Day 1 summary

SIAP Management Seminar on the Future of Economic Statistics

Demands and challenges

1. Demands on statistical systems for economic statistics are increasing
2. Demands include
   - Integrated data on economic, social and environmental dimensions
   - Disaggregated data, including rural/urban, subnational, etc
   - Tourism satellite accounts, SEEA accounts, inequality statistics
3. GDP remains important; economic statistics should be developed to augment, not replace GDP
4. Challenges include
   - Quality, including availability and timeliness,
   - Financial and human resources
   - National and subnational coordination
5. Special challenges for countries with small populations, including small island states
   - Low number of staff in statistical offices
   - Too many indicators from national and international commitments

Responding to the demand

1. Prioritization of which statistics should be produced needs to be country led and country driven
2. Collaboration between statisticians and users needs to be strengthened to ensure that statistics is relevant and used
3. Statistical literary needs to be built at all levels, including to enable users to better articulate their demands for statistics
4. There is a need to make much better use of data already available; better integration of the national statistical system is part of addressing this problem
5. Communication and outreach by statistical offices need to be scaled up
6. Use of common methodology, definitions and classifications is key to achieving integration across the national statistical system and to ensure comparability over time and between countries.

Globalization

- There is a need to agree on guidance and methodology at the global level on measuring value chains
- Certain concepts and definitions need to be clarified including what is an enterprise given their multinational nature
- Better coordination is needed in order to ensure that Regional and Global Input-Output tables can be produced (one of the major difficulties is the incongruence in data between counties); this is related to putting in place mechanisms for countries to share trade data confidentially
- There is a need to produce Regional and Global input output tables in order to better meet the needs of policy makers.

Digitalization and e-commerce

- Work needs to be done to properly define e-commerce (what is in scope?)
  - What jobs are part of e-commerce?
  - How do we measure penetration? (maybe using proxies such as internet usage, smart phone availability)
  - How do we measure the portion of e-commerce that is part of international trade?
  - How do we measure the portion of e-commerce that is part of other sectors of the economy (e.g. what portion of an UBER ride is with the transportation sector and what portion is with e-commerce)?
- Data that is collected by companies such as Facebook and Google is valuable; guidance is needed on how to measure it. Is advertising revenue sufficient?
- E-wallet/money—how do we leverage transactions that are made electronically to measure e-commerce activities?
- What is the value added of the digital economy?

Inequality

- Should be part of policy discussion; there are issues with capturing outliers. Areas of focus should include:

- Distributional analysis of: income, expenditures, consumption, education, employments, assets, access to services

- How often should inequality data be reported in order to be policy relevant

- There is a need for disaggregation, especially subnational inequality data

- Data should also be disaggregated by age and gender.

Beyond GDP / Well-being

- NSO should play a leading role for measuring well-being; such work should be statistically sound and based on the principles of official statistics
- There is a need to GDP to be complimented by other data
  - Subjective measures of happiness
  - Equality measures (see section on inequality above)
  - Adjusted measures of GDP (e.g. adjusting for environmental degradation
- Trust in institutions is important as well as measures of social capital, education and health

Sustainability/SDGs

Priority areas include
- Climate change statistics/Green growth framework
  - Disaster related statistics
  - Poverty
- Land and water resources (SEEA type of accounts more broadly)
  - Ocean accounts
  - Land resources
- Sustainable Tourism accounts
- Social indicators
  - Education especially quality of education
  - Health specially relating to immunization and other important aspects
  - Labor data (including data on unemployment and underemployment)

Global, regional and national initiatives to meet country needs/demands

How can NSOs be more responsive to the demand from policy makers/public for current or new accounts and statistics?

- How can we be more responsive to demands from our users through changes in statistical operations and statistical infrastructure
- How can we increase in-country and multi-country collaboration and increase concerted experimentation on agreed priorities?
- How can we improve the agility of our systems of economic statistics and contribute to the update of the system of economic statistics?

Key takeaways

- We have two levels of experimentation going on – technical and organizational
  - Asia and Pacific has such diversity, different levels of development, one size will not fit all
  - Diversity is an opportunity
- Responsiveness is key
  - There is an importance of legislation to be responsive to new sources
  - Responsiveness to needs for coordination
  - Responsiveness to user trust
  - Responsive to new technology and big data
- Increase in-country and multi-country collaboration through innovative mechanisms
- Be agile and allow for experimentation
  - don't necessarily lock in new frameworks and standards too early
  - experiment with big data, admin data, etc
- Carefully manage the data demand deluge

How to generate what has been identified as priority statistics

Development and update of <u>conceptual frameworks</u> of economic statistics (for macroeconomic, business, trade and price statistics)

- We are getting increasingly complex here and NSOs are not keeping pace with what is required. There is a deluge of demand. Don't create demand if there really is no demand.
- When looking at the frameworks, keep the following in mind
  - What are the challenges, what are the policies, can it be efficiently implemented, does it support integrated statistics, is it intuitive
- Infrastructure (e.g. transport, ICT, cities, digital) has to be better understood
  - Some elements are not connected (e.g. business and trade).
- Need frameworks for
  - Global value chain
  - Natural capital economy (implementation of SEEA)
  - Price statistics (are we overestimating inflation, how can we buy the commodities)
  - Human capital economy

Update of the <u>statistical operations</u> using administrative and big data, microdata linking, geo-coding, sharing and exchanging data, etc.

- Integrated register/integrated information system are very important
  - To reduce provider burden
  - Issues include common identifiers, legal environment, technical capacity in the NSS (not just NSO), intersectoral collaborations, and improving existing systems (e.g. aligning definitions, classifications between administrative registers and statistical needs)
- New data sources
  - Such as geospatial data (satellite), mobile phone data
  - Issues include legal environment, confidentiality, cooperation
- Open data sharing platform (its not just ICT)
  - Cooperation framework is essential. Other issues include privacy, standards, legal environment
  - Microdata as well as aggregates
- Capacity building
  - In international standards, leveraging regional and sub-regional mechanisms, in building trust, including users and producers, in using technology (e.g. blockchain) for real-time, continuous data collection

Update of the <u>statistical infrastructure</u> including capacity building, update of legal statistical framework, profiling MNEs for statistical registers, introduction of cloud-environment

Statistical infrastructure is integral part of a statistical system therefore it needs to be upgraded to meet today and future demands. Also need to mobilize the NSS and address how to have access to big data, open data, and other sources, to deliver

- Legislation and legal frameworks
  - Update and revised legal act. To raise or level up the status of official statistics. MOUs with private sector and ministries. Second bill or Act with Data Sharing Act. Covering aspects of confidentiality, keep in mind accessibility of data as well as the quality of the data itself
- Build statistical literacy – start early
- Quality assurance frameworks for different data sources (e.g. for administrative data, for big data, etc)
- Business registration - establish or update business registration.
  - Qn on how to capture informal sector especially in e-commerce
- Capacity building
  - Capability building framework which NSOs can follow, start training throughout the NSS, based on train-the-trainer approach
  - Need statisticians and programmers in all levels of Govt
  - Infrastructure for cloud environment on a regional or sub-regional basis so country itself can be empowered to have access to safe cloud-based environment without investing in their own

Development of <u>partnerships</u> for innovative data solutions and mutual country support

- Country-led Partnership for innovation
  - To help everyone work out what is meant and how to measure 'it' e.g. China and Hong Kong, China experiences on Digital Economy
- Multi-country partnership
  - South-south partnerships helping out other NSOs e.g. Pacific Coalition on using CAPI for surveys
- Sectoral Partnership within the country at national level
  - E.g. NSO-Private sector, NSO-local government, NSO-NGO, NSP-Ministeries
- Regional Forums for showcasing new innovative data solutions
  - E.g. KOSIS from KOSTAT.   Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS) is a website providing every statistics possible in Korea (from KOSTAT, DPRK, private sector, etc) to promote the statistical literacy of public.
  - There could be a 'KOSIS" type forum at the regional level for showcasing innovative data solutions across the regional community. Create multiplier effect.

System of <u>governance</u> at the national, regional and global level for the system of economic statistics

- Reform/revise/develop principles (global level)
  - In current situation, are the FPOS sufficient? e.g. add private sector and big data to the list of data sources; clearer statement of role of Chief Statistician to lead/coordinate the NSS; stronger or clearer statements about protecting secrecy of respondents as well as better statements around dissemination risks (e.g. for disseminating business microdata data)
  - Develop principles for how countries could/should manage the data demand deluge
  - Develop principles for what is a Chief Statistician
- Promote principles into practice (regional level)
  - Share common methodologies among countries, transfer technologies and knowledge among countries, share good practices between regional or culturally similar countries
- Adopt and adapt ourselves to reflect standards (national level)
  - Including legal frameworks, human resource frameworks
  - Communicate with users how to use existing statistics better – don't just create new statistics
  - Create annual or multi-year plans
  - Involve whole-of-government to improve the statistical system – create networks for experimentation
- Meeting local level needs (local level)
  - Strengthen local capacity, promote partnerships between localities

Next steps

- ESCAP, SIAP and UNSD to prepare a meeting report which will be
  - provided to the Global Friends of Chair Group on Economic Statistics as Asia and Pacific contribution
  - Joint reference point for capacity building, knowledge sharing, etc in Asia and the Pacific to be used by ASEAN, SPC, SIAP, FAO, ESCAP, UNSD, ADB and other regional agencies
  - Used to consider the priority areas identified for the region regarding the update to the economic statistics system and engagement of countries in these particular areas
- Admin things (e.g. photos on website, ppt's shared, etc)

Key takeways