

REPORT OF EIGHTEENTH MANAGEMENT SEMINAR FOR HEADS OF NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, 14 – 15 DECEMBER 2023

A. INTRODUCTION/ BACKGROUND

1. The Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (FPOS) were first conceived at the end of the 1980s, when countries in Eastern and Central Europe began the transition from centrally planned economies to market-oriented democracies. It was essential to ensure that national statistical systems in those countries would be able to produce appropriate and reliable data and statistics that adhered to specific professional and scientific standards. In 1994, the United Nations Statistical Commission adopted the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as the set of professional and scientific standards to guide the production of statistics at the global and national level. The Fundamental Principles were more than just a noble intention. They were to be an integral part of and a common reference tool for day-to-day statistical work.

2. Thirty years on from that historic commitment, in the wake of the unprecedented challenges brought about by the global Covid-19 crisis and increasing digitalization of various activities, the role of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) is undergoing rapid transformation. Among these transformations, there has been an increased demand for new types of statistical products, driven by the urgency to respond to emerging trends using novel and non-traditional data sources. The paradigm shifts in the speed, methods, and types of statistical indicators to be produced raises pertinent questions about the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (FPOS) and the quality frameworks that underpin the work of statistical offices. As custodians of data, NSOs face the challenge of navigating these changes while upholding the integrity of their statistical systems.

3. FPOS stands as the bedrock of commitment to building trust while NSOs serve as the unwavering source for generating independent and reliable data, crucial for making informed and effective data-driven evidence-based decisions. In an information economy teeming with diverse actors and competitors producing different types of data and statistics, adherence to FPOS becomes a distinguishing factor, setting NSOs apart as bastions of trust and credibility.

4. As the milestone 30th anniversary of the endorsement of the Principles approaches in 2024, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the ESCAP Statistics Division selected the topic *Strengthening Official Statistics through the Implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics* as its focus for the Eighteenth Management Seminar for Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific.

B. SEMINAR OBJECTIVES, FORMAT AND CONTENT

5. The Management Seminar seeks to strengthen the statistical capability in leadership and management in support of economic and social development. It is a forum through which the heads of national statistical offices in Asia and the Pacific can identify, discuss and propose common solutions, or at least pointers and ideas, for coping with the rapidly changing environment in which they operate. The objective of the Eighteenth Management Seminar was to explore how Asia and the Pacific countries can fully implement the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

6. The Management Seminar was held from 14 to 15 December 2023, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and hosted by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM). To ensure active participation and engagement throughout the event, the approach for delivery was mainly small group discussions in the format of World Café Style, plenary (whole group) discussions and a limited number of presentations. The full schedule is provided in Annex 1.

7. The seminar was facilitated by a range of resource persons from SIAP, ESCAP Statistics Division and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and a consultant.

C. PARTICIPANTS

8. Target participants were Heads of National Statistical Offices and statistical training institutes and international agency representatives.

9. Sixty-nine (69) senior level officials attended the seminar. The composition of participants by sex was 41 males (59.4 percent) and 28 females (40.6 percent). The profile of participants by sex and country is presented in Annex 2.

D. KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND MAIN OUTCOMES BY AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item 1: Opening remarks and overview

10. Welcome and opening remarks were delivered by Ms. Shailja Sharma and Ms. Rachel Beaven, Directors of SIAP and ESCAP Statistics Division, respectively.

11. In her remarks, Ms. Sharma underscored the importance of the Fundamental Principles and elaborated on the rationale for selecting the topic for the seminar. She reiterated the goals of the seminar and encouraged participants to purposefully reflect on their implementation of the Principles and to use the forum to actively engage with peers, share their insights and contribute to the discussions.

12. Ms. Beaven reiterated the goals of the seminar; explained the approach to be used; and guided participants in creating the groups for the initial sessions.

Agenda Item 2: Introduction to Fundamental Principles

13. In the presentation delivered by Mr. Ashish Kumar (consultant), he laid the groundwork for the seminar by providing a detailed overview of the Fundamental Principles which included firstly tracing the journey of the Principles from origin to adoption by the United National Statistical Commission (UNSC), Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) and then the United Nations General Assembly (GA) in 2014. This was followed by an explanation of each of the 10 Principles in terms of their meaning and scope. He also discussed the challenges and opportunities being faced by NSOs due to technological advancement and explosion of data sources, integrating these advancements in the work of national statistical systems which included use of big data, data from various digital platforms consisting of social media, web scrapping, mobile data etc. He expressed the importance of the role of data stewardship and governance. He also expressed the need for striking a balance between rapid data production and reliability and adherence to ethical standards.

14. He informed that the statistical commission in 56th session is considering two important issues: (i) establishment of FPOs Independent Advisory Board to guide implementation of the Principles with its mandate,

structure and reporting and (ii) development of separate set of guidelines for statisticians and policy makers. The discussions in the management seminar would provide important input in the decision making of the commission.

15. To solidify their understanding of principles, participants then engaged in an exercise of rewriting the Principles in their words without using any of the same words used in the original phrasing of the Principles. This exercise was small group discussions followed by presentations by each group and plenary.

16. The exercise proved useful in helping participants unpack each Principle. The outcome of this activity verified the individual and collective understanding of the selected principles. Summary of rewriting done by the participants is presented below:

REWRITING OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Principle 1		
<p>Relevance/ Realistic Official statistics provide inputs to stakeholders such as policy makers, craft data-drive policies that benefit the citizens</p> <p>Realistic meaning, they should portray the true picture of a context or situation</p>	<p>Impartiality/ Unbiased Free from intervention that will alter the outcome in use of official statistics</p> <p>Unbiased free from intervention in the sense that they will neither give benefits of disadvantages to anyone</p> <p>No interference on political considerations</p>	<p>Equal Access</p> <p>Share information without discrimination</p> <p>Dissemination without being against or in favor of anyone</p> <p>Everyone can access free of charge</p>

Principle 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Standards <p>Adopting to UN guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific principles <p>Adopting GSBPM, NQAF, GAMS0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional ethics <p>Independence Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust and integrity <p>Will be achieved when all of the above are followed</p>

Principle 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure correct use of data taking into account the statistical principles so that statistics are fit for purpose ▪ Safeguarding the use of statistics for the intended purpose ▪ To ensure correct use of data taking into account the statistical principles to safeguard the use of statistics for the intended purpose

Principle 5

Select the best fit data sources(s) with regular availability and giving consistent results and optimizing resources.

Principle 6

Legally safeguarding/ protecting the individual details of respondents and used primarily for the intended stats reasons.

Principle 7

- Defines concrete rules and obligations of NSS (institutions) to coordinate (stewardship)
- Enables compliance with international standards
- Ensures access to the data sources (admin data, surveys, censuses)
- Ensures equal access to all users, transparency and accountability
- Empowers NSO/ NSS to perform its duty
- Defines responsibilities of citizens and entities as respondents

Principle 8

- Coordination among NSO and other agencies is essential to achieve consistency, integration and efficiency in statistical system
- NSO shall play a leading role in the coordination of the national statistical system
- Must react first to national needs to ensure fast response due to rapid data request

Principle 9		
<p>Why we need this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparability – consistency – interoperability ▪ Efficiency – replicability ▪ Aggregation – subregional, regional global 	<p>Issues vs challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity ▪ Relevance ▪ Specificity – flexibility 	<p>How to mitigate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-development (inclusive) ▪ Modular – stepwise ▪ Capacity support and partnerships

Agenda Item 3: Country Practices – World Café Style

17. Representatives of Fiji, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, China and Mongolia delivered brief presentations on their country practices in relation to Principles 1 (Relevance, Impartiality and Equal Access), 2 (Professional Standards, Scientific Principles and Professional Ethics), 4 (Prevention of Misuse), 6 (Confidentiality) and 8 (National Coordination), respectively. The presentations helped participants gain insights on how the principles are currently being implemented in different country contexts. Participants were also enlightened on both opportunities and barriers to implementing the Principles.

- **Principle 1:** The representative of Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBoS) affirmed that the FBoS embraced all 10 Fundamental Principles. He shared his personal experience when the release of the 2019 household income and expenditure survey (HIES) led to a disagreement between the government and FBoS on the poverty estimates that resulted in the loss of credibility of the FBoS. Based on his personal experience he recommended that political interference in the work of the NSO should be avoided and should only occur in instances when the NSO fails to produce high quality official statistics.
- **Principle 2:** The representative of Malaysia detailed the importance of the FPOS as an essential element of the governance structure of DOSM. For DOSM, Principle 2 is not just a guideline but a commitment to excellence, ensuring the credibility, reliability, and integrity of Statistics and data. Good practices under the four elements of Principle 2 include: developing and implementing 5-year strategic plans; adhering to international standards; publishing an advanced release calendar, applying the General Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and establishing strategic partnerships and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with a range of agencies. Areas of focus are strengthening data governance to speed up availability of statistics, harnessing a culture of data use in evidence-based decision making, strengthening strategic co-operation for data sharing between agencies and strengthening the data ecosystem by investing in human capital development and infrastructure.
- **Principle 4:** The representative of Department of Statistics Singapore highlighted a range of strategies employed by the department to minimize the misuse of data. Some notable good practices were incorporating technical notes in publications/ data releases to support data use; publishing articles explaining trends on topical issues of national interest; preparing and disseminating data in a manner that facilitates easy understanding,

access and use; publishing data for use by key stakeholders; and investing in the development of human capacity of government agencies through national level training.

- **Principle 6:** The representative of Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong, China placed high priority on data confidentiality and maintaining trust. To that end, the department employed multiple layers of security to ensure the confidentiality of data including: (i) introducing policy and procedures such as security measures to safeguard data at all stages and establishing a department of security tasked among others to continuously review procedures; (ii) investing in technology to support data confidentiality; and (iii) engaging in continuous staff awareness through tailored trainings, knowledge and capacity building to promote more accountability and responsibility. In addition, the department uses data anonymization techniques such as hash tag identifiers to mask data and minimization of individual data.
- **Principle 8:** The representative of the National Statistics Office of Mongolia stated that the Law on Statistics provides all necessary provisions to empower the NSO in its role as coordinator of the system. He highlighted the role of the Statistical Council and Methodological Standing Committee as two mechanisms supporting national coordination and the systematic training of staff in the national statistical system. Challenges of national coordination included: limited statistical and high turnover of statistical units within line ministries; issues in accessing to data generated by government organizations; limited analytical capability of staff; statistical and physical infrastructure; and budget constraints.

18. Following the presentations, participants engaged in small group discussions on the 5 Principles using the World Café Style format. In the plenary that ensued, the following key points were noted about the specific Principles and their implementation (in general) of the FPOS in Asia and the Pacific:

- (i) The FPOS are still the guiding principles that ensure official statistics meet highest standards of quality, relevance, and integrity.
- (ii) The FPOS remains as relevant now as when they were first adopted 30 years ago.
- (iii) There is strong evidence of the emphasis placed on FPOS and full-on integration/implementation of the Principles in the work of NSO.
- (iv) Despite the commitment to adhering to the FPOS, there are challenges that continue to hinder implementation including: statistical capacity, budget, statistical legislation.

Agenda Item 4: Hypothetical case studies – What would you do if...?

19. For this session, participants were assigned to small groups, and each allocated a hypothetical scenario. The scenarios were developed to allow for the application of the Fundamental Principles in a range of different contexts and roles in the national statistics system. The exercise challenged participants to consider different perspectives and what they would do in each role and situation. Each group was allocated time for discussion and to formulate appropriate responses for each role. In the briefing session that followed, groups shared their responses to the scenarios and received feedback.

20. Participants appreciated that the exercise stimulated critical thinking and created a learning environment that promoted active engagement, open discussion and practical application of their knowledge and experience of the Fundamental Principles.

Agenda Item 5: What strategies to create awareness about Principles?

21. Similar to agenda item 4, this session included an activity that challenged participants to reflect on real world headlines that were linked to breaches of the Fundamental Principles and/ or the consequences of breaches. The approach for the session was like the previous session - discussions and brainstorming on the headlines in small groups followed by whole group discussion.

22. In addition to offering their reflections on the headlines, participants were invited to identify key audiences that they should target in raising awareness of the Principles as well as the approaches for awareness building.

23. Two additional takeaways were: (i) adherence to the FPOS should not be limited to select actors within the NSO but should be a joint responsibility of all NSO staff (individually and collectively); and (ii) fostering an appreciation/ understanding of the Principles (particularly at highest political level) is critical in avoiding breaches of the FPOS and ensuring sustained and consistent application of the principles, all of which are essential for continuous production and use of official statistics while maintaining the credibility of the NSO. One approach that could facilitate a better understanding of the Principles would be to explain them in a simplified way using non-technical language.

Agenda Item 6: How can we help each other to implement the Principles (World Café Style)

24. In this session, participants were placed in groups, each assigned a table leader who facilitated discussions on how different actors can assist with the FPOS implementation. The actors featured in this exercise included: academics, parliamentarians, ISI/ Professional associations, development banks, other NSOs, media and other users, ESCAP, regional organizations (e.g. SPC) and UNSD/ DESA. The small group discussions were coordinated in the World Café Style format.

25. In the plenary, table leaders reported back the following:

a) Other NSOs can support the implementation of the FPOS by

- Establishing bi-lateral or multi-lateral agreements between NSOs
- South-south co-operation (leveraging resources and practices)
- Sharing of resources
- Technical support (on topics such as communication of data/ results)
- Sharing methodologies and legislation (strengths of statistics acts)
- Providing support with networking
- Cost-sharing through partnerships with international organizations

b) ESCAP can support with (infrastructure and governance) by:

- Advising on text of new statistical legislation and supporting the process by informing rest of government on the importance of legislation as well as lobbying with decision makers

- Continue supporting NSOs with the conduct of the global assessments/ reviews of statistical systems. The reviews help with educating non-NSO agencies about the FPOS
- Developing guidelines or providing advice on data sharing (big data and administrative data)
- Using ESCAP session for annual meetings on FPOS as an opportunity to be in touch with high level officials
- Organizing seminars to share good practices and legislation.

c) UNSD/ DESA

- Raising awareness on obligation/ commitment made by countries (at UNGA) – at various levels (global, national, regional) and fora
- Helping in making better use of administrative and other data sources (more support on gaining access and using the data);
- Promoting (setting, enforcing, and building awareness) international standards (principles, guidelines, standards)
- Supporting the drafting of statistical legislation
- Reinforcing the need for professional statisticians throughout the statistical system

d) Regional Organizations (RO e.g. SPC)

- Creating environment where there is greater awareness and knowledge of the principles (can make judgement call on whether data is in keeping with FPOS)
- Linking FPOS with national legislation – empowers the national statistician in cases when there is political interference
- Countries with training institutes: ROs can help designing new courses on FPOS
- Continuous opportunities for statistical development
- Supporting with statistical literacy for data users / media on principles
- Ensuring that NSDS need to cover all elements of FPOS

e) Media and other users

- Media plays a role in dissemination of statistics
- Knowledge of use principles is essential to ensure correct interpretation
- Communication strategy with rules and procedures
- Conduct press conferences to explain reasons for variation
- Trainings/ seminars for data users on how to use and interpret
- Conduct users' satisfaction survey
- Dissemination in a more visually attractive manner (supports the understanding and use of statistics)

f) Development Banks

- Challenging countries to release data (IMP, World Bank)
- Playing a role in data quality assurance
- Challenging non-adherence to FPOS

g) Parliamentarians

- Support the legislative reform such as statistics act/ legislation
- Advancing national coordination (Principle 8) given their role in allocation of resources
- Support smooth coordination (interaction among stakeholders)
- Facilitating regular interaction such as setting statistical information kiosk for information sharing during parliamentary sessions
- Using simpler vocabulary to support better understanding

h) Academics

- Harness the support of the academics as partner through engagement
- Members of academic community sit on advisory councils / committees
- Support the preparation of papers based on data produced by the NSO

i) ISI/ Professional associations

- Facilitate membership of NSOs to ISI and other professional associations
- Facilitating capacity building of new members joining ISI
- Reviewing of processes or evaluation/ verification of reports
- Supporting with sampling methodologies
- Supporting the correct interpretation of data
- Facilitating data storage and access to regional data hub (need national hub)
- Assisting NSO when there are issues of political interference
- Engaging with universities to assist with methodologies and sampling

Agenda Item 7: Looking forward – what do we need to do going forward?

26. In the presentation delivered by the representative of the United Nations Statistics Division, participants were further enlightened on elements of the FPOS and the planned activities to observe the 30th year anniversary milestone.

27. Guided by the presentation, in particular the establishment of an independent Advisory Board to advocate for FPOS, participants were then invited to deliberate on three questions namely:

- i. Identify ONE task or activity that the Independent Advisory Board can take care of?
- ii. What should the Advisory Board NOT have as part of its terms of Reference?
- iii. What elements are missing and should be mentioned in the FPOS implementation guidelines?

Tasks or activities to be taken care of:

- Common challenges (national, regional, international)
- Complete review of non-compliance to FPOS

- Non-compliance report
- Support NSO if there issues of FPOS implementation that cannot be handled at the national level
- Board members can visit countries and provide guidance on implementation of FPOS (issue of financing of Board and number of countries that can be visited)
- Undertake critical thinking assessment of FPOS; use results to develop guidelines and reflect best practices
- Provide expertise and guidance

What should not be contained in TORs:

- Not be too bureaucratic
- It should not duplicate roles already taken by other existing bodies
- TOR should not include provisions that does not influence/ interfere with professional independence of NSO
- Should not give scores/ rank countries based on implementation (no beauty contest!)
- Should not enforce implementation of FPOS
- Do not comment on quality of data of NSOs
- Remain regional; not identify/ single out countries

What should be included in the implementation guidelines?

- Communication guidelines (engagement of stakeholders) to ensure adherence to official statistics
- Principles are invaluable to guide professional work and should be more forward looking and innovative (how to make NSO more progressive)
- Guidelines on to distinguish between Big data and admin data
- Require more data integration
- Data security (digital ID)
- To update manual on Statistical Organization (updating manuals) – document needs to be living document and updated more frequently
- Evaluation of implementation of FPOS
- How to empower NSO to access different data sources for official statistics (needs more explicit guidelines in addition to what has been provided in the implementation guidelines)
- Publication of Statistics – explicit mention that official statistics can only be produced by the NSO (how to extend to other non-NSO data producers)
- How to deal with misuse and misinterpretation of statistics
- Scope of statistical agency needs to be elaborated (not just NSO)
- Producers of admin data should be under ambit of NSO

Agenda Items 8 and 9: Revisiting the Fundamental Principles and Summary and next steps

28. In the concluding substantive session, participants were invited to openly share their learnings from the seminar, highlighting their main takeaways and actions to be taken upon their return to the office. The participants agreed with the importance of FPOS for their work in National Statistical Systems. They agreed to create awareness about these Principles and effectively implement them.

There was agreement that the Independent Advisory Board proposed in the Statistical commission should be set up with the suggested terms of reference. There was also recommendation that the guidelines both for Statistics professionals and policy makers should be developed separately to help in implementation of the Principles.

29. It was also suggested that international organizations should actively assist national statistical systems in implementation of the Principles. UNSD and UNESCAP should play an important role in the creation of awareness amongst the other parts of the governments by suitably taking the relevant issues to the UNGA and the ESCAP Commission.

30. Finally, the participants were invited to share their anonymous feedback on the event through an electronic evaluation questionnaire administered using Microsoft Forms. Time was also allocated for the electronic evaluation's completion, the results of which will be used for planning and conducting future seminars. A brief analysis of the responses received to the closed-ended items along with the most significant comments shared by participants is presented in section E of this report.

Agenda Items 10: Closing

31. The closing session featured brief remarks by the Director of SIAP in which she thanked participants for their active participation and DOSM for the seminar's excellent hosting.

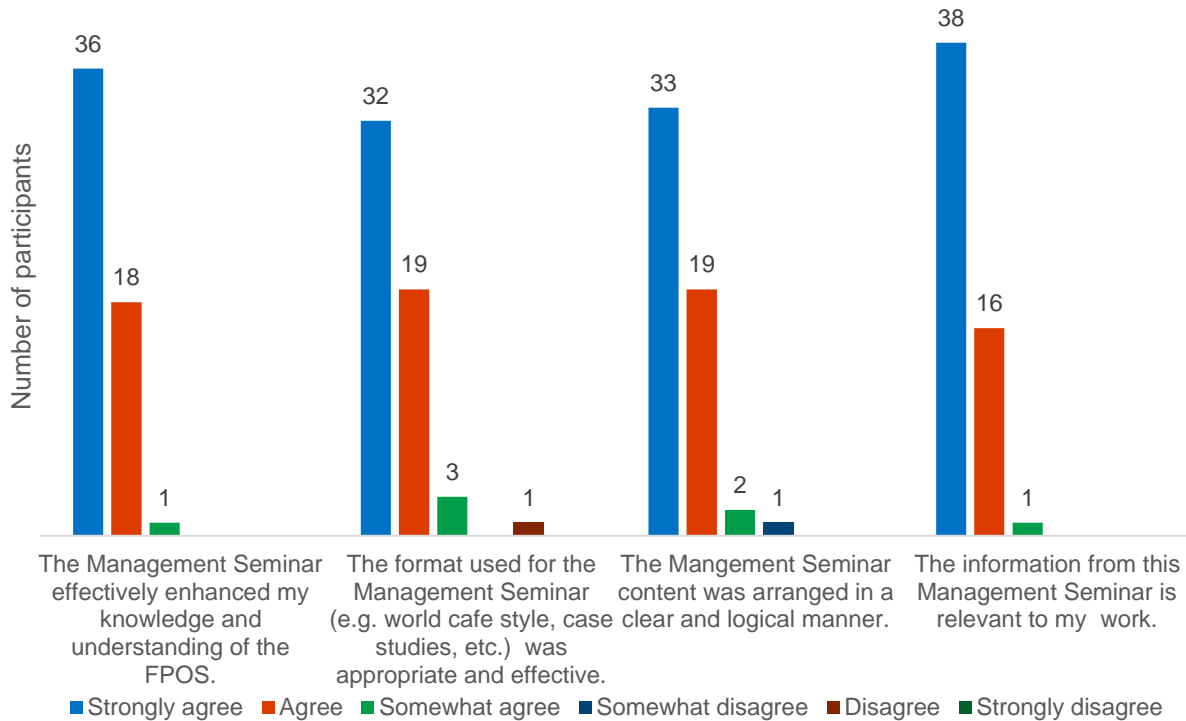
E. SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

32. The questionnaire used for the evaluation comprised both closed-ended and open-ended items, and elicited participants' views in core aspects of the seminar. Responses were received from 55 participants, yielding a response rate of 79.7 percent.

33. Participants' impressions of core aspects of the seminar were assessed through four closed-ended items, which were each scored along a 6-point scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". One of the statements measured the impact of the seminar in improving participants' knowledge and understanding of the FPOS. The three other statements focused on the format, content and relevance of the seminar.

34. More than ninety percent of the participants indicated agreement (through responses of either "Strongly agree" or "Agree") to each of the statements; with the mode being "Strongly Agree" in all cases. The distribution of responses to all 4 items is displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Participants’ responses to items on the relevance of the workshop



35. Participants were asked to share comments and recommendations on how to improve future Management Seminars. In addition to the comments such as “well managed and coordinated”, “well organized” and “well done” that demonstrated participants’ overall satisfaction with the seminar, participants offered a few other insights. Some of the most significant comments were grouped by main thematic areas as follows:

Content:

- “Mid review for what focus in the seminar.”
- “If there is a session on how to apply [FPOS] into our laws and if there are guidelines to do that. (“fpos” changed to “FPOS”)”
- “Knowledge about FPOS, share knowledge from other participants. Care style is good to taking knowledge from [each] other. (“every” changed to “each”)”
- “Just a suggestion: Maybe presentations from some countries in terms of their readiness towards incorporation of principles or what specific principles they need support for.”
- “More relevant topics.”
- “Follow up seminar”
- “Continue to hold it with emerging areas.”
- “Interesting but maybe we should have an ice breaking session before the start of the [seminar]”
- “the next program”

- “It’s good if MS (Management Seminar) also emphasizing on quantifying the level of FPOS [practicing] by the country.”
- “Continuous knowledge share should be the approach.”
- “Regular feedback and support to concerned stakeholders.”

Time allocation and management

- “More time for networking”
- “Make it short”
- “Extend to 3 days”
- “Please continue with allowing more time to draw from participants with regards to discussion sessions.”
- “Presentations and sessions to be within allocated times”
- “Short time”

Target audience

- “Engaging middle managers in these activities as well as leadership trainings and capacity building”

Format/ logistics

- “The moving part is less fun with senior participants.”

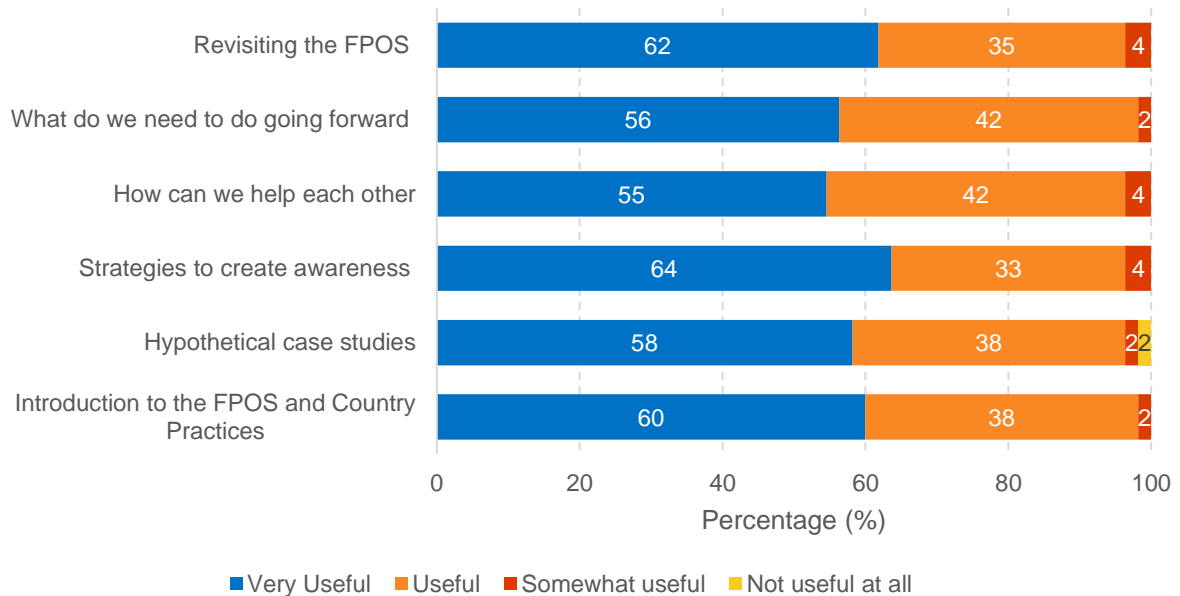
Presentations:

- “Share more docs to the participants especially docs produced during the seminar”
- ‘Brief country's / NSO's self-assessment on the implementation of PFOS [prior] the [workshop].’
- “Perhaps the presentation from [speakers’] sessions could also use PowerPoint or interactive presentation to attract participant's attention, and to make easier for us to make some notes.”

Feedback on sessions

36. Participants were also invited to provide specific feedback on the usefulness of each of the sessions, using a 4-point scale that ranged from “Very useful” to “Not useful at all”. Without exception, participants’ responses were clustered on the positive end of the scale, with more than 90% rating the sessions as either “Very useful” or “Useful”.

Figure 2
Participants' feedback on the usefulness of sessions by agenda item



Logistic Arrangements

On the question of logistic arrangements, most participants commended the organizers and expressed appreciation for them.

- “Excellent.”
- “I am fine and appreciate the efforts of the DOSM in retrieving my lost luggage.”
- “I also want to ask if the airline we are on will need us to pay for everything food water blanket etc., could it be a way forward to specifically notify on the email.”
- “All was good.”
- “Thank you very much, DOSM and SIAP. The activity is well managed, and participants are active.”
- “Logistics fine”
- “Good arrangement”
- “The arrangements made by DOSM are excellent. Thank you very much!”
- “Logistic arrangements are very good”
- “All was so perfect and well organised. All sessions were well thought out and were based on good engagement/interactive ideas.”
- “Thank you for conducting this kind of seminar.”
- “Excellent arrangement by Govt of Malaysia.”
- “thank you...and very good management”
- “The first day was quite long, a bit boring. But the second day was okay with the timing and the format.”
- “Thank you. Great job.”
- “Very impressive.”

- “Thanks, excellent organized”
- “This seminar was really effective, time accurate, and had a big impact.”
- “All was good.”
- “It is good.”
- “Continue do the best work”

37. The following suggestions were offered for consideration:

- “Flights arrangements to be more flexible to suit needs of participants not what Amex Un travel agencies wanted to.”
- “Perhaps notes / slide could be circulated prior the sessions”
- “Request to support 2 colleagues from each country NSO”
- “Please support 2 [officers] from each NSO for next event.”
- “If tour to DOSM was organized”

ANNEX 1
PROGRAMME

18th Management Seminar for Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific

Strengthening Official Statistics through the Fundamental
Principles of Official Statistics

14-15 December 2023, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Date/Time	Session and Events	Presenter
DAY 1: 14 DECEMBER 2023		
11:00-11:30	<p>Session 1: Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Welcome messages <p>Ms. Shailja Sharma <i>Director, SIAP</i></p> <p>Ms. Rachel Beaven <i>Director, ESCAP Statistics Division</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Overview of the meeting objectives, expected outcomes and agenda <p>Ms. Shailja Sharma <i>Director, SIAP</i></p>	
11:30-12:30	<p>Session 2: Introduction to Fundamental Principles</p> <p>The Chair will present an overview of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and share main highlights from the background paper. (10 minutes)</p> <p>Each table will then be given two Principles and asked to rewrite them to make them easier to understand and without using any of the same words used in the Principle itself.</p>	<p>Mr. Ashish Kumar <i>Former Director of SIAP & Former Director General, Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of India</i></p>
12:30-13:30	Lunch break	
13:30-15:00	<p>Session 3: Country Practices – World Café Style</p> <p>The Chair will ask five countries to present on a different Principle for 5 minutes to explain how they are implementing the Principle and to share one challenge they may have faced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Principle 1:</i> Relevance, Impartiality and Equal Access • <i>Principle 2:</i> Professional Standards, Scientific Principles and Professional Ethics • <i>Principle 4:</i> Prevention of Misuse • <i>Principle 6:</i> Confidentiality • <i>Principle 8:</i> National Coordination 	<p>Mr. Ashish Kumar</p> <p>Fiji</p> <p>Malaysia</p> <p>Singapore</p> <p>Hong Kong, China</p> <p>Mongolia</p>
	<p>After the presentations the presenters will become table hosts and host a discussion on their Principle. Participants will move between the tables every 10 minutes to discuss each of the five selected Principles. Table hosts will encourage participants to</p>	

Date/Time	Session and Events	Presenter
	share their own examples of good practice in implementing that Principle and any challenges they have faced. Table hosts will have two minutes to feedback on one example of good practice in implementing that Principle and one challenge. (Feedback from the groups will take place after coffee break.)	
15:00-15:30	Group Photo and Coffee break	
15:30-16:00	Session 3: Continued Table hosts will have two minutes to feedback on one example of good practice in implementing that Principle and one challenge.	Mr. Ashish Kumar
16:00-17:00	Session 4: Hypothetical case studies – What would you do if.....? Each table will be given a hypothetical short case study. Participants will also be given a role (e.g. National Statistician, Prime Minister, Head of a Civil Society Organisation, Chair of ISI Ethics Committee, Finance Minister) and then there will be a discussion on what would be the recommended course of actions in the short and long term for that scenario.	Ms. Rachel Beaven
17:00-18:00	Session 5: What strategies to create awareness about Principles? This session will take the form of an open discussion.	Ms. Rikke Munk Hansen <i>Chief, ESCAP SD</i>
19:30-21:00	Colours of Malaysia MADANI: Malaysia's Delight	

Date/Time	Session and Events	Presenter
DAY 2: 15 DECEMBER 2023		
09:00-09:15	Recap of Day 1	Ms. Sinovia Moonie <i>Statistician/ Lecturer, SIAP</i>
09:15-10:30	<p>Session 6: How can we help each other to implement the Principles? (World café style)</p> <p>This will be a World Café style discussion where table hosts manage a discussion on how their organisation can help countries to implement the Principles.</p> <p>Tables will be hosted by relevant experts who will start with a 2-minute pitch on their role before the participants start to circulate.</p> <p>Participants will be grouped and asked to move to the next table every 10 minutes.</p> <p>At the end of the session, each table host will present highlights of the discussion at their table (also 2 minutes)</p>	<p>Chairs: Mr. Ashish Kumar Mr. Gabriel Gamez <i>Inter-regional Adviser United Nations Statistics Division</i></p> <p>Table leaders: Ms. Rikke Munk Hansen <i>Chief, ESCAP SD</i></p> <p>Mr. Claire Dennis Mapa <i>Undersecretary, National Statistician and Civil Registrar General, Philippines Statistics Authority</i></p> <p>Mr. Gobinda Prasad Samanta <i>Chief Statistician of India cum Secretary,</i></p> <p>Mr. Nadeem Akhtar <i>Statistics Adviser, SPC</i></p> <p>Mr. Gogita Todradze Executive Director, National Statistics Office of Georgia</p>
10:30-11:00	Coffee and tea break	
11:00-12:30	<p>Session 7: Looking forward – what do we need to do going forward?</p> <p>Presentation by Gabriel to present on the possible new Advisory Board followed by a world café discussion to cover the five aspects of the role of the new Advisory Board.</p> <p>World café discussion tables to discuss the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Awareness Raising and Advocacy.</i> b. <i>Prevention of Breaches</i> c. <i>Identification of Breaches</i> 	Mr. Gabriel Gamez

Date/Time	Session and Events	Presenter
	<p><i>d. Addressing Breaches and Non-Compliance</i></p> <p><i>e. Reporting and Communication</i></p> <p>Tables will share feedback on the key discussion points.</p>	
12:30-14:30	Lunch	
14:30-16:00	<p>Session 8: Revisiting the Fundamental Principles – are they still relevant and sufficient in the context of use of non-traditional and non-conventional data, COVID 19 like situation etc.</p> <p>Discussion amongst participants in small groups and then feedback to plenary.</p>	<p>Mr. Gabriel Gamez Ms. Rachel Beaven</p>
16:00-16:30	Coffee Break	
16:30-17:30	<p>Session 9: Summary and next steps</p> <p>Final summing up and agree key messages to feed back to UN Statistical Commission and any points for Committee on Statistics.</p> <p>Evaluation Participants will provide feedback on Management Seminar through an electronic questionnaire.</p>	<p>Mr. Seiji Takata <i>Deputy Director, SIAP</i></p> <p>Mr. Ashish Kumar Ms. Rachel Beaven</p>
17:30-17:45	Closing messages	<p>Ms. Shailja Sharma <i>Director, SIAP</i></p>

ANNEX 2
PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS BY SEX AND COUNTRY

Country	Sex of Participant		Grand Total
	Female	Male	
Armenia	0	1	1
Azerbaijan	0	1	1
Bangladesh	0	1	1
Bhutan	0	1	1
Cambodia	0	2	2
China	2	3	5
Fiji	0	1	1
Georgia	0	1	1
Hong Kong	0	1	1
India	0	2	2
Indonesia	1	2	3
Japan	1	1	2
Kazakhstan	0	1	1
Kiribati	1	0	1
Kyrgyzstan	1	0	1
Lao People's Democratic Republic	1		1
Malaysia	7	6	13
Maldives	1	0	1
Mongolia	0	1	1
Nauru	0	1	1
Nepal	0	1	1
Philippines	2	3	5
Republic of Korea	4	1	5
Samoa	1	0	1
Singapore	0	1	1
SPC	0	1	1
Sri Lanka	1	0	1
Tajikistan	0	2	2
Thailand	3	0	3
Timor-Leste	0	1	1
Tonga	0	1	1
Turkey	0	1	1
UNSD	0	2	2
Uzbekistan	0	1	1
Viet Nam	2	0	2
TOTAL	28	41	69

