

International Statistical Education Newsletter

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EDITORIAL

The aim of the newsletter is to spread information about what is going on in statistical education. The meetings of the Education Committee and the papers at the 43rd Session on education are perhaps most obvious and are reported briefly below, but there are many other activities round the world worth reporting. Previous issues have begun this, but the net needs to be spread wider.

There are, for example, undoubtedly a number of programmes and projects in statistical education, with diverse aims, which are of potential interest to a wider group than those who would hear of them in the normal course of events. As another example, in a number of countries there are statistical education committees: much of their business is inevitably specific to the country concerned, but some of it deserves wider currency, and certainly the fact of their existence ought to be broadcast. In this issue a beginning is made on circulating information of this type.

Some of this kind of information will be discovered by systematic enquiries - but much probably will not unless those concerned write and let the editor know: so please do that.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

At the 43rd Session of the ISI, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 30 November to 11 December, 1981, the Committee met to consider past and future activities; a report was presented to the Bureau of the ISI, who accepted the report and approved a number of recommendations, as follows.

1. The ISI should continue to support the International Statistical Education Centre (ISEC, Calcutta), in principle and (to a token extent, in keeping with ISI's limited resources) financially.
2. The Task Force on Teaching Statistics in Schools should continue with its work.
3. The Task Force on the International Conference on the Teaching of Statistics should, after the forthcoming ICOTS conference in August 1982, be renamed the Task Force for Conferences on the Teaching of Statistics, with three aims: to plan future conferences, to help future Program Committees of the biennial Sessions to arrange a section on the teaching of probability and statistics,

and to promote the continuation of the tradition of Round Table Meetings on the teaching of statistics.

4. The Task Force on the Coordination of International Statistical Training Centres, having completed its programme of work, should be disbanded; Dr. Benyaklef and his colleagues received the Bureau's thanks.
5. The Task Force on Tertiary and Technical Education in Statistics should continue with its work.

The Bureau appointed members of the Committee for the period 1981-83 as follows.

J. Gani (Chairman), V. Barnett, M. Benyaklef, R.M. Loynes, R.P. Mentz, G. Parniczky, L. Råde, Mary H. Regier, and ex officio H. Ben-Amor (UNESCO), E. Fabbroni (IASI), S. Nordbotten (UN), C.R. Rao (ISEC).

REPORTS FROM ROUND THE WORLD

THE 43rd SESSION OF THE I.S.I. =====

Statistical Education was considered formally on two occasions.

a) A morning meeting devoted to 'Recent Developments in the Field of Statistics in Latin America' received the following papers.

(i) E. Cansado: 'Basic aspects of the Current Teaching of Statistics in Latin America' surveyed the present situation and made recommendations for the future.

(ii) S. Chaparro Ruiz: 'Official Statistics in Latin America: Aspects and Perspectives'.

(iii) R.P. Mentz and N. Jarma de Cortes: 'Survey of Latin American Statistical Centres' described the results of a survey on the professional (e.g. editorial) and research activities of the various centres; teaching was not covered.

(iv) S. Infante Gil and G. Zarote de Lara: 'The Statistical Profession in Latin America'.

b) A round table meeting on 'Education and Statistical Training in Latin America: its Future Development' took place, under the chairmanship of L.A. Santaló. The following topics were introduced by the panellists.

(i) Teaching of statistics at secondary level. (L.A. Santaló) - need, content, and the training of teachers.

(ii) Teaching of statistics at university level. (E.M. Cabaña) - objectives, regional and international aspects; (C.B. Dantas) - undergraduate, master's and doctoral level programmes, with reference to Brazilian experience; (R. Ignacio Méndez) - analysis of the Mexican situation as an example of

the problems of staffing.

(iii) Statistical training at the technical level (V. Ochsenius).

(iv) Statistical training for personnel in government offices (E.O. Fabbroni).

STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA (STPA)

In response to a call by directors of African Statistical offices for the establishment of a coordinated long-term programme for the training of statisticians to meet the needs of the continent, the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) was established as a ten-year programme in 1978 by a resolution of the Conference of Ministers in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

The main objective of the programme is to work towards making Africa self sufficient in statistical manpower, and training facilities for them, by the end of the 1980 decade. This is to be achieved by:

- a) increasing the number of trained statistical personnel;
- b) improving and maintaining the quality of Statistical personnel in service;
- c) ensuring that the centres participating in the programme become self-supporting.

At the moment the following twelve centres are participating in the programme.

Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC), Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Department of Statistics, University of Ghana and Institute of Statistics, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Ghana.

Department of Statistics, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISAE) University of Makerere, Kampala, Uganda.

Department of Statistics, University of Botswana and Swaziland.

Department of Statistics, National University of Lesotho.

Centre Européen de Formation des Statisticiens Economistes des Pays en voie de Développement (CESD), Paris.

Institut National de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée (INSEA), Rabat, Morocco.

Ecole de Statistique d'Abidjan (ESA), Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Institut de Statistique de Planification et d'Economie Appliquée (ISPEA), Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Institute des Techniques de Planification et d'Economie Appliquée (ITPEA), Algiers.

SECOND MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF CENTRES PARTICIPATING IN THE STPA

The first meeting of directors took place at the headquarters of the ECA in Addis Ababa in September 1979. The second meeting took place 2-6 November, 1981, in the same location; in addition to the directors themselves, representatives of various donors and a number of observers were present.

The meeting reviewed progress to date, considered current activities, and went on to look to the future. It was noted that the goals of the STPA can only be achieved through a satisfactory solution of the problem of 'training of trainers': i.e. giving an appropriate training to the right candidates. Close collaboration between

Institut Africain et Mauricien de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée (IAMSEA), Kigali, Rwanda.

These are centres mainly concerned with basic formal training at degree and subdegree levels. A thirteenth centre, Munich Centre for Advanced Training in Applied Statistics for Developing Countries which focuses on short-term courses for practising statisticians, is an associate centre. Some other centres are currently being considered for associate membership.

The activities of the STPA are carried out primarily through these centres. These activities include, inter alia,

- a) dissemination of information on training activities;
- b) co-ordination of financial resources for staffing, fellowships, equipment, etc;
- c) co-operative development of training programmes and activities;
- d) general administration of the programme which include biennial meetings of directors of the centres.

Two issues of a newsletter entitled 'STPA News' have appeared.

The programme is overseen by the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers with guidance by the meeting of directors. Financial assistance has been provided through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and various bilateral aid schemes.

Further information about the Programme can be obtained from

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statistical offices, both by providing lecturers for specialised practical parts of courses and by allowing attachment of students for part of their training, was agreed to be a valuable contribution to its solution. Aspects of regional and other co-operation were discussed, including such matters as exchange of staff. Other aspects of the work of centres were also considered: research, including co-operative projects with other kinds of institution; and short courses and workshops - in particular the role of the centres in training for the African Household Survey Capability Programme. Finally, guide syllabuses for the middle (technical level produced by consultants were approved: for Certificate/Agents techniques and for Diploma/Adjoints techniques.

Correction: in issue 2 the name Murphy in the Gothenburg Symposium should read Murthy.