

Preface

With the increasing globalization of the real economy, the significant growth taking place in East Asia is leading to a growing interdependence and integration among national economies within the region. East Asia has begun to operate as a single economic area.

Yet the East Asian region has not yet established internationally comparable manufacturing statistics that can serve as the basis for research on the regional economy. One primary reason for this is that many East Asian nations were focused on organizing their own economic statistics to consider comparing them with those of other nations. That was good enough in the age of closed economies, but as the real economy globalized, these countries fell behind in adopting manufacturing statistics that take a regional view of their area of economic activity. Policymakers and economists now have an urgent need for statistics data to use in understanding their nation's position in the international and regional economies, and to identify practical trends of the economy.

For the East Asian region to organize internationally comparable manufacturing statistics, it must define industrial classification, survey subjects and survey categories, and understand the current status of data disclosure and statistical survey systems in the industrial statistics of each East Asian country, clarify the problems and issues that are hindering international comparisons, and develop approaches that can be put into effect. And to prevent any nation from falling behind in organizing statistics for the East Asian region, it must enthusiastically employ capacity building programs to nations that require support.

With knowledge of these facts, we adopted two different approaches in this fiscal year's ERIA Research project. One is the means of acknowledging the current status of manufacturing statistics in the East Asian region as stated in PART-I, and the other is the capacity building program that we conducted with industrial classification officials in CLM (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar) governments, as summarized in PART-II. This report consequently consists of two sections. While the two approaches do not unify into one policy recommendation, the synergy of conducting both projects at the same time was significant, and we believe that they will contribute to improving international comparability of manufacturing statistics in the East Asian region.

Finally, please let me express my sincere gratitude to those who cooperated in our project over the fiscal year.

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