

Tenth Management Seminar for the Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific 7 – 8 December 2011, Chiba, Japan

The Tenth Management Seminar for the Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific was held at Hotel Springs, a hotel near to SIAP at Makuhari, Chiba city, on 7 and 8 December 2011, back to back with SIAP's 7th Governing Council session. The seminar was organized by SIAP, in collaboration with the Statistics Division of ESCAP (ESCAP-SD), the International Statistical Institute (ISI), World Bank and the Government of Japan.

The theme of this year's seminar was "Shifting from 'stove-pipe' data producer to 'information service' provider". Objectives of the seminar were (i) to bring together the heads of NSOs in the ESCAP region to review global and regional initiatives and share experiences in responding to the needs for modernization of statistical information systems; (ii) to enhance skills and knowledge of participants regarding the relevant concepts and tools; and (iii) to determine common challenges and discuss and agree on regional approaches required to address the challenges.

In total, 38 participants attended the seminar, which consisted of 33 participants including 14 heads or above of NSOs from 25 countries; Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Georgia; Hong Kong, China; India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Viet Nam; and 5 participants from 5 International organizations; ADB, ISI, PARIS21, SESRIC and SPC.

At the opening session, Ms. Haishan Fu, Director of Statistics Division, ESCAP, made her welcoming remarks, as the representative of the seminar organizer. Mr. Takao Ito, Director General for Policy Planning (Statistical Standards) delivered his opening statement representing the host country of the seminar.

Mr. Brain Pink, Australian Statistician and the Chairperson of the Committee of Statistics delivered keynote speech, reminded participants the issue of the actions that the official statisticians needs to take now to just not survive but to thrive in the digital age, and noted that we are just at beginning of the 'information age'. He stated that with the rapidly expanding volumes of data becoming available and a variety of technology put into use in statistical processes and systems, the official statisticians are now faced with the challenge of meeting an expanding set of expectations; and to meet this challenge of modernizing the statistical systems, we the community of official statisticians have to work together and set up international collaboration of the specialists in the areas of ICT and statistical methods. He proposed that the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) could be a means of adopting the new approach of modernizing statistical infrastructure.

The seminar consisted of Session 1: "Modernization of statistical information system: Review of global and regional initiatives"; Session 2: "Modelling statistical business processes: New concepts and recent experiences"; Session 3: "Meeting new expectations of users: Integrated statistical products"; Session 4: "Meeting evolving needs of data users: Microdata dissemination"; and Session 5 on group discussions. During Session 1 to Session 4, there were 5 key presentations by resource persons describing some kind

of frameworks relating to modernization or reviewing global initiatives, as well as 4 presentations of country experiences.

During the group discussion, participants were divided into three groups and each group were given one of the following specific topics for discussion: 1) initiating a national transformation process for official statistics: Advocating on the issue; 2) transformation process: enhanced regional cooperation: establishing a regional coordination mechanism; and 3) Supporting transformation process: capacity needs and capacity building. At last, the three groups reported back on the summary of discussions. All groups had discussed and identified several recommendations.

The participants' evaluation indicated that all participants found the seminar relevant to their work, and they were satisfied with seminar level and contents. Also the evaluation of participants was evidenced by the presentations of group works.

