

Division on Investment and Enterprise

Capacity-building in FDI Statistics

2006 activities

Development context: Scarcity, unreliability and inconsistency in existing data reporting systems cause severe problems in formulating policies and strategies regarding FDI. There is also a shortage of studies on the role of FDI, its impact on sustainable economic development and its contribution to the transfer of technology, human resource development and export performance. In response to recommendations made by the UNCTAD Expert Meeting on Capacity Building in the Area of FDI: Data Compilation and Policy Formulation in Developing Countries in December 2005 and endorsed by the tenth session of the Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues (Geneva, 6–10 March 2006), UNCTAD continues to provide technical cooperation in the area of FDI statistics.

Objectives/features: The overall objective of the project is to increase FDI inflows into developing countries, particularly LDCs, by formulating FDI policies based on quality FDI data and information on TNCs operating in the region or the country. This project aims at enhancing the capacity of government agencies in those countries to compile, disseminate and analyse data on FDI and TNC activities through implementing internationally recommended methodological standards and enabling national authorities to maintain high-quality and up-to-date databases. It also aims at strengthening networking among national authorities involved in FDI data compilation and reporting and in FDI policy issues and investment promotion activities, so as to facilitate the exchange of experience.

Outputs: In 2006, a national seminar was held in Maldives from 15 to 20 January on the methodology of compilation of FDI statistics, and one regional workshop for West Asia was co-organized with Bahrain's Economic Development Board in May. In February 2007, a seminar on FDI statistics and TNCs' activities was held in Rabat, Morocco, from 13 to 15 February.

Results: These workshops and seminars advanced government officials' understanding of FDI statistics and initiated a survey on FDI in some countries (e.g. Maldives). These meetings also took a step towards establishing a regional association of FDI data compilers to harmonize FDI statistics in the region and to share experiences of data collection and reporting.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Objectives/features: To advise the Working Group on Foreign Direct Investment Statistics and the ASEAN secretariat on a harmonized FDI data methodology and strategies, and organize joint training seminars and workshops as a capacity-building support for the region.

Outputs: UNCTAD and ASEAN continue to jointly organize a number of events to support regional integration and the ASEAN Investment Area process. Having acted as an adviser and resource to the ASEAN Working Group on Foreign Direct Investment Statistics, UNCTAD organized jointly the ASEAN/UNCTAD Seminar on Key Issues of FDI: Outward FDI from Asia, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on 10 April 2006.

Results: Providing comprehensive, quality and timely FDI statistics for ASEAN countries to make policy analysis and monitor the FDI situation in the context of the ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) is regarded as one of the major tasks of the region. UNCTAD continues to provide the advisory role and expertise to the various activities for improving FDI data quality and harmonization of FDI statistics to support the AIA process.

