

Asia-Pacific UN ESCAP Statistical Training Institute Turns 40



It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to the United Nations ESCAP Asia Pacific Statistical Training Institute on the occasion of its 40th Anniversary celebration.

I share my deepest thanks for your leadership, your example, and your record of achievement on behalf of the United Nations in Asia and across the Pacific Islands. Thank you for educating, enlightening and promoting the critical development objectives of the United Nations in seeking a better life for the people of Asia-Pacific.

The story of SIAP is the story of the UN itself. In its beginnings, some 40 years ago, was the recognition that national statistical offices of Asia and the Pacific region were severely constrained by critical shortages of personnel trained in official statistics keeping and the inadequacy of available local training facilities. SIAP was established to fill this gap. Over the four decades, SIAP has grown into a premier statistical training institute - known worldwide for the relevance and success of its training courses. At the onset, the Government of Japan shepherded SIAP, providing leadership at critical moments, establishing a Governing Council for the new institute.

From the early initial years, when its efforts were concentrated on developing basic technical skills of official statisticians, SIAP has today has embraced a practice-oriented training strategy to fulfil the principles of official statistics. Participants of SIAP training programmes are now provided wider exposures of 'good' practices of data production suitable to the changing economic, social and technological environments – data that is critical to national governments facing the pressure of rapid population growth, development growth and societal change.

More than ever before, SIAP has proved its value, its worth, in reinforcing the work of national governments planning for development in countries across Asia and the Pacific. After 40 years, the work of UN ESCAP's SIAP underscores a quiet achievement of the United Nations and recognition of the good work of the people of Japan – critical and foremost supporters of SIAP's mission and work.

I thank you.

Dr Noeleen Heyzer

Dr. Noeleen Heyzer is Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP.