COURSE REPORT

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Prepared on: June 16, 2014

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Course Title	:	Third Regional Workshop on Production and Use of Vital Statistics
Course Dates/Duration	:	26-30 May 2014
Course Venue	:	Statistical Training Institute, Daejeon, Republic of Korea
Course Director	:	Aurora G. Talan-Reolalas
Number of Participants	:	Total Pax = 26 Number of Participating Countries = 15
		By Gender: Male = 14; Female = 12
Number of Sessions	:	Modules = 9; Sessions = 6
Host Agency	:	Statistical Korea (Kostat)
Other Cooperating Agencies	:	UNSIAP, UNESCAP and UNSD

II. COURSE CONTENTS

Course Background

Reliable vital statistics are essential for producing timely and accurate population estimates and demographic and health statistics, which are basic requirements for effective policy-making and evaluation and efficient resource allocation. Social and economic sectors, including health, education, labour and employment, urban planning, finance and economic development, industry and trade, social insurance, environment, population, business, and commerce require solid and up-to-date statistics on population size and distribution, and on levels and trends in fertility and mortality. The education, employment and other social sectors responsible for the provision of public services require accurate vital statistics at the levels of national, local administration and community service provision. The health sector depends on trustworthy data on levels, trends and causes of mortality to identify emerging health threats and high risk groups and provide the evidence base for selecting priority interventions and allocating resources. Accurate information on cause of death is essential to understanding disease burden and influencing policy. Yet, despite the importance of vital statistics, there is universal acknowledgement of the urgent need to improve their availability, timeliness and quality.

In the Asia-Pacific region, in 2012, the "Make Every Life Count" regional initiative to improve CRVS in Asia and the Pacific was launched and a Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics was endorsed by ESCAP member States. The World Health Organization and Health Metrics Network convened the first ever Global Summit on CRVS in Bangkok. The Summit was attended by over 220 participants from 47 countries 34 international organizations and academic institutions. In 2014, ESCAP organized the first meeting of the "*Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific*" in Bangkok that made five strategic recommendations for the future activities in the region[1]. With the view of contributing to the global and regional initiatives, SIAP and ESCAP Statistics Division implemented two training workshops in 2012 and 2013 that aimed to increase knowledge and skills of government statisticians in (i) production and use of vital statistics from different

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[1] http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Final-RSG-CRVS1-Meeting-Report-030214.pdf

sources particularly civil registration, and (ii) turning vital data into statistical tables according to the internationally agreed principles and standards. The workshop in 2013 also aimed to improve training capacity of countries by developing and testing training materials.

The third regional workshop is organised by SIAP in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and Statistics Korea to assist national statistical systems in the establishment of a functioning vital statistics system for the production and use of regular, reliable and accurate vital statistics through the adoption of the latest international principles and recommendations on production and use of quality vital statistics as provided in Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System (Revision 3)[2].

Course Objectives

The workshop aims to (a) increase the knowledge of the government statisticians and civil registration officials about the revised international principles and recommendations for compiling, processing and disseminating vital statistics; (b) enhance their understanding on some strategies in improving civil registration and vital statistics system; and (c) improve their capability in identifying gaps and challenges in applying international standards to improve their vital statistics system. The workshop also aims to provide a platform for participants to share their national experiences and learn from good practices.

Course Outline

Topic	Description
Overview of the Workshop	This overview will inform participants on the details of the programme of work, including different modules, as well as of the methods of work, and the composition and functioning of group discussion. It will also guide participants through the literature provided to them in print and in electronic format.
Module 1 – Revised international standards for a vital statistics system	**Session 1 – United Nations principles and recommendations for civil registration and vital statistics historical overview** This presentation by UNSD will walk the participants through the origin and development of international standards for civil registration and vital statistics. It will also outline, in broad strokes, the changes in the current revision compared to the previous ones.
Module 1 – Revised international standards for a vital statistics system	**Session 2 – Presentation (UNSD): Functioning of Vital Statistics System and its coordination and integration** The presentation will focus on international recommendations in setting up and running a civil registration system, as well as the necessary coordination and integration within it. (Chapter II of Part 1 of the Principles and Recommendations, Rev. 3)
Country presentations on Functioning of Vital Statistics	**Guide Questions:** Give a brief overview of vital statistics system and its relationship with civil registration and health institutions in your country.

[2] http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/principles/unedited_M19Rev3en.pdf

System (15 minutes each)	Describe the set-up and running of civil registration and coordination among official agencies (with respect to coverage, definitions, classification and tabulation) and statistics integration and consistency of vital statistics and other official statistics within your system.
Group Discussion	**Guide Questions:** How do national systems compare to international recommendations? What are the obstacles? What would be the best approaches to adapt them to international recommendations? Is there a coordination body at the national level? Centralized or decentralized?
Module 1 – Revised international standards for a vital statistics system	**Session 3 – Presentation (UNSD): Internationally recommended definitions of vital events and recommended topics** The presentation will focus on internationally recommended definitions of vital events and characteristics of the event and actors needed for statistical collection, processing and dissemination (Chapter III of Part 1 of the Principles and Recommendations, version 3)
Group Discussion	**Guide Questions:** How national definitions of vital events compare to international recommendations? If not, what is the rationale? Are the core topic at the national level in line with internationally recommended? If not, what are the reasons? What are the obstacles? What would be the approaches to adapt them to international recommendation?
Module 1 – Revised international standards for a vital statistics system	**Session 4 – Presentation (UNSD): Quality assessment and assurance in the vital statistics system** The presentation will focus on internationally recommended mechanisms for assuring reliable, accurate and timely vital statistics and the methods for assessing their quality (Chapter I of Part III of the Principles and Recommendations, version 3)
Country presentations on quality assessment and assurance in vital statistics system (15 minutes each)	**Guide Questions:** Give a brief overview of vital statistics system and its relationship with civil registration and health institutions in your country. Describe procedures and processes for quality assessment, assurance and reporting in your vital statistics system.
Group Discussion	**Guide Questions:** How national practices in ensuring quality of vital statistics compare to international recommendations? If not, what are the circumstances? Are there regular quality assessments in place? If not, what are the reasons? What are the obstacles? What would be the approaches to adapt them to international recommendation?

Module 2 – Sources of vital statistics	**Session 1 – Presentation (UNSD): Use of population registers for vital statistics purposes** (Chapter III of Part Two of the Principles and Recommendations, Rev. 3)
Module 2 – Sources of vital statistics	**Session 2 – Presentation (UNSD): Role of health institution** (Chapter IV of Part Two of the Principles and Recommendations, Rev. 3)
Group Discussion	**Guide Questions:** Are there functioning population registers at the national level? Are there plans to develop them? What is the role of health institutions in regard to producing vital statistics? Is there a legal framework in place for regulating this role?
Module 3 – Contemporary tools for assessing a vital statistics system	**Presentation (UNSIAP): Rapid Assessment tool and its implementation**
Group Discussion	**Guide Questions:** Were there any attempts to assess the national system as presented? If not, what would be the reasons? Are there objectives/reasons that make this tool inapplicable at the national level? What would these be?
Module 4 – International collection of vital statistics	**Presentation (UNSD): United Nations Demographic Yearbook Data Collection System** The presentation will focus on the description of the system for collecting, processing and disseminating demographic statistics at the international level using the UN Demographic Yearbook **Presentation (UNSD): Regional response rates for vital statistics in Asia** It will present the response rates for Asia and compare them with other world regions
Group Discussion	**Guide Questions:** Could response rate be improved? What are the obstacles? Is there anything on the collection side that hampers the response rates?
Module 5 – Strategies for improving vital statistics system	**Presentation (SIAP):** Strategies for improving civil registration and vital statistics systems: Case of the Philippines **Presentation (SIAP): Regional initiatives on civil registration and vital statistics in**
Individual Work	Representative(s) of each country will work in preparing their 5-7 minute presentation on possible national strategies to improve on vital statistics in their respective countries in light of the revised set of international principles and recommendations as presented at this workshop, assisted by resource persons. Presentations will be delivered by each country on the last day of the workshop

Topics Covered:

The following are the topics covered in the workshop:
- United Nations principles and recommendations for civil registration and vital statistics: historical overview
- Functioning of Vital Statistics System and its coordination and integration
- Internationally recommended definitions of vital events and recommended topics
- Vital Statistics System in Rep. of Korea
- Quality assessment and assurance in the vital statistics system
- Use of population registers for vital statistics purposes
- Role of health institutions
- Rapid Assessment tool and its implementation
- United Nations Demographic Yearbook Data Collection System
- Regional response rates for vital statistics
- Strategies for improving civil registration and vital statistics systems: Case of the Philippines
- Presentation (SIAP): Regional initiatives on civil registration and vital statistics in Asia

Method Used in Teaching:

In order to achieve the expected outcomes, the training activities are divided into pre-course assignment and 5-day face-to-face workshop. In the pre-course assignment, participants are required to prepare and submit a document that compares their national practices to the 3rd revision of the UN principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system. The 5-day workshop will consist of a mix of experts' presentations, sharing of and discussion of lessons learned from country practices, facilitated group discussions, and individual (country) presentation for the Country Action Plan.

Training Materials

- HMN Tool for Assessment of CRVS

Reference Materials

- UN Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System Revision 3
- UN Demographic Yearbook

III. EVALUATION/OBSERVATIONS

Course Participants

A total of 26 participants from 15 countries attended the workshop, and at least one representative from each country (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam and Republic of Korea). Majority of the participants came from Statistical Offices and only five participants came from the Civil Registration Offices. Aside from , there were two other resource persons coming from UNSD and KoStat.

Course Evaluation

Participants were asked to answer an evaluation sheet for the workshop. As to the overall assessment of the workshop, 91 percent of the total participants reported that they acquired substantive knowledge involving techniques to produce a statistical data; 77 percent said *"Yes, I acquired substantive knowledge involving techniques to analyze statistical data";* and another 77 percent said *"Yes, I acquired substantive knowledge involving techniques to disseminate statistical data"*.

As to content and conduct of the workshop, 68 percent of the participants answered that quality of materials is excellent, 59 percent rated the quality of presentations as excellent, 55 percent said that sufficient time for discussion and participation, as well as balance between topics, is good. As to extent to which workshop objectives were achieved, 55 percent of the participants rated the materials are excellent. Around 59 percent of the participants said that workshop level is just right, while 68 percent of the participants said that their ability to apply acquired knowledge/information to improve the quality of data and services provided by organization will be improved after the workshop. Three of the participants commented that field visit is least useful element of the workshop.

Lessons Learned

Sharing of country experiences on civil registration and vital statistics system during the country presentations and discussions after every presentation was valuable to each participant. The group discussion was also the venue of each country participant to share the problems related to CRVS of their country and how they handle such problems for the improvement of CRVS in their own country.

Only few countries use civil registration as their source of vital statistics, these are Rep. of Korea, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Thailand. Bangladesh and India use the sample registration system as their source of vital statistics. Other countries make use of census results and surveys as source of vital statistics. It is worth noting that Rep. of Korea, Iran and India have an online birth registration in their country. The presentation of the Vital Statistics of Korea is worth mentioning for their regular and timely release of vital statistics, as well for the very high registration of vital events.

Observations/Comments/Recommendations

There were also some comments and suggestions coming from the participants to improve the content and conduct of the workshop, such as: a) presentation of more tools to analyze data, b) continuance of the workshop in the future, c) presentation on the implementation of CRVS in much developed countries, d) stronger discussion on how to improve the CRVS, e) assistance from the UN and advance countries on the implementation of CRVS, f) conduct of regular meetings for the evaluation of previous works, and g) sharing of experiences in the implementation of CRVS in each country, to name a few. Some suggested to conduct the next workshop in Maldives or in other countries.

Persons Met During the Workshop

The Head of the Statistical Training Institute and Director and Assistant Director of KOSTAT were present during the opening and closing ceremony of the third regional workshop on the production and use of vital statistics.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. List of Participants

Bangladesh

Mr. Shahidul Islam Khan
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India

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Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

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Ms. Kathleen Vosen
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Statistical Officer
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Male, Maldives

Ms. Ummeedha Abdul Razzag
Senior Administrative Officer
Center for Information Technology and Management
Department of National Registration
Ministry of Home Affairs
Male, Maldives

Myanmar   Ms. Cherry Swe
Assistant Director
Central Statistical Organization
Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development
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National Director

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Resource Persons

UNSD	Mr. Srdjan Mrkić
	Chief, Demographic Statistics
	United Nations Statistics Division
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	Ms. Adriana Skenderi
	Statistician
	Editor, UN Demographic Yearbook
	Demographic Statistics Section
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SIAP	Mr. Arman Bidarbakht Nia
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	Ms. Aurora Reolalas
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2. Daily Course Schedule

Third Regional Workshop on Production and Use of Vital Statistics
May 26-30, 2014, Daejeon, Republic of Korea

DAILY SCHEDULE

Monday, 26 May 2014	
8:50 – 9:30	Registration
9:30 – 10:00	Opening Session/Photo Session - Opening Remarks - Introduction of participants and administrative matters
10:00 – 10:15	Tea Break
10:15 – 10:45	Overview of the Workshop
10:45 – 12:00	Module 1 – Revised international standards for a vital statistics system Session 1 – United Nations principles and recommendations for civil registration and vital statistics historical overview
12:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:00	Session 2 – Presentation (UNSD): Functioning of a vital statistics system and its coordination and integration Country Presentations on functioning of vital statistics system - Bangladesh - Cambodia - China - India
16:00 – 16:15	Tea Break
16:15 – 18:00	Module 1 – Session 2 continued Group Discussion
Tuesday, 27 May 2014	
9:00 – 10:20	Module 1 (continued) Session 3 – Presentation (UNSD): Internationally recommended definitions of vital events and recommended topics Country presentation on definitions of vital events and topics (15 mins each) - Indonesia - Islamic Republic of Iran - Lao PDR - Maldives
10:20 – 10:35	Tea Break
10:35 – 12:00	Module 1 – Session 3 (continued) Group Discussion
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00 – 15:00	Module 1 (continued) Session 4 – Presentation (UNSD): Quality assessment and assurance in the vital statistics system

	Country Presentations on quality assessment and assurance in vital statistics system (15 mins each) - Myanmar - Nepal - Thailand - Timor-Leste - Vietnam
15:00 – 15:15	Tea Break
15:15 – 17:00	Module 1 – Session 4 (continued) Group Discussion
Wednesday, 28 May2014	
9:00 – 10:30	Module 1 (continued) Presentation (KOSTAT): Vital Statistics System in Rep. Of Korea Module 2 – Sources of vital statistics Session 1 - Presentation (UNSD): Use of population registers for vital statistics purposes Discussion
10:30 – 10:45	Tea Break
10:45 – 12:00	Module 2 – Sources of vital statistics (continued) Presentation (UNSD): Role of health institution Group Discussion
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00 – 15:00	Module 3. Contemporary tools for assessing a vital statistics system Presentation (UNSIAP): Rapid Assessment tool and its implementation Group Discussion
15:00 – 15:15	Tea Break
15:15 – 17:00	Preparing for Module 5. Strategies for improving vital statistics system Presentation (SIAP): Strategies for improving civil registration and vital statistics systems: Case of the Philippines Presentation (SIAP): Regional initiatives on civil registration and vital statistics in Asia Individual work time
Thursday, 29 May 2014	
8:30 – 9:45	Module 4. International collection of vital statistics Presentation (UNSD): United Nations Demographic Yearbook Data Collection System
9:45 – 10:00	Tea Break
10:00 – 11:00	Module 4 (continued) Presentation (UNSD): Regional response rates for vital statistics Discussion
11:00 – 18:00	Field Trip organized by KOSTAT
Friday, 30 May 2014	
9:00 – 10:30	Module 5. Strategies for improving vital statistics system Individual work time – revising/finalizing the presentations on strategies for improving vital statistics systems Presentation by each country

	- Bangladesh - Cambodia - China - India - Indonesia
10:30 – 10:45	Tea Break
10:45 – 12:00	Islamic Republic of Iran Lao PDR Maldives Myanmar Nepal Thailand Timor-Leste Vietnam
12:00 – 14:00	Farewell Luncheon
14:00 – 15:00	Visit to KOSTAT Headquarter
15:10 – 16:00	Wrap-up Session/Closing Ceremony

3. Summary of Course Evaluation by Participants (in percentage)

Overall assessment	Yes	No
Acquired in the workshop any substantive knowledge involving techniques on how		
a. to produce a statistical data?	90.9	4.5
b. to analyze statistical data?	77.3	18.2
c. to disseminate statistical data?	77.3	18.2

Note: percentage does not add up to 100% due to missing responses

Content and conduct of the workshop	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor
Quality of materials	68.2	31.8			
Quality of presentations	59.1	36.4	4.5		
Sufficient time for discussion and participation	31.8	54.5	13.6		
Balance between topics	27.3	54.5	13.6		
Usefulness of each session:					
Module 1, Session 1	50.0	45.5	4.5		
Module 1, Session 2	50.0	45.5	4.5		
Module 1, Session 3	45.5	45.5	9.1		
Module 1, Session 4	40.9	45.5	13.6		
Module 2, Session 1	54.5	36.4	9.1		
Module 2, Session 2	50.0	36.4	13.6		
Module 3	36.4	40.9	13.6		
Module 4	45.5	40.9	4.5		

Module 5	40.9	36.4	4.5	
Clarity of conclusions reached after each session	40.9	50.0	4.5	
Extent to which workshop objectives were achieved	54.5	36.4	4.5	
Overall value of the workshop	**45.5**	**36.4**	**4.5**	**4.5**

Note: percentage does not add up to 100% due to missing responses

Content and conduct of the workshop	Advanced	Right	Elementary
Workshop level	36.4	59.1	4.5

Content and conduct of the workshop	Much improved	Fairly	Little
Confidence in implementing knowledge/skills acquired in own work upon return home	45.5	54.5	

Content and conduct of the workshop	No change	Improved	Much improved
Ability to apply acquired knowledge/information to improve the quality of data and services provided by organization	4.5	68.2	27.3

Content and conduct of the workshop	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor
Timeliness of distribution of	36.4	45.5	9.1		
Satisfaction and timeliness of travel/DSA	27.3	31.8	13.6	18.2	
Duration of workshop	40.9	36.4	9.1	4.5	
Quality of workshop facilities	40.9	36.4	9.1	4.5	
Overall planning and organization of the workshop	36.4	36.4	18.2		

Note: percentage does not add up to 100% due to missing responses