

# Annex C

## Effective Initiatives and Good Practices



Overall, statistics in Africa are deficient. But there are instances of effective initiatives and examples of good practices. This list of good practice is not comprehensive; it reflects only practices identified by the countries and organizations visited and for which sufficient details were available. Additional good practices may be found in a series of publications on best practices available on the Web site of the UN Statistical Division (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/>). Some of these practices relate to monitoring and evaluation.

### Overall Strategy: Develop a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

*Kenya* developed and adopted a Strategic Plan for the National Statistical System 2003/4–2007/8. The initiative responded to the government's demand for data stemming from its PRSP, its Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation and the associated monitoring and evaluation program, the MDGs and associated indicators, and a number of government policy initiatives and commitment to show results.

Government commitment of funding for statistical purposes is provided in the regular budget in Kenya. In addition, a major project is in place to develop the national statistical system, including implementation of the strategic plan. The government has contributed some of the funding for this plan.

A Strategic Implementation Master Plan is in place to implement the plan. A national statistical steering committee with an aggressive program of implementation has been established and has met five times. A national statistical technical committee is in place. A new statistical legislation has been approved by the cabinet and will be going to parliament in the near future. Under this legislation, the Central Bureau of Statistics will become a semi-autonomous government authority with a board of governors. The legislation provides for coordination of the national statistical system by the Central Bureau of Statistics. Sectoral committees are being formed. The Central Bureau

of Statistics and all line ministries have submitted work programs for statistics; the Central Bureau of Statistics is leading the process. An integrated program of surveys is planned.

The donors supporting the statistical development project have coordinated their support effectively. They are invited to meetings of the national statistical steering committee.

### Strategy 1: Invigorate Statistical Advocacy

*Uganda's* Bureau of Statistics puts great emphasis on statistical advocacy, coordination, and collaboration. Advocacy activities take many forms, including grand celebrations of Africa Statistics Week each year. The celebration program usually includes feature articles in newspapers, radio discussions, television talk shows, a media workshop, user-producer workshops, processions through the streets of Kampala, demonstration of sectoral databases and statistical products, screening of the OECD-PARIS21 Film "Measuring Change in World Poverty" on national television, and hosting of the President, Vice President, or Prime Minister as the guest of honor on November 18.

### Strategy 2: Mainstream Statistics as a Cross-Cutting Sector in the Development Process/Agenda

For some time, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics was experiencing financial problems because not all budgeted funds for statistical operations were being released by government. In order to solve this problem, a decision was made by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (parent ministry) to include the core statistical activities of the Bureau in the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) as from 1995/96 financial year. PAF was established as a key element of the 1998/99 national budget. It has directed funds from the HIPC debt relief initiative and mobilized donor resources towards the implementation of the Poverty Eradication Action Programme (Uganda's PRSP). All activities under PAF are fully funded and are protected from cuts should there be a shortfall in government revenue.

### Strategy 3: Update the Legal and Regulatory Framework

*Sierra Leone* repealed its Statistics Act 1963, replacing it with the Statistics Act 2002 and the Census Act 2002. In 2002 it replaced the Central Statistics Office with Statistics Sierra Leone, an autonomous agency governed by the Statistics Sierra Leone Council and managed by a "Statistician General." The coordinating role of Statistics Sierra Leone was reinforced with the

establishment of a National Statistical Coordinating Committee, which has representatives from ministries, academia and civil society. As an autonomous institution, Statistics Sierra Leone has been removed from the civil service financial system and awarded grants to cover salaries and operational charges. This change enables it to offer higher salaries and better conditions of service. If the government honors its budgetary commitment, this should help it attract and retain better qualified staff.

In *Uganda* an act of parliament established the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, a semi-autonomous government agency, to act “as the principal data collecting and disseminating agency responsible for coordinating, monitoring, and supervising the national statistical system.” The statistics function was delinked from the mainstream civil service in order to enhance the impartiality, credibility and probity of official statistics, to be seen to have done so, and to make production of official statistics more effective and efficient. The bureau has a lean and focused board of directors as its policy-making organ. The board includes seven members, representing various stakeholder constituencies, including the ministry responsible for finance and planning, the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (Makerere University), the private sector, and civil society.

The functions of the board include formulating and monitoring the implementation of policies pertaining to the organization and management of the bureau; promoting and protecting the integrity of official statistics and the professional independence of the bureau; advising government on the national statistics policy, procedures, methods, and regulations relating to the development of official statistics; determining competitive terms and conditions of service for the staff of the bureau; monitoring the technical quality of official statistics and promoting adherence to good practice and international recommendations and standards; appointing, promoting, and disciplining senior staff of the bureau; setting guidelines for recruiting, disciplining, and promoting junior staff; providing the minister responsible for statistics with a quarterly progress report on activities of the bureau and the entire national statistical system; reviewing the structure of the bureau as necessary; and approving the corporate plans, work plans, and budgets of the bureau.

#### Strategy 4: Assess and Prioritize User Needs

Following an independent audit, *Tunisia* reformed its statistical system in the late 1990s, establishing the *Conseil National de la Statistique*. Among other tasks, it is responsible for assessing user needs. It has a small permanent structure, with a staff of four.

A decree determined the composition of the *Conseil National de la Statistique* for four years. It currently includes 18 producers and 18 users, including accountants, bankers, farmers, women, unionists, academics, and representatives of employers, who meet quarterly. Three permanent commissions (on statistical ethics, statistical information quality and dissemination, and survey clearance) and eight working groups also operate.

Working groups meet every two weeks for lively discussions. Their recommendations serve as an input into the government's decision-making. Issues discussed include confidentiality, ad hoc dissemination, and statistics to be developed, such as statistics on leisure time, tourism, the elderly, power saving, and secondary illiteracy. Each working group is generally chaired by a university representative and the national statistical office takes minutes of the working groups' meetings. Two external programs - the MEDSTAT EU project and PARIS21 - seem to have designed around users' needs on which Tunisia puts a strong emphasis.

#### Strategy 5: Undertake Data Development

The *Central African Republic* is making efforts to use local administrative data. These data are at a detailed geographical level and can therefore be used for development projects. The decentralization process has also promoted statistical awareness: statistical graphs and tables are tacked to the walls of health centers, and rural broadcastings report agricultural products prices.

#### Strategy 6: Foster Coordination, Collaboration and Partnerships

*Cameroon* provides a good example of effective coordination of the national statistical system. One hundred members of Cameroon's National Council for Statistics meet once a year. The national statistical office is looking for financing so that specialized commissions can convene meetings. The National Council for Statistics examines: the texts of regulations (AFRISTAT nomenclature, external trade tariffs, geographical coding); documents that affect the statistical system; statistical work program; the *Manual for Concepts and Definitions* published annually; conventions for files transfers; the road map for the national strategy for the development of statistics; and dissemination strategies. Validation committees on external trade and national accounts meet quarterly. Committees are also established for surveys.

In *Tunisia*, the *Conseil National de la Statistique* is responsible for statistical strategies, planning, program monitoring and evaluation, and organizing the national statistical system. The President of the CNS reports directly to the

Prime Minister and has direct contacts with line ministers. With this more political orientation and a composition largely opened to data producers other than the national statistical office, the *Conseil National de la Statistique* has progressively made administrations more inclined to view statistics as important and to provide funding for their production.

One of the first tasks of the *Conseil National de la Statistique* was to draw up an inventory of the 40 administrative structures that produce public statistics outside the national statistical office. These structures are under the supervision of nearly 20 ministries, the central bank, and the Financial Market Council. All ministries have a statistical unit.

In order to improve coordination, a single public structure is responsible for official data on a sector or issue. However, the national statistical office can act as sub-contractor for this structure. The *Conseil National de la Statistique* covers the national schools for statistics and the private statistical bodies if their surveys require its authorization. Due to the high level of coordination obtained through CNS, Tunisia's statistical development is remarkably uniform, with no sector left behind.

The **UEMOA** zone is the most advanced sub-region in terms of harmonization and development of statistics. As a result of the UEMOA PARSTAT program (Programme d'appui régional à la statistique), carried out with financial support from the European Union and important technical assistance from AFRISTAT, UEMOA countries now produce a harmonized consumption price index, harmonized external trade statistics, and more harmonized and modernized national accounts, using an SNA 93 conceptual framework. The UEMOA zone has also conducted a survey on the informal sector. By 2006 member countries should be able to provide a harmonized industrial production index and harmonized economic outlook surveys.

## Strategy 7: Enhance the Statistical Infrastructure

**Cameroon** has supplied the IMF with GDDS metadata. Only a few sectors are not covered. Furthermore, a *Manual of concepts and definitions used in the official statistical publications of Cameroon* is issued by the national statistical office each year. The 4<sup>th</sup> edition was published in 2005 and encompasses about 180 pages. These efforts toward transparency are very welcome by the users, as well as the greater regularity of the publications.

## Strategy 8: Harness information and communication technology

The web site of *Kenya's* Central Bureau of Statistics (<http://www.cbs.go.ke/>) has helped raise its profile through outreach to the public. It ties the collection of statistics to policy issues, provides transparency (by including the full text of the strategic plan), and fully explains surveys, inviting comments on draft questionnaires.

Information and communication technology underpins the collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination of statistical information in *South Africa*. The intention of Statistics South Africa is to use appropriate cutting-edge technology to enhance the production of good-quality statistical information. In the past, the deployment of information and communication technology was often fragmented within the organization and not guided by a strategic approach aligned with the core business requirements of the department.

Statistics South Africa's current policy and strategic approach is to provide a personal computer to all staff who require one in the execution of their duties. There are currently about 900 personal computers at the head office and another 150 in provincial offices. Significant efforts are made to train staff in the use of information technology.

The heart of Statistics South Africa's information technology infrastructure is a data center of 24 file servers that handle mail, Internet, Intranet, databases, the Geographic Information Service, file sharing, and other functions. Each provincial office has its own server.

## Strategy 9: Develop human capital

In 1961 the National Bureau of Statistics of *Nigeria*, previously the Federal Office of Statistics, established a school for training statistical assistants. The school has trained mid-level statistical personnel from both the National Bureau of Statistics and other main data-producing agencies, such as the Central Bank of Nigeria, the National Population Commission, federal and state government ministries and parastatal organizations. By 1996 the school had trained more than 5,000 statistical personnel. It will continue to play an important role in the development of the national statistical system.

The current statistical master plan provides for strengthening and then upgrading the school. The school will be strengthened by providing it with better infrastructure, developing its library and providing it with more teaching materials. The strengthened school will be affiliated with the proposed

Chartered Institute of Statistics of Nigeria (CISON), offering courses leading to the award of a professional diploma and a postgraduate diploma in statistics. The Nigerian Statistical Association is working on getting Parliament to authorize establishment of the institute. The National Bureau of Statistics plans to promote greater use of the school by different agencies.

### Strategy 10: Improve data analysis

**Zambia** illustrates how the coordination of data analysis by research centers and national statistical offices can have policy relevance. The Institute of Economic and Social Research at the University of Zambia was involved in the sector performance analysis of the Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (ZASIP), which the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was implementing in the late 1990s. The Institute conducted quantitative analysis using data collected mostly in the Post-Harvest Agricultural Survey, which the Central Statistical Office carries out every year as part of its integrated agricultural survey program. The Institute was not only able to add value to the data, but also it identified areas that needed improvement in data collection and processing.

### Strategy 11: Improve data dissemination

**Cameroon's** National Statistical Institute organizes producer-user workshops and seminars at which it presents the results of large surveys, such as Demographic and Health Surveys. The cost of this type of seminar is taken into account at the time of survey budget formulation. This dissemination effort is appreciated by users.

**Tanzania** was the first country in the sub-region to develop a database of poverty indicators meant to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of its PRSP. Since then many countries in Africa have adopted this practice. Tanzania's socioeconomic database was established by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2001 as a user-friendly, easily accessible source of data on more than 300 indicators, disaggregated by gender, urban/rural location, and administrative areas down to the ward level, where available. The data allow for trend analysis, since good time series are available. The database includes a module that highlights MDG-related indicators. The sources of data include surveys, censuses, and routine data systems. The aim of the database is to contribute to evidence-based decision-making, targeting government policymakers and planners, members of parliament, NGOs, the community, and the media.

The institutional framework for Tanzania's socioeconomic database is very elaborate and includes more than 17 government and non-government agencies,

ministries, and institutions. It consists of a steering committee, a taskforce, and a focal point in all partner institutions. The idea is to reach broad consensus on the substance of the database. The lesson is that starting small may push the process along more quickly. Moreover, initiatives like this can be integrated into existing institutional frameworks.

Tanzania's socioeconomic database represents good practice for several reasons:

- It is government owned.
- It is fully institutionalized within the framework of the PRSP and the Poverty Monitoring System.
- It allows regular monitoring of the MDG indicators.
- It contributes to capacity building for evidence-based decision-making.
- It has contributed to building partnerships with UN agencies and between the government, the United Nations, and the private sector.
- It is cost-effective, because it was customized from UNICEF's ChildInfo and draws on many years of experience with that package in other countries.
- It avoids duplication of effort by linking up with other government initiatives, such as establishment of a database to monitor the implementation of the local government reform program.
- It contributes to South-South collaboration.

The National Bureau of Statistics has already hosted study tours with delegations from different African countries

*Tunisia* is one of two countries in Africa participating in the Special Data Dissemination Standard. The Tunisia National Statistical Institute disseminates its data in a variety of ways, including its web site (<http://www.ins.nat.tn/>), which receives 200 -300 hits a day, news releases, and (free) dissemination lists to official users. Its Statistical Information Centre welcomes the general public, receiving 3,000 visitors a year. Visitors can consult and purchase the National Statistical Institute's publications. It is also open to the public for ad hoc extracts from the external trade database. The National Statistical Institute also publishes documents, some of them accompanied by a CD-ROM that includes more detail or time series.

A number of datasets are available on the National Statistical Institute Web site, which is organized into 38 economic and 24 socio-demographic themes. As Tunisia subscribes to the IMF's Special Data Dissemination System, a dissemination schedule for real sector and external trade indicators can be found on the Web site. Seminars are regularly organized at each important data release, which are accompanied by a display of the institute's latest publications.

## Strategy 12: Improve funding and sustainability

The government of *Ethiopia* is highly committed to funding the Central Statistical Authority and other statistics activities in Ethiopia. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development demands data to make the macroeconomic projections it needs to derive resource envelopes for planning, to establish the effectiveness of policy instruments, and to make decisions on future budget allocations. The ministry is also responsible for compiling national accounts. For these reasons, the government has been investing heavily in statistical development and production.

*Cameroon's* three-year statistical work program is presented to a pool of potential partners, each of whom determines whether it would be interested in contributing. When the final detailed budget becomes available, each partner chooses which activities to finance. This system works well, as the national statistical office strives for transparency in accounting. This transparency has created confidence among donors and organizations such as the European Union and the World Bank, which provide support on a multiyear basis.

In 2002 *Mozambique* started a project to strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Institute of Statistics. The project joins the three Scandinavian donors and their three national statistical bureaus in the same project that forms a framework for all donor support provided to the National Institute of Statistics.

The project seeks to strengthen the national statistical system in Mozambique through support to the National Institute of Statistics and its provincial branches. The development objectives are to support the implementation of the national statistical system's five-year plan (2003–07), guided by a strategic plan for the same period, thus allowing the government, the private sector, researchers, donors, and the general public to monitor social and economic development in the country. One focus is on implementing Mozambique's strategy for reducing poverty.

The High Council for Statistics, chaired by the Prime Minister, determines both the strategic and the operational plan. The project is based on a twinning

arrangement between the National Institute of Statistics and the national statistical bureaus in all three Scandinavian countries, with Statistics Denmark the lead partner. A consortium of the three bureaus is supporting the National Institute of Statistics in implementing the project. The project emphasizes donor coordination, a twinning arrangement, the National Institute of Statistics' role as fully responsible for the project activities, integration of project activities with the National Institute of Statistics' regular plans and reports, and implementation of a comprehensive human resource development plan for 2003 - 07.

## Good Practices Cutting across Several Strategies

Sharing limited resources can lead to substantial progress, as the experience of *AFRISTAT* reveals. *AFRISTAT* is an African skills center in the development of statistics, carrying out programs and projects for many international financial and technical partners including programs and projects in other African non member countries, including English-speaking countries. Its main mission is to strengthen the statistical systems of its members. Its main activities are on-site technical assistance and training through seminars and workshops.

*AFRISTAT* has helped its member states to manage a national statistical office, to manage human resources, to revise laws governing statistics, to reintroduce national councils of statistics, and helped the UEMOA zone to harmonize price, informal sector, and national accounts data. It has produced two nomenclatures adapted to its members, the *AFRISTAT* member states activities classification (NAEMA) and the *AFRISTAT* member states products classification (NOPEMA). These nomenclatures conform to international organizations standards.

*AFRISTAT* has produced several methodological documents, which are used by its member states in their statistical infrastructure. These include a methodological guide for the elaboration of national accounts in member states, concepts and indicators related to the job market and the informal sector, the state of reflections on the fundamental principles of public statistics, and a reference framework and minimum common methodological support for information for the follow-up of PRSPs and the MDGs (still provisional).

*AFRISTAT* also drafts statistical regulations for its member states. It has drafted its own reference framework to guide statistical operations (the Common Minimum Statistical Program [PROSMIC]) in six domains: statistical coordination, national accounting, assessment of economic and social

situation, dissemination, follow-up of households and poverty, and agricultural statistics.

AFRISTAT has helped train staff in computer software such as CHAPO (price index) and ERETES (national accounts), developed with the assistance of Eurostat and France. It has helped member states create Web sites.

Initially, AFRISTAT was financed through a fund made up of equal contributions from member states and a contribution from France. In 2003 AFRISTAT's council of ministers decided to renew and increase their participation and to open the fund to other partners in development, such as central banks, development banks, sub-regional organizations, and other international donors.

**SADC** has harmonized statistics by using the same census questionnaire as UEMOA and AFRISTAT. Member states are required to provide statistics to SADC.

SADC aims to promote development and growth, alleviate poverty, and spur regional integration among member states and enhance the quality of life of all peoples in Southern Africa. It has designed policies, plans, programs and protocols that require statistics from member countries. The SADC statistics committee, made up of Directors of national statistical offices of member states, acts as the steering committee for the SADC Statistical System. It has identified priority areas for development and reporting of statistics, including sectoral areas (trade, finance and investment, mining, transport and communication, energy and water, and agriculture and food security) and cross-cutting areas (poverty, gender, informal sector, environment and natural resources, classifications, definitions, and standardization).

The 2001 population and housing census was carried out in member countries in line with the decision of the SADC ministers of planning and development to adopt a common census year, beginning in 2001, and common methodologies. This led SADC members to carry out a preparation project with the aim of strengthening the capacity of member states in census takings and harmonizing standards on key definitions, concepts and methodologies on cartographic work, data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

Donors and recipients have identified several successful approaches to ***donor support***:

- Give more recognition to what the country defines as its needs and priorities, which increases ownership and success (Denmark)

- Place the recipient in charge of the program after it receives external budgetary assistance (Denmark providing assistance to countries such as Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia).
- Have national staff and consultants work alongside international consultants as a way of building national capacity.
- Use long-term resident, experienced, statistical experts from the national statistical office of the donor country, supplemented by short-term experts as needed (Norway).
- Establish a close association between professionals from the national statistical offices of the donor and recipient countries (twinning) (Sweden).