The Macroeconomic Management and Policy Division of EDI (EDIMP) conducted a core course on *Africa: Policies for Economic Growth* in Harare, Zimbabwe from March 23-April 3, 1998. The course was offered in collaboration with two partner institutions, Japan’s Foundation for Advanced Studies in International Development (FASID) and the Harare-based Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI). This was the second course on economic growth offered this year by EDIMP. The two-week program was designed to provide mid- and senior-level economists from Central Banks and government economic and development ministries with the latest developments in the area of economic growth, and to assist them in developing relevant policy recommendations for their own countries. The course was offered in the three modules: 1) background issues on economic growth; 2) the institutional background for growth; and 3) the policy framework for growth. Thirty-seven participants attended this course, consisting mainly of economists from the partner institutions.

The course was evaluated by the EDI Evaluation Unit (EDIES) using an end-of-course questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed by thirty-five respondents, 94.6 percent of the total number of participants. There were two sections to the questionnaire. The first section asked respondents to rate the extent to which the course met its performance objectives. The second section asked the level of respondents knowledge about topics covered in the course, before and after completing the course, based on a self-assessment. A 5-point Likert type scale that ranged from 1 = minimum to 5 = maximum was used to rate respondents rating for each question. Following are some of the major evaluation findings.

- The course received positive ratings on overall course performance. Respondents’ mean scores of all performance indicators, including course content and delivery, and the extent to which the course was a worthwhile use of participants’ time, exceeded 3.0, the mid-point of a 5-point scale.

- Higher mean scores on course performance were observed in the relevancy of the course. Respondents felt that the course was relevant to their current and future work, as well as to their learning needs. All indicators of the course relevancy were above 4.0 out of 5.0, suggesting that the course was attended by the participants with appropriate needs.

- Respondents indicated that the materials presented in the course were constructive. The mean score was 3.94 out of 5.0. They felt, however, that the course should be treated more in depth. Respondents’ ratings on the level of coverage was 3.38, one of the lowest ratings.

- Results showed that the trainers allowed respondents to engage adequately in the
discussions (mean=3.97). The extent to which respondents learned from one another during the discussions, however, may have been limited. Respondents were asked whether the course gathered the right group of participants to discuss issues. The mean score was 3.32, the lowest score in course performance.

- Trainers’ interactive skills with respondents also had relatively lower ratings. Respondents were asked whether trainers communicated with respondents well in delivering their messages, answered questions effectively, and achieved the stated objectives. The mean scores of these indicators ranged between 3.40-3.46 out of 5.0.

- Pre/post self-assessment of respondents' knowledge can serve as an indicator of how much respondents felt they knew about a topic upon entering the course and how much they felt they learned at the end of the course. Pre-course mean scores were in the range of 2.4-3.4 out of 5.0. Results showed that respondents' level of understanding of all issues increased by 21-46 percent after the course. Post-course ratings rose to the 3.4-4.1 range.

- Issues that respondents felt they learned in the course varied between respondents from the MEFMI member countries (N=22) and those from non-MEFMI countries (N=7). MEFMI respondents indicated that their understanding of East Asian Experience increased by 50 percent after the course. The Economic Growth in Africa showed the lowest gain among them, an increase by 16.4 percent after the course. A relatively high pre-course rating on this topic, 3.6, suggests that more emphasis on recent issues and examples on Africa may be needed in the future course. Non-MEFMI respondents indicated that they learned most on Stylized Facts of Economic Growth. The percentage gain on this topic showed the highest increase, 64.5 percent.

- The information obtained from pre/post self-assessment should be interpreted with caution. It reflects the degree to which respondents believed they understood the topics, but does not measure how much they actually learned. Also, the data had six missing responses on respondents affiliation, affecting the analysis by respondents category. The question of whether or not respondents belong to MEFMI should be worded clearly so that they understand what countries represent the organization of MEFMI.