

“Training Official Statisticians in India”

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It is now recognized internationally that better statistics is an integral part of an enabling environment for development. Better statistics undoubtedly leads to timely policies and development outcomes. The official statisticians have significant statistical and managerial roles. Training helps in enhancing their capabilities to achieve their goals in the changing and dynamic environment in which they operate. Training is needed at all levels – at senior levels of management, where the main responsibility is to plan, introduce and manage innovations, at the middle level, where the main job is to carry out ongoing new jobs efficiently, and at the operational level, where the operational personnel need to be trained on the specific job on hand. It enhances knowledge and skills and brings a positive change in attitude needed to overcome gaps in performance and for achievement of both individual and organizational goals. Since the needs and requirements of the training depend upon the jobs/ functions carried out by personnel at different levels, Training, in order to be meaningful, needs to be driven by the demand of the functionaries at different levels. The National Statistical Organization, India under capacity building initiative, as a part of long-term strategic planning has set up National Academy of Statistical Administration (NASA) as one of the apex training institutions in the country for imparting training on Official Statistics. The academy plays a proactive role as a lead player in enhancing the skills and development of capacity of the statistical personnel at different levels both at Centre and States in the country. The academy aims to develop a trained statistical manpower at national and sub- national level (States/UTs) in the statistical applications in official statistics, monitoring and evaluation, management, Information Technology, GIS, forecasting, and administration of official statistical system. The country has large pool of statistical manpower of around 50,000 personnel. To train this large number, NASA (i) conducts several training programmes/courses every year for the statistical personnel either at NASA or institutions of repute in the country; (ii) conducts trainer’s development programmes to create a pool of quality trainers who can promote training in official statistics; (iii) identify course module, content and the respective target groups for training in identified module; and (iv) develop course curriculum, prepare course material, etc. Every year, in addition to the regular induction Probationary training programme for the direct recruits of Indian Statistical Service (ISS) officers and Subordinate Statistical Services (SSS) the academy conducts a large number of In Service Refresher Training for ISS and SSS and state officials.

Key words: National Academy of Statistical Administration (NASA), India; enhancing the skills and development of capacity of the statistical personnel at different levels; trainer’s development programmes.