. The Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Botswana provided all administrative assistance needed, including the transportation from and to the airport as far as practicable. The success of the Workshop resulted therefore from the collaborative efforts of all concerned.

The criteria for selection of candidates were high school level mathematical aptitude and practical experience of working with statistical data. No prior formal training in statistics was required for eligibility to attend the Workshop. Fourteen women statisticians (from Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zambia) received fellowship stipends from the United Nations. Because of the scarcity of funds, only the countries in the Southern Africa region were invited. Zimbabwe was invited, but decided not to send any trainee. In addition to the 14 international participants, there were four nationals from Botswana. Of these four, three were women. It may be noted here that although the objective of this particular Workshop was to train women statisticians of Africa in the basic theory and practice of statistics, it was agreed in advance that the host country should take advantage of any training workshop by sending male candidates too, if spaces were available. As mentioned earlier, the project INT/92/R91 does not pay any costs incurred for the participation of nationals of the host country.

The Workshop began on 1 June and ended on 14 July 1993, in accordance with a draft programme of training containing a suggested syllabus that was developed by the UN Statistical Division using the ECA guidelines for statistical training in Africa. The programme was covered in about 180 hours of classroom teaching which included theoretical lectures and practical work, dealing with revision of mathematics, elementary statistical methods, population and social statistics, agricultural statistics, economic statistics and national accounts, statistical sampling, household and other surveys, and computer processing of data. The teaching staff of the DSUB conducted the training. The UN Adviser on Censuses and Census Analysis assigned to Botswana for the national population census, covered the topic of population statistics, and the Government Statistician of Botswana gave lectures on official statistics. In accordance with the practice followed in the Workshops sponsored by the United Nations, the Gaborone Workshop was evaluated by the participants. Almost all participants found it to be very useful for the work that they carry out in their home countries. Several of them suggested the desirability of a longer duration of the Workshop in order that participants with no previous formal training in statistics could properly assimilate the courses.

RECENT ROYAL STATISTICAL SOCIETY INITIATIVES

In 1992, with sponsorship from commerce and industry, the RSS Education Committee began a programme of one-day workshops at venues throughout Britain for teachers of statistics in schools. A total of 450 teachers

have attended the events so far. Speakers were drawn from all levels of education and industry. The papers from four of these workshops have now been published as *Teaching and Using Statistics* (ISBN 0 9523 4270 7) and are available for £5 (£6.50 overseas) including post and packing from the Royal Statistical Society, 25 Enford Street, London, W1H 2BH [Tel: (0)71-736-5882, Fax: (0)71-706-1710].

Each year, the RSS awards Teacher Bursaries for teachers who are embarking on a recognised training course on statistical education. Priority has been given to candidates who were already involved in promoting statistical education within their own schools or colleges and whose efforts in this area could be expected to be enhanced by completing a course. From a field of 35 applicants, four awards were given for 1993-94 courses.

Since the RSS established a new grade of membership a few months ago, approximately 100 schools and colleges have registered as Associate members. The Society hopes to create a dynamic relationship so that schools and colleges will work with the Society to identify their own needs and find ways in which the RSS can help to satisfy these. Initially, in return for the £30 per annum registration fee the RSS, with help from its network of Local Groups, provides the following;

- A free subscription to *Teaching Statistics*,
- Regular distribution of other materials (including statistical teaching aids),
- Access to all meetings of the Society,
- Establishment of Local Networks of Schools and Colleges, and
- Concessionary rates for courses and conferences.

The RSS is currently involved in a wide-ranging recruitment drive to encourage young people into the statistics profession. New careers literature aimed at school, college and university students is being produced and disseminated by the Society. Part of this exercise has involved collaboration with other professional organisations whose members are expected to acquire statistical skills, and with major employers of both specialist and non-specialist statisticians.

ANNOUNCING!

STATISTICAL TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 1994-95

The 1994-95 catalog (named above) lists all of the course offerings for the following United States Government Statistical Training Centers:

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
 Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
 Bureau of the Census (ISPC)
 National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)
 National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

To receive a catalog, contact one of the following training centers:

	Phone	FAX
BEA	(202)606-9728	(202)606-5322
BLS	(202)606-5666	(202)606-7900
ISPC	(301)763-2860	(301)763-7589
NASS	(202)690-1831	(202)690-1960
NCHS	(301)763-2860	(301)763-7589