

"17th International Conference on Statistical Sciences (ICSS-17) to be held from 21-23 January, 2019 at, National College of Business Administration & Economics, Lahore."

Address

Shaista Sohail,
Chief Guest

Secretary, Statistics Division,
Lahore, 21-23 January 2019

Honourable, Prof. Dr. Munir Ahmad, founding President/ Patron, ISOSS/Rector NCBA&E, Prof. Dr. Hanif Mian, Sr.Vice President, ISOSS/Pro Rector NCBA&E, Prof. Dr. Mahmood Khalid Qamar, Secretary General ISOSS/Pro-Rector NCBA&E,

Ladies and Gentlemen and dear students,

Assalam o Alaikum,

1. It is truly a pleasure to have been invited to the opening ceremony of the '17th International Conference on Statistical Sciences jointly organized by, Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences, Pak Institute of Statistical Training and Research and the National College of Business Administration & Economics. During the three day conference simultaneous sessions will see the presentation of '168'

papers under the overall theme of, 'sustainable development goals (SDGs) and data gap challenges'. universities from all over the country are participating.

2. After independence of Pakistan, Central Statistical Office (CSO) was setup by the Government of Pakistan in 1950 as an attached department of Economic Affairs Division. Since then statistical system was reviewed from time to time by both local and foreign consultants.
3. In 1972, on the recommendation of IBRD Mission, Central Statistical Office (CSO) was upgraded to a full-fledged Statistics Division. The Division was re-organized in 1981 and its technical wing (the then CSO) was converted into Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS) as one of its attached departments. As a step forward Government of Pakistan has established Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, by merging Federal Bureau of Statistics, the Population Census Organization, The Agriculture Census Organization and the Technical wing of Statistics Division.
4. The PBS is responsible for data collection, compilation and dissemination of data on various socio-economic sectors is the primary function of PBS.
5. This data is collected from primary and Secondary Sources. The primary data is collected through different surveys such as Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM), Labour Force Survey (LFS), Household Integrated Economic Survey (HIES), Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (PIHS), Pakistan Demographic Survey

(PDS) etc. Secondary data such as Foreign Trade Statistics, Industrial Statistics, Transport and Communication Statistics, social statistics, agriculture Statistics, Environment statistics etc. are collected from the records of concerned Ministries/Departments.

6. Demand for data is increasing immensely in computer readable form. Such demands are made mainly by various Government/Semi-Govt., Non Government Organization (NGOs), Research Institutions, and Universities etc. within and outside the country.
7. When i was a student in 1970's-early 80's, i recall my calculator which could calculate percentages and roots for me. Making life easy for a student but we were not allowed to carry it with us in the exams! Today we stand in the age of harnessing 'Artificial intelligence' (AI) for the betterment of our people so that decision making is need based and not left to the discretion of any authority.
8. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the branch of computer sciences dealing with development of intelligence machines, thinking and working like humans. Speech recognition, problem-solving, learning and planning. We all use, 'google maps'. A tool that facilitates our daily lives. 'Uber' and 'Careem' drivers use it to provide them the most direct route to a destination. AI provides computer systems ability to learn and improve from experience i.e. capability to analyze. Machines use algorithms, that are a set of rules to be followed in calculations

or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer.

9. However, they need to be fed the data and if certain flaws are introduced in the data the analysis of the machines will carry the same bias.
10. The underlying theme of the 17th Conference of Statistical sciences is addressing 'Data gap challenges'. Such challenges can be addressed meaningfully in a number of ways.
11. The twin issues that confront 'data suppliers' are ensuring data 'credibility' and reducing 'time lag' between data collection and its final publication. Authentic data provided to policy makers as quickly as possible gives them time to react in a timely way to make the best policies in the interest of the people.
12. In this context the Federal Minister for Statistics, Makhdum Khusroe Bakhtyar has issued instructions to develop software to collect data electronically using tablets so that it is directly filled in at the source using software. The coordinates of the enumerator would be recorded on GIS thus ensuring that the data has been actually obtained. Secondly the multiple stages currently adopted of digitizing, cleaning and punching data not be required any longer as data would be punched in directly proverbially direct from the horse's mouth. The possibility of introduction of human error at multiple stages would end.

13. The time lag currently being experienced in the CMI Census of Manufacturing Industries 2015-16 is running into years and the end is expected in June 2019. The Census 2017 similarly was manually conducted. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is striving to carry out all its future activities end to end electronically. This means that from the collection of data to its dissemination no human interface would be there. The software would generate the report as per user requirement.
14. Data 'gaps' are also due to failure in identifying a representative 'sampling frame' that gives the correct picture of the indicator being investigated. Recently the World Economic Forum released its lists inter alia showing positions of females in the labour force in all the Countries of the world.
15. I have received letters from the Ministry of Human Rights and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to look into Pakistan being placed bottom third in the world. This situation is obviously not correct. Women presence is very obvious in very large numbers at retail outlets, household help, a large percentage as private school teachers, advocates, nurses, doctors, receptionists all over the country. *At PBS we are laying stress on designing sample frames that are most representative of the 'indicator' regarding which data is being collected.*
16. We at the Federal Ministry and PBS are striving to facilitate data based decision making by ensuring data availability at disaggregated levels and its **dissemination** in user friendly machine readable formats.

17. A resolution moved by Senator, Shibli Faraz has been passed by the Parliament to ensure that hence forth all decision making be based on actual real time data and not be left to discretion.
18. Accordingly, all the Federal Ministries have been classified in terms of their data use in accordance with their work out put. Some Ministries and departments provide Secretarial Services like Establishment, Cabinet, AGPR while others are directly using data in coming up with development plans in PC-1s.
19. The ten ministries dealing with education, health, food security, communications will be provided secure access to real time GIS mapping i.e. Geographic Information data through dash boards *in the first phase* along with training on how to use the data. The development projects will henceforth be based on 'need'. This will in due course check lop sided development leading to income and facilities distribution inequalities and focus on bringing those areas that are least developed at par with the most developed areas. The remaining Ministries will also have access to the dash board and in addition will be facilitated in preparing suitable software's in line with their core activities.
20. I would like to once again thank all the honourable organizers for having invited the Federal Ministry of Statistics to this event and wish them and all the learned participants a very fruitful and successful conference.

THANK YOU