

Fifth Regional Course on Poverty measurements

SIAP conducted its fifth regional course on Poverty Measurements for two weeks from 29 September to 9 October 2009 in Jakarta, Indonesia, with collaborative assistance from BPS Statistics, Indonesia. The Regional Course on Poverty Measurements was aimed at strengthening the capability of national statistical systems throughout the Asia Pacific Region to take part in the process of poverty identification, measurement and analysis. Course participants, representing National Statistics Offices (NSOs) throughout Asia and the Pacific, were middle-level statisticians with experience and/or responsibilities related to collection and analysis of data for poverty indicators and measures.

24 officials from 20 selected countries in the Asia and Pacific region participated in the course including 5 officials from the host government of Indonesia. Participating countries were Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia (5), Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka.

The course was conducted at the Education and Training Centre (ETC) of BPS in Jakarta where sufficient facilities were available and Personal Computer facilities for all participants were provided. The course content was directed at addressing the specific technical needs of the participants on poverty measurements, and ensuring that they make use of the knowledge and analytical skills gained through practical computer exercises toward generating presentations on poverty profiles based on microdata from household surveys. A new feature of the course (compared to previous conducts of the course) was a session introducing the use of Geographic Information Systems, with the commercial software Arc View and the freeware Adept (developed by the Research Group of the World Bank)

Course contents included topics on: Concepts and definitions of poverty and poverty indicators; construction of poverty lines; poverty and inequality measures; poverty profiles; determinants of poverty, introduction to small area estimation and use of GIS for poverty mapping. The course also discusses data issues in using sample survey data for poverty analysis and the use of the statistical software STATA.

SIAP consultant Mr. Jose Ramon G. Albert served as the course director cum lecturer and was assisted by local lecturers Dr. Hamonangan Ritongan Dr. Ali Said. The successful conduct of the course led the participants to the accomplishment of the following:

- a.** explain concepts and definitions related to poverty, the basic steps in measuring poverty, and the objectives and framework for poverty analysis;
- b.** construct poverty lines using various approaches for setting poverty lines, especially the cost of basic needs method;
- c.** obtain poverty and inequality measures from household survey data, especially using the software application STATA;
- d.** undertake studies in his/her country on poverty analysis, including the construction of poverty profiles, and;
- e.** demonstrate basic skills in the use of a Geographic Information System.

During the training, participants showed keen interest in acquiring knowledge on the subject and improving their statistical literacy. The BPS Deputy Director-General Arizal Ahnaf inaugurated the course on 29th September and emphasized the relevance and importance of poverty measures and analysis to the respective country's social development. The course was concluded on 9th October and the closing ceremony was attended by the BPS Director-General Dr. Rusman Heriawan.

The participants' evaluation and speeches in the closing ceremony indicated that all the participants had gained very good knowledge from the course. BPS/ETC showed a keen interest in collaborating with SIAP for future capacity building programmes.