

Country Course on Multivariate Statistics, Sri Lanka

SIAP conducted a country course on Multivariate Statistics in Colombo, Sri Lanka, for 5 working days from 21 to 25 July addressing the following objectives: to improve national capacities in developing capabilities of Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) officials on the use of Multivariate techniques for analysis of data and generating indicators to enhance the use of data for improved decision making. The course was organised subsequent to a request made by the NSO Sri Lanka.

In total there were 19 participants attended and completed the course. Officials from NSO working in different subject matter areas including Census and sample surveys, Agriculture, Industries, Education and National accounts divisions attended the course.

The course was conducted at the DCS premises in Colombo where sufficient facilities were available and personal computer facilities for participants were provided.

With the present situation in Sri Lanka where new development programmes are undertaken in the Northern and Eastern parts of the country after the disturbances prevailed for more than two decades the demand for data at sub national level has become a crucial input. Small area estimation for determining poverty, nutrition and food security and obtaining information on important many other social and demographic indicators require the use of specialised statistical techniques including Multivariate Statistical analysis. The course was designed principally for officials of the DCS which is the National Statistical Office of Sri Lanka.. Course topics included: Introduction to types of variables and analytical methods and software, multiple regression analysis, linear transformations, Logit /probit models, Principal component analysis, Factor Analysis, Discriminant analysis and Cluster analysis. Group exercises/project work was included as part of the programme.

Participants showed improved their analytical knowledge. Dr. Amara Satharasinghe, Director of the Training Division, inaugurated the course and emphasized the relevance and importance of the use of Multivariate Statistical techniques to assist the decision making of the country's socio economic development activities.

Participants' evaluation and speeches in the closing ceremony indicated that all the participants had gained good knowledge from the course. DCS showed a keen interest in involving SIAP in their future capacity building programmes.