

Summary Assessment

Committee on Statistics, sixth session Bangkok 16-19 October

I. Introduction

The Committee on Statistics, sixth session was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 16-19 October 2018.

A questionnaire assessing the relevance, effectiveness and quality of the meeting was distributed to each delegation of ESCAP members and associate members. In total, 26 of the 29 members and associate members in attendance submitted questionnaires. The overall response rate is therefore 90 per cent. The present assessment was prepared on the basis of these questionnaire responses.

The main purpose of this assessment is to support the secretariat's ongoing efforts to improve its servicing of session.

II. Attendance

The Committee on Statistics was attended by 47 per cent of all ESCAP members and associate members (29 of 62). Some 25 of delegations (86 per cent) were headed by officials from the respective capital, including 1 participant at ministerial level. In total there were 110 individual participants, of whom 43 were female (39 per cent).

A number of other entities participated, including United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations. From these entities, there were 44 participants of whom 21 were female (49 per cent). Therefore, the total number of participants from both governments and other entities is 154 individuals and the total number of female participants is 64 (42 per cent).

III. Relevance of the session

Respondents agreed that the agenda items reflected the present development trends and issues in the Asian and Pacific region. The respondents also rated positively on relevance to the needs and priorities of their countries/territories (See table 1).

There were some suggestions and comments on the relevance of the session:

- Sessions were relevant with the participating countries.
- Excellent! Yes, relevant
- Environmental Statistics – Land, Water, Forest
- We have learned from other member countries experiences in adapting and implementing of the NBDS as well as the government policy on national social economic development and their progress on implementing the SDG at the national level. Therefore, we hope that the workshop/seminar on sharing good practices is encouraged to countries.

Table 1

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100) ¹
The agenda items reflected the present development trends/issues of the Asian and Pacific region.	87
The agenda items are relevant to the needs and priorities of my country/territory.	87

IV. Effectiveness of the session

The respondents rated favorably agenda item 11 on member States' perspectives on navigating policy with data to leave no one behind; and agenda item 7 on consideration of the draft declaration on navigating policy with data to leave no one behind. Good reviews were made regarding the session effectiveness in identifying priority areas and emerging issues in the region; and that the session documents were of high quality, concise and clear. (See table 2).

There were some suggestions and comments on the effectiveness of the session:

- Encourage members to make statements
- Maybe Secretariat can follow-up with attending members what they do with the Declaration if they have make any difference relating to 2030 Agenda or role of NSOs in the country.

Table 2

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
Item 2: Review of overall progress with respect to the document entitled "Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective	84

¹ Methodology, an index between 100 and 0 is given, whereby, at a value of 100, all respondents rate to a great extent to the statement, and, at a value of 0, all respondents rate to not at all.

Index = actual value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses / maximum value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses.

vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community”.	
Item 3a. Economic statistics	83
Item 3b. Population and social statistics	83
Item 3c. Civil registration and vital statistics	84
Item 3d. Disaster-related statistics	79
Item 3e. Agricultural and rural statistics	84
Item 4a. Partners and Statistics Development in Asia Pacific	79
Item 4b. Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific	80
Item 7: Consideration of the draft declaration on navigating policy with data to leave no one behind.	85
Item 11: Member States’ perspectives on navigating policy with data to leave no one behind.	88
The session effectively highlighted regional development trends and issues.	81
The session effectively identified priority areas and emerging issues in the region.	83
The session effectively promoted dialogue on regional and subregional approaches to statistics	80
The session effectively addressed gender-related issues.	79
The session documents were of high quality, concise and clear.	83

V. Efficiency of the session

The respondents rated positively on the time available for discussion during the session. The respondents also rated positively that the organisation of work prior and in between Committee sessions enabled the session to proceed effectively, in particular, the Bureau; the Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics; and the Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics (Table 3).

There were some suggestions and comments on the efficiency of the organizational and servicing aspects of the session:

- Updated version of the power point slides should be posted on the web. These new set of slides were already given to the conference officer.
- A bit of improvement in the communication.
- I thought the photo booth and display was a good initiative. Well done team!

- Generally, I think there is a lot of repetition in the meetings. I think moving the meeting along faster would keep people more engaged allow more topics to be covered, be more efficient with everyone’s time. You have an informed audience so pushing us harder I think is appropriate.
- Allow coffee mugs in the Conference Room to keep people stay inside and not fall asleep during the meeting. Request participants to read relevant documents before each session to make discussions more alive or Secretariat can provide folder with all materials to make sure everyone read the documents and get engaged. Chair or Secretariat to stimulate discussions on issues. I felt that the meeting lacked debates and real dialogue on issues, maybe member States all share the same understanding so there was nothing new to talk about!

Table 3

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The time available for discussion during the session was adequate.	87
The servicing by the secretariat was efficient and effective.	85
The communications from the secretariat to the member States on the preparations for the session were effective.	85
The following organisation of work prior and in between Committee sessions enabled the session to proceed effectively:	
a. Bureau	85
b. Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics	82
c. Steering Group for the Regional Programme on Economic Statistics	85
d. Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics	85
e. Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific	84
f. Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific for the Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.	84

VI. ESCAP statistical products

More than half of respondents are aware of statistical publications. Over 80 per cent are aware of the Statistical online database; and Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2017 and have used it as reference (See Table 4).

Table 4

Publications	Are you aware of this product?		Have you ever used it as reference?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Statistical online database	20 (83%)	4 (17%)	16 (76%)	5 (24%)
2. Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2017	20 (83%)	4 (17%)	14 (67%)	7 (33%)
3. Stats Brief	19 (79%)	5 (21%)	13 (59%)	9 (41%)
4. Working Paper Series of Statistics Division	14 (58%)	10 (42%)	11 (50%)	11 (50%)

VII. Other comments

The respondents indicated concrete actions that their government would take in response to the decisions and recommendations of the session included:

- We will consider the additional recommendations for the Economic Stats Steering Group.
- Yes, we all have to improve on our statistical system to strongly support the 2030 SD Agenda.
- The country policies influentially should be developed well and effectively and efficiently manner. Continuous and close relation and communication will be more effective to enter the proper development of Stat since the field is faster changing.
- This will enhance: 1. Political support in terms of increasing budget allocation for production of statistics related to the 2030 Agenda and all other global, regional and national data needs, necessary for policy and decision-making. 2. Make the sessions more engaging maybe presentation instead of country statements.

VIII. Conclusion

Overall, in conclusion, responding delegations agreed that the sixth session of the Committee on Statistics was successful.

The session was positively seen as relevant to the needs of the region; including in highlighting regional development trends and issues. The efficiency of the session also received very positive feedback, in particular, the time available for discussion during the session.
