

Statement of the Philippines on the Upcoming Election to the Governing Council of the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

Introduction

As the central statistical authority of the Philippine government, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) is mandated to produce statistical information on the country's economic, social, demographic, and general activities and the condition of the people.

The PSA aims to be a solid, responsive, and world-class authority in delivering relevant and reliable statistics for equitable development towards improved quality of life.

The PSA is an active member of the statistical community, not only in the Asia Pacific region, but globally as well, with its involvements in the UN Statistical Commission and its expert groups, the UNESCAP Commission on Statistics, the PARIS21, the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS), and the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).

Longstanding Partnership with SIAP

Even before the creation of the PSA through Republic Act No. 10625 also known as the Philippine Statistical Act of 2013, the Philippine Statistical System (PSS) had already established a strong partnership with the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). The Philippines is one of the 20 governments that established the UN SIAP (formerly the Asian Statistical Institute) in May 1970.

The Philippines has been a beneficiary of the institute's specialized training programs to strengthen the knowledge and build the skills of national governments' employees to produce, use, and share reliable statistics, including the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and the development of evidence-based policy.

In 2021, the PSA participated in 21 training courses conducted by the SIAP on the topics of climate change statistics, data visualization, SDG monitoring, and big data, among others.

The Philippines had previously been elected to the SIAP Governing Council for the period 2013-2015.

Aims and Thrusts

The UN SIAP has been a consistent and reliable provider of capacity-building activities for the region since it was established. It continues to be an integral part of the development of statistics in Asia Pacific especially in its recovery efforts after the outbreak of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

If re-elected as a member of the SIAP Governing Council, PSA will work towards conducting more capacity-building activities on how to use Big Data and other non-traditional data sources in generating official statistics. PSA will also advocate for training programs on data science and programming, which will be most helpful in maximizing the potential of these alternative data sources. The goal at the end of each training is a pilot project that will produce concrete outcomes benefitting target countries in their efforts to improve statistical services.

Like many other institutions, we believe that human resources are the bedrock of the organization, hence empowering them with both hard and soft skills will ultimately benefit the entire institution. We have seen this in the wealth of experience and information that the PSA has

gained from various fora and engagements. As a member of the SIAP, we seek to upgrade the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) by supporting strategic statistical capacity-building, not only focusing on individual training needs but also lifelong plans for the working statisticians in the NSOs.

We firmly believe that in the wake of the data revolution and digitalization, NSOs could widen their data sources by partnering with multiple stakeholders and collaborators such as local governments, NGOs, private organizations, and the academe. Collaboration is crucial to improving the quality of statistics generated, and with these partners as data sources, we would be in a better position to determine how we have fared in terms of meeting the SDG goals and other regional commitments like the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

Lastly, in an era putting a premium on international cooperation, we wish to advocate for a SIAP that will foster inter-country partnerships to harness each other's strengths in building a stronger Asia Pacific statistical community.

Commitment

As an active and contributing member of the statistical community in Asia Pacific, PSA commits to continue being involved in the statistical development of the region.