

WELCOME REMARKS

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON DATA DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Manila Traders' Hotel

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Participants from the national statistical offices and national focal agencies on data dissemination in the Asia Pacific region,

Participants from the different agencies of the Philippine Statistical System, from international organizations, and from the media.

Good morning!

OIC-NEDA Director General Rolando Tungpalan sends his warm greetings and apologies for not being able to join us in today's gathering.

On behalf of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), the Philippine Statistical System (PSS), and the Philippine government, I am pleased to welcome you all to this Regional Workshop on Data Dissemination and Communication. *Maligayang pagdating sa Pilipinas.*

First, let me thank the UN Statistics Division under the brilliant leadership of Dr. Cheung for the confidence in inviting the NSCB to be a partner in this very important activity. And let me thank all the participants, particularly the foreign participants for your decision to come to our country, share your experiences, and learn about the latest challenges on data dissemination, together with our colleagues in the global statistical community

Data dissemination and communication are core statistical functions that have not been given priority attention by national statistical systems, until recently. In the past, we official statisticians have been focusing on data production – on the conduct of censuses and surveys and the compilation of administrative record systems – and we have failed to recognize the role that data dissemination and data communication

play in enhancing our relevance. As a result, our stakeholders find our products very difficult to access if not outright inaccessible, our stakeholders find us not very useful, if not outright irrelevant, and therefore, they do not appreciate our work, they do not appreciate us and they do not sympathize with us when we ask for resources for statistics. Thus, our perennial complaints about low budgets continue.

I hope you will agree that no matter how good and useful the statistics we produce and generate, they lose their utility if we fail to disseminate and communicate them properly. Each country in the Asia Pacific region has its practices and policies on disseminating and communicating official statistics, with some of us having succeeded in using the right strategies while others may, unfortunately, be on the wrong track, still figuring out how to do things better.

Thus, this regional workshop on data dissemination and communication is a welcome and timely initiative that provides a forum for sharing our national practices and experiences in the dissemination of statistical data and metadata. While our existing national dissemination strategies as well as technologies may differ, I am confident that during, or as a result of the workshop, we can come up with statistical standards on data exchange and dissemination that will be very useful towards the efficient and effective functioning of our national statistical systems. Everyone is therefore encouraged to be totally proactive in sharing not only your good practices but also the lessons you have learned in your efforts to disseminate and communicate statistics in your respective countries. Needless to say, we all stand to benefit from the expertise to be shared by our very capable resource persons.

We are fortunate, and we are grateful, that the UNSD continues to find ways to help countries, especially those of us developing countries, so that our national statistical systems will be strengthened. The UNSD has produced many statistical outputs in the form of sources and methods, principles and recommendations and methodological guidelines that we find very relevant in our work, especially in developing countries. As I have mentioned earlier, we official statisticians have underestimated the importance of data dissemination and communication strategies and this workshop will surely benefit our efforts to be of greater relevance to our stakeholders. Clearly, the objective of bringing greater visibility and accessibility to the development indicators of countries in the Asia Pacific, will give greater recognition to the role of our statistical systems in achieving the goals of our respective national development agenda.

As we share our national experiences, we hope that this event will contribute towards building closer working relationships among the national statistical offices in our region, and between national statistical systems and our development partners, towards improving the communication and dissemination of country data thru better connectivity and data exchange.

As co-host of this event, let me wish you all a successful workshop and we hope you will enjoy your stay in our beautiful country while savoring the hospitality of our people.

*Magandang umaga at mabuhay tayong lahat.*