

INITIATIVES OF STATISTICAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE IN JAPAN – FOR DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICAL LITERACY OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

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Statistical Research and Training Institute (SRTI) fulfills the roles of a central statistical training institute as well as a special training institute for statistics in Japan. SRTI provides various statistical training courses for the personnel of national and local governments with the aim of imparting statistical knowledge and skills in duties such as the compilation of statistics, statistical analysis, and the use of statistical data. Training contents or training methods are changing to meet the needs of training and, for example, based on development of ICT. This presentation explains initiatives and challenge of SRTI for effective training.

INTRODUCTION

SRTI is the institute belongs to Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), and aims to promote the development and the dissemination of statistical knowledge, and to contribute to the development of statistical systems in Japan and globally. Roles of SRTI are “Statistical Research” and “Statistical Training”.

“Statistical Research” implements the following activities for responding to the various needs of statistics required from the social and economic change.

- Collection, organization and research for information on Big Data.
- Collection and research for information on statistical techniques common to national governments.
- Technical cooperation in response to requests from national and local governments.
- Publishing of research achievements in “Research Memoir of Official Statistics” and “Research Paper”.

“Statistical Training” implements training targeted to the staff of relevant organizations including national and local governments. It implements various training aimed for acquiring knowledge on theory necessary for the preparation and use of statistics and on analytical methods and technology.

This presentation explains the “Statistical Training” part of SRTI.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAINING

SRTI was established in 1921, the longest history among training institutes in the Government of Japan. Also, the only institute which specializes in statistical training in the Government of Japan.

Characteristics of the training contents are as follows:

- There are various courses targeting different levels. For example, there is an introduction course for those learning statistics for the first time or a specialist course for those who require expertise knowledge.
- Trainees are chosen and selected based on the nomination from each organization.
- Training is provided free of charge, in principle.
- The staff of the Institute will give lectures on some basic subjects and other subjects are delegated to external lecturers (university professors, staff of government organizations with expertise knowledge, etc.).
- The classroom is equipped with excellent information and communication technologies (ICT). PC is provided for each trainee which is able to carry out exercises during lectures by using a PC.
- The accommodation facility for the trainees is within the compound.
- E-learning courses started which makes it possible to learn by the office PC or the trainee’s tablets as well as group training.

SYSTEM AND COURSES OF TRAINING

Most of the courses in STRI are group training. They are opened at STRI in general which locates in Kokubunji City, the east side of Tokyo, and some courses are opened in other prefectures or universities.

System of group training course is as follows.

System	Course examples	Periods (Apr.2017~Mar.2018)	Term
Introductory courses	Statistical Training Course for Staff engaged in Statistical works	May.2017 Jun.2017 Jan.2018	2 days
	Statistical Training Course for Users	May.2017 Jun.2017 Feb.2018	3 days
Basic courses	Designing Statistical Surveys	Oct.2017	5 days
	Statistical Analysis	Jun.2017	4 days
	Comprehensive Course	Sep.2017 to Dec.2017	3 months
Specialist courses	Population Estimate	Jul.2017	5 days
	Policy Planning and Statistics	Sep.2017	2 days
Special seminars	Introduction of Big Data	Feb.2018	1 day
	Statistical Seminar for Educators	Aug.2017	1 day

In 2016, SRTI introduced e-learning courses for trainees by movies, which have few time constraints using ICT. Trainees can learn the basic statistical courses using PCs in the office, or their own mobile devices anytime and anywhere. Now, two courses are held, namely “Statistics for Beginners” and “How are Statistical Data made?”. Each course consists of 5 chapters and each chapter takes approximately an hour. They are held three times a year.

There is an English version for “Statistics for Beginners”, which can be seen from following URL:

<http://www.stat.go.jp/training/english/e-index.htm>

Total number of finished trainees from April 2017 to March 2018 was 2,510 and the trainees of e-learning courses are 1,212 as of February 28, 2018. Among the finished trainees, 884 were national government officials, 1,529 were local government officials and 97 were others (government-related organizations).

CONCLUSION

SRTI is revising the courses and programs as needed, monitoring the needs of relating organizations continuously. For example, SRTI started the course for big data at February 2018, reflecting increasing needs for big data usage. SRTI will follow the needs of the time, and will draw up curricula, responding flexibly.

Also SRTI will facilitate further promotion of e-learning courses. This was mentioned in the final report of the Council for the Promotion of Fundamental Reform of Economic Statistics held by the Cabinet Secretariat on May 2017. SRTI would like to hold new courses to enhance the literacy and the ability of data analysis, for all officials to promote EBPM, in addition to the existing e-learning courses about statistical techniques.

Recently, importance and necessity of EBPM is becoming recognized in Japan. Statistics has become a more important tool than ever, not only for statistical sectors, but also for non-statistical sectors such as policy making and planning sector. SRTI will play the role to satisfy these needs.

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