



Background

The Workshop on Data Governance, Innovation and Quality Assurance in a Changing Data Ecosystem for the Asia-Pacific Region will take place from 13 to 16 October 2026 in Chiba, Japan. The workshop is jointly organised by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), with the support of the Office of the Director-General for Policy Planning on Statistical Policy, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), Government of Japan. The workshop is also supported by the United Nations Development Account 18th tranche project, which will facilitate the participation of selected beneficiary countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The workshop will be conducted in English.

Official statistics are essential for informed decision-making, public accountability and public trust. As demand grows for more timely, granular and integrated data, national statistical offices are increasingly expected to draw on administrative records, geospatial information, data science, artificial intelligence and other new and alternative data sources. These developments offer important opportunities to modernise statistical production and better meet user needs, while also raising challenges related to governance, data access, confidentiality, transparency, interoperability, methodological soundness and quality assurance.

Against this background, the workshop aims to strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices from selected countries in the Asia-Pacific region to respond to these opportunities and challenges. It will address data governance, innovation and quality assurance as mutually reinforcing dimensions of modern official statistics. The workshop will first consider the opportunities and risks associated with innovation and new data sources, before moving to governance and enabling institutional frameworks, data stewardship and modern statistical production architecture, and quality assurance approaches suited to a fast-changing data environment.

The workshop is intended for officials from national statistical offices whose work relates to one or more of the workshop's areas. This may include officials involved in data governance, innovation, quality

assurance, data stewardship, institutional coordination, or the modernisation of statistical production processes. Participants are expected to actively contribute to the discussions by sharing national experiences, challenges and possible solutions from their own institutional contexts.

The workshop will combine presentations, national experiences, practical exercises, breakout discussions and facilitated exchanges. Particular emphasis will be placed on peer learning and on providing participants with sufficient time to exchange national experiences, challenges and possible solutions. The interactive parts of the workshop may take the form of country experiences, facilitated roundtables, breakout discussions or practical exercises, allowing flexibility when the detailed agenda is finalised.

The opening session will introduce the context and the workshop will proceed as follows:

Key segments:

1. Innovation and new data sources: opportunities and risks for official statistics

Participants will explore how innovation, new technologies and new data sources can support the modernisation of official statistics. The session will consider opportunities in data science, artificial intelligence, administrative data, geospatial information, citizen-generated data, and other alternative data sources. It will also address related risks and challenges, including bias, privacy, transparency, methodological robustness, sustainability, institutional capacity and public trust.

2. Data governance and enabling institutional and policy frameworks

This segment will focus on the governance, institutional and policy conditions needed for national statistical offices to operate effectively in a changing data ecosystem. Participants will discuss data governance for official statistics, coordination across the national statistical system, the role of the national statistical office in the broader data ecosystem, data access and data-sharing arrangements, confidentiality provisions, ethical and responsible data use, and the relevance of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in a changing data environment.

3. Data stewardship, interoperability and modern statistical production architecture

This segment will focus on the operational aspects of managing, integrating and using data across the statistical production process. Participants will discuss data stewardship functions, metadata, standards, data curation, data integration, interoperability, statistical-geospatial integration and data exchange. The segment will also address how modern statistical production architecture, including the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, can support the effective integration of multiple data sources and improve the efficiency, coherence and adaptability of official statistics.

4. Quality assurance in a changing data ecosystem

The final thematic segment will focus on quality assurance approaches for official statistics in the context of innovation, new data sources and modernised production processes. Participants will discuss the relevance of the UN National Quality Assurance Framework and related tools for assessing and managing quality across institutional settings, statistical processes and outputs. Particular attention will be given to quality assurance for administrative data, geospatial data and other new or alternative data sources, as well as to the role of metadata, transparency and continuous improvement in maintaining trust in official statistics.

Objectives

Strengthen understanding of innovation and new data sources: To equip participants with a deeper appreciation of how data science, AI, administrative records, geospatial information, citizen-generated data and other alternative sources can modernise official statistics, while critically examining associated risks such as bias, privacy, transparency, sustainability and public trust.

Enhance knowledge of data governance and enabling institutional frameworks: To improve participants' capacity to design and implement data governance arrangements, including coordination across the national statistical system, data-sharing mechanisms, confidentiality provisions, ethical use of data, and the application of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in a changing data ecosystem.

Build operational skills in data stewardship and interoperability: To strengthen participants' ability to manage and integrate data through modern statistical production architecture, including metadata management, standards, data curation, interoperability, statistical-geospatial integration, and the use of models such as the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM).

Improve capacity to apply quality assurance in a modern data ecosystem: To develop participants' skills in applying the UN National Quality Assurance Framework (UN-NQAF) and related tools to ensure quality across processes and outputs, with special attention to administrative, geospatial and alternative data sources, transparency, metadata, and continuous improvement.

Facilitate peer learning and regional exchange: To promote active sharing of national experiences, challenges and solutions across Asia-Pacific countries, fostering a regional community of practice on data governance, innovation and quality assurance.

Support identification of national priorities and next steps: To enable participants to articulate country-specific priorities, capacity gaps and actionable next steps for modernising statistical production and strengthening institutional readiness for a changing data ecosystem.

Expected outcomes

- a stronger understanding of the opportunities and risks associated with innovation and new data sources for official statistics;
- increased awareness of data governance and enabling institutional and policy frameworks in national statistical systems;
- improved understanding of data stewardship, interoperability and modern statistical production architecture;
- enhanced capacity to apply quality assurance approaches in a changing data ecosystem;
- strengthened peer exchange among countries in the Asia-Pacific region on national experiences, challenges and possible solutions;
- identification of national priorities, capacity needs and possible next steps to support the modernisation of official statistics.

Tentative agenda

In general, morning sessions will be conducted from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and afternoon sessions from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The detailed programme will be finalised in consultation with the organisers and resource persons.

Day 1 - Tuesday, 13 October 2026

- Opening of the Workshop
- Session 1: Innovation and new data sources: opportunities and risks for official statistics
- Interactive exchange and practical application: National experiences, challenges and possible responses related to innovation, new technologies and new data sources

Day 2 - Wednesday, 14 October 2026

- Session 2: Data governance and enabling institutional and policy frameworks
- Interactive exchange and practical application: National experiences, challenges and possible responses related to data governance, coordination, legislation and enabling policy frameworks

Day 3 - Thursday, 15 October 2026

- Session 3: Data stewardship, interoperability and modern statistical production architecture
- Interactive exchange and practical application: National experiences, challenges and possible responses related to data stewardship, interoperability and the modernisation of statistical production processes

Day 4 - Friday, 16 October 2026

- Session 4: Quality assurance in a changing data ecosystem
- Interactive exchange and practical application: Applying quality assurance considerations to new data sources, data stewardship and modern production processes
- Concluding roundtable: Key insights, national priorities, capacity needs and possible next steps
- Closing of the Workshop

Organisers

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