

INVITING COMMENTS ON DRAFT POLICY

# National Policy on Official Statistics

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5/17/2018

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## National Policy on Official Statistics

### 1. Background

1.1 "official statistics" means statistics derived by the Government agencies from statistical surveys, administrative and registration records and other forms and papers, the statistical analyses of which are published regularly, or planned to be published regularly, or could reasonably be published regularly.

1.2 The primary aim of official statistics is to provide an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful empirical picture of the society and economy to support the formulation and monitoring of economic and social policies by the Government. As official statistics is produced within the Government, its credibility and integrity depends on professional independence of statistical Departments/ Offices/ Units/ Cells. Professional independence is an essential prerequisite and the means to provide objective statistical information free from any undue pressures / influences.

1.3 The statistical system is laterally decentralised among the Ministries of the Government of India (GOI), and in every one of them, vertically decentralised, between the Centre and the States. At the national level, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) is the nodal Ministry on statistical matters. At State level, the concerned Directorates of Economics & Statistics (DESSs) are the nodal offices on statistical matters. The National Statistical Commission (NSC) is the apex advisory body on statistical matters. The existing institutional arrangements and legal framework have been found to be inadequate in the light of the emerging challenges. Details are given at Annex-I.

### 2. Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

2.1 It is recognized that official statistics are public goods and that they must comply with certain basic principles, such as professional independence, impartiality, accountability and transparency about methods of collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics. These principles are enshrined in the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

2.2 A milestone in the history of the global statistical system was reached when, on 29 January 2014, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution concerning the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which have been applied worldwide since 1994. The Principles are given below:

**Principle 1.** Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society, serving the Government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honour citizens' entitlement to public information.

**Principle 2.** To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.

**Principle 3.** To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.

**Principle 4.** The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

**Principle 5.** Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records. Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on Respondents.

**Principle 6.** Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.

**Principle 7.** The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.

**Principle 8.** Coordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.

**Principle 9.** The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.

**Principle 10.** Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries.

2.3 The Fundamental Principles benefit statisticians, respondents (data providers), users and decision makers in different ways. For statisticians, the Principles provide sound guidelines for professional and impartial practices based on scientific principles and quality standards. For respondents, they guarantee that data are collected and used solely for statistical purposes and not for commercial or other

use and ensure data confidentiality. For users of official statistics, they form a transparent framework in regard of quality, relevance, utility and procedures of official statistics in order to retain trust of users. For decision makers, they set out the role of official statistics, which provide impartial information needed in the decision making process of a society and used by the government, businesses and the public.

2.4 To enhance the practical implementation of the Fundamental Principles, the United Nations Statistics Division brought out 'United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics - Implementation guidelines' in January, 2015. The guidelines provide several actions or activities, which a statistical agency is advised to take into account when aiming to improve the practical and effective implementation of a certain Principle and recommendations on how to ensure a high level of professional independence of statistical systems. A collection of statistical laws reflecting the experiences of the national statistical offices of various countries complement and concretize the recommendations in the guidelines.

2.5 The Fundamental Principles were formally adopted through a decision of the Union Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016 and notified in the Official Gazette on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The adoption paved the way for devising this National Policy on Official Statistics for improving systems, procedures and institutions consistent with these principles.

### 3. Objectives

The Mission Statement of the Indian Statistical System shall be to provide, within the decentralised structure of the system, reliable, timely and credible social and economic statistics, to assist decision-making within and outside the Government, stimulate research and promote informed debate relating to conditions affecting people's life.

### 4. Approach

**4.1** In view of the aforementioned objectives to be achieved in the decentralized statistical system, adherence to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics is necessary for building public trust, and can be achieved only if the various component parts of the system carry out their functions within a framework, which is consistent with the Principles. This Policy takes the Fundamental Principles as guiding principles in the overall decentralized statistical system in the country and provides a framework consistent with and in furtherance of them. It also provides mechanisms for promoting and assessing compliance.

**4.2** Integration of the official statistical system would be achieved at the initial phase through identification of subject areas in official statistics requiring immediate attention, through establishing appropriate institutional and legal framework for regulation of such statistics identified, and through organising a network of officers/offices at the Centre and in the States/ UTs to implement the directions of the

regulatory regime. It is also proposed to introduce best practices in the statistical system for its overall development. This policy provides a framework for achieving these objectives covering the policy initiatives, implementation strategies and initial provision of resources as detailed in the following paragraphs to enhance public trust in statistics and eventually evolve official statistics as public goods.

## 5. Government Policy Initiatives

### 5.1 Dichotomising official statistics as core statistics and other official statistics

5.1.1 In India, the need for statistical information has increased manifold over the years due to population growth, growth in entrepreneurial activity, and delicensing and deregulation. The Government (at different levels) is the producer of official statistics and is also the biggest user of statistics. No office in the Government which produces official statistics does it for its own consumption alone and no official user of statistics produces all those statistics that are required by it. Although production of official statistics is in the respective domain of the concerned organisations, they should be responsible to the user needs in respect of quality and timeliness. It is also necessary to ensure independence of the official statistical system and ensure public trust in statistics. Official statistics being a large domain, it would be ideal to focus attention on certain specific products to be designated as core statistics which are of national importance and critical to the economy to regulate them for quality and timeliness. In respect of other official statistics, it is desirable to provide guidance.

5.1.2 Core statistics, in most of the cases, require data flow among different Central Ministries, State level organisations and sub-State level organisations. For this purpose, producers of these statistics at the Centre and in the States/ UTs are dependent on each other. No office could afford to stop producing certain statistics merely for the reason that it does not use them or to ignore the requirements of user Departments in respect of quality and timeliness.

5.1.3 Production of official statistics within the Government setup is going to be inescapable at least for some time to come, as there are no producers in the private sector who would invest their money and produce such a vast gamut of official statistics available now. Secondly, the administrative statistics, by their very nature, have to be produced within the Government.

5.1.4 The MOSPI prescribed core statistical functions on official statistics for some of the Central Ministries/ Departments, *vide* M-12011/1/2015-CAP dated 16-04-2015. Under this arrangement, each Ministry/Department *inter alia* should maintain relevant databases and also undertake monitoring and evaluation of all the concerned projects and programmes. The core functions would be revised periodically taking into account the resulting changes due to progress in the economy and new and emerging data requirements.

5.1.5 In view of the above reasons, it is desirable to dichotomise statistical products in the official statistical system into core statistics and other official statistics. Core statistics would be a sub-set of official statistics. The Core Statistics will have the following characteristics:

- (1) They should be of national importance.
- (2) It will be mandatory for the Government at all levels to collect and disseminate them.
- (3) They should conform to prescribed definitions, concepts and standards.
- (4) They should be updated periodically, with suitable periodicity to be determined.
- (5) They will be available at both aggregate and disaggregate levels, wherever appropriate.

5.1.6 In consultation with the NSC and Central Ministries/ Departments, a list of core statistics has been prepared in respect of eight domains, namely, National Income, Production & Services sectors, Budgetary Transactions, Money and Banking, Capital Market, Indices and other short term indicators, External Sector, and Demography, Social and Environment Sectors. The list is given at Annex-II. This list will be effective at the commencement of this Policy.

5.1.7 The policy initiatives on core statistics are as follows:

- (1) Production of core statistics with optimum use of resources and their release, as per a pre-announced calendar, free from Government influence will be ensured.
- (2) The Generic National Quality Assurance Framework endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission would be promoted for adoption in respect of core statistics. Further measures to ensure quality, credibility, timeliness and public trust in respect of core statistics will be evolved to enforce national quality standards on core statistics, such as standard statistical concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies.
- (3) Statistical audit will be exercised over the core statistical activities to ensure quality and integrity of the statistical products;
- (4) Nation-wide strategies for collection, tabulation and dissemination and for ensuring statistical co-ordination among the different agencies involved on core statistics will be evolved and monitored for implementation from time to time.
- (5) The National Statistical Office (NSO) will collect or arrange to collect core statistics. Data collection under the provisions of the Collection of Statistics

Act, 2008, to protect the identity of data providers and confidentiality of data, will be promoted.

- (6) The nodal officers designated in Central Ministries/ Departments will be made professionally responsible to Chief Statistician of India (CSI) on core statistics.
- (7) The NSO will publish, as per pre-announced calendar, core statistics along with critical analysis regarding the quality of data and implication of the use of data in policy making and administration.
- (8) The Code of Statistical Practice given at Annex-III will be promoted for enforcement on a mandatory basis by all the concerned producers in respect of core statistics.
- (9) The NSO will maintain a “warehouse” for core statistics, for dissemination amongst all users in the public and private sectors inside and outside the country and serve as the sole provider of information to foreign Governments, international bodies and United Nations agencies.
- (10) Appropriate institutional and legal arrangements would be made as per this Policy to produce and disseminate core statistics and to conduct statistical audit on core statistics on a regular basis.

## 5.2 Constitutional amendment in respect of core statistics

5.2.1 For production of core statistics, the interdependence of official producers at the Centre and in the States/ UTs is inevitable, although the accountability of such producers at present is to their respective Departments. This may pose problems in future for ensuring production of core statistics with desired quality and timeliness, particularly in the absence of a clear provision on core statistics in the Union List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. Hence, it is necessary to ensure that the Union List provides for regulating statistics of national importance, which aspect cannot be left to be decided by States.

5.2.2 There is an element of vagueness in the Constitutional provisions, surrounding the subject ‘census’. There is a view that Entry-69 (Census) in the Union List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution relates to only human population census, as its Hindi version indicates ‘Janganana’ and since the manner in which the word ‘census’ is used in the Article 82 (on the allocation of seats in the House of the People to the States and the division of each State into territorial constituencies, introduced through 42<sup>nd</sup> amendment) of the Constitution refers to human population census. Centre has been conducting over the years, a number of other nation-wide censuses, such as the Economic Census, the Agriculture Census, the Livestock Census, the Small-scale Industries Census, the Handlooms Census and the Handicrafts Census. Quality and timeliness have been issues to be addressed in



these censuses. Since nation-wide censuses fall in the category of core statistics, it is necessary to eliminate vagueness in the Union List and specifically provide for them in the Union List.

5.2.3 In view of the above reasons, the Union List in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution will be appropriately amended to bring in censuses on subjects other than population census and statistics declared by Parliament by law to be of national importance in the Union List. This makes the Central Government bear the cost of producing and disseminating core statistics. This also facilitates regulation of core statistics.

### 5.3 Mechanism for regulating core statistics including auditing

5.3.1 Regulation of core statistics cannot be entrusted to any one producer of those statistics and non-statutory arrangements made by the Government previously for the purpose have not met with desired success. What is feasible and desirable is that production of official statistics should continue with the Government, whereas the related regulatory and advisory functions could be kept outside the Government. It is proposed that National Statistical Commission (NSC) could be mandated to regulate and audit core statistics and advise Government on improving other official statistics. For this purpose, the NSC will be constituted by law as a public corporation.

5.3.2 The NSC will consist of a Chairperson and not less than four Members, all full-time. The Chairperson and Members of the NSC shall be persons of high integrity, so that they could provide proper regulatory leadership to the statistical system. The tenure and eligibility conditions will be formulated accordingly. Appointment of the Chairperson and Members in the NSC will be made on the basis of recommendations of a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister with representation from the opposition. The Committee will be assisted by a Search Committee headed by the Vice-Chairperson of the NITI Aayog, in which a few technical experts could be included as Members. No officer of the Government will be included as a Member in the NSC, as it could undermine the authority and independent functioning of the NSC. However, the NSC may associate officers of the Government in its meetings. The NSC will have its Hqrs at Delhi and it may establish offices at other places in India and, with the previous approval of the Central Government, outside India.

5.3.3 The NSC will have a Secretariat headed by an officer not below the rank of an Additional Secretary to the Government of India to mainly assist the NSC in its regulatory and oversight functions.

5.3.4 The NSC will recommend from time to time to the Government on inclusion or exclusion of any statistical product in core statistics (applicable at the commencement of this Policy) and the Government, on receipt such advice may notify addition or deletion of the product from the list of core statistics.

5.3.5 The NSC will recommend to the Government, in respect of each core statistical product, on the form, the manner and the time by which collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics shall be carried out, statistical standards including statistical concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies that are required to be met, and other arrangements. Based on such advice, the Government may notify appropriate directions. The machinery to implement the directions is separately given in this Policy.

5.3.6 The NSC may, from time to time, recommend to the Central Government or any State Government, collection, compilation and dissemination of administrative statistics with such periodicity and in such format, as may be useful for statistical purposes. The Central Government or a State Government, as the case may be, may notify directions for compliance on the basis of advice of the NSC notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force.

5.3.7 The NSC will conduct statistical audit on core statistics keeping in view the directions notified by the Government. A separate Division under the NSC will be established, to be named as National Statistical Appraisal and Assessment Organisation (NSAAO) headed by an officer not below the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India to be designated as Chief Statistical Auditor. This organisation would be conducting statistical audit on mandatory basis in respect of core statistics and selectively on other products, as per the directions of the NSC.

5.3.8 Along with functional autonomy, the NSC will also be provided financial autonomy. In order to provide financial autonomy to the NSC, an initial endowment fund of Rs.500 crores will be provided and certain percentage of the budget on official statistics (say five percent of the budgetary grant of the National Statistical Organisation) would be made to devolve to the NSC in every financial year for the services that the NSC is expected to render. The NSC would organize the amounts received from time to time in the form of a non-lapsable Fund for meeting its expenditure.

5.3.9 Regulation of core statistics and implementation of related directions may have implications on policy matters effecting Centre-State relations. Political will both at the Centre and in the States may have to provide support including primacy in public administration to official statistics from time to time. Since the pith and substance relating to core statistics has implications in the Centre-State relations in the areas of official statistics, constitution of a National Statistical Development Council (NSDC) under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister is desirable to provide guidance to the NSC on related policy matters. This arrangement would foster and facilitate smooth working of the NSC.

5.3.10 The Council will be presided by the Prime Minister and in his absence, by the Minister in-charge of statistics as Vice-president. Since the Council would handle Centre-State relations in the areas of official statistics, the Council should be represented by Chief Ministers of six States to be nominated by the Centre. Besides, the Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog, the Cabinet Secretary, the Governor of the

Reserve Bank of India and the Chairperson and Members of the NSC shall be members in the Council. The Council requires continuous technical support from some of the important bureaucrats and technical experts in the Government, to strengthen the implementation process in respect of statistical policies and priorities. For this purpose, the Secretary (Home Affairs), the Secretary (Economic Affairs), the Chief Statistician of India, the Chief Statistical Auditor, the Chairman (University Grants Commission), the Director General (Central Statistics Office), the Director General (National Sample Survey Office) and the Director (Indian Statistical Institute) shall be permanent invitees in the Council. The NSC Secretariat will provide secretariat service to the National Statistical Development Council.

5.3.11 The Council may meet at least once in a year to deliberate on policy matters, such as reforms in the system, Centre-State relations in the areas of official statistics, international obligations, and resource requirements and provide directions to the NSC. The NSC's reports would be an important input for the Council. The NSC shall take steps to implement the directions of the Council.

5.3.12 A Bill to constitute the NSC on the above lines as a public corporation will be introduced in the Parliament. Other salient features of the Bill are given at Annex-IV.

#### 5.4 Official Machinery to implement directions on core statistics

5.4.1 The Office of Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is an important link between the NSC and the Government (at different levels). Hence, the service conditions of the CSI and his accountability are very important in the statistical system. The CSI will be mandated to perform his duties in accordance with the directions of the NSC to -

- (i) promote statistical coordination with different Ministries of the Government of India, Departments of different States and Union territories and international statistical agencies;
- (ii) assist the NSC in evolving and implementing any statistical strategy;
- (iii) assist the NSC in deciding and reallocating statistical priorities;
- (iv) promote reliability and integrity of statistics;
- (v) monitor implementation of the directions of the NSC on production, processing and dissemination of statistics in respect of the NSO and other Government Departments in the Government of India and in the States and Union territories; and
- (vi) formulate and monitor implementation of any plan scheme on official statistics.

5.4.2 The CSI shall submit reports to the NSC in such format and with such periodicity, as may be specified from time to time by the NSC. The CSI shall be associated in such meetings of the NSC, as may be specified from time to time by the NSC. CSI's role as Secretary to the NSC will be discontinued and the NSC will be provided a separate Secretariat.

5.4.3 At present, no specific provisions exist in respect of removal of a CSI. Hence, it is proposed that the Central Government may, after giving the person concerned a reasonable opportunity to prove his innocence, remove a CSI from service on the basis of any adverse report received from the NSC on his performance. The service conditions of the CSI will be amended on these lines.

5.4.4 In the performance of his duties, the CSI requires a network of offices and officers. Each Ministry/ Department/ its instrumentality at the Centre will designate a nodal Officer of appropriate rank for all statistical matters and functions pertaining to it. The nodal Officers would be professionally responsible and accountable to the CSI on all core statistics. Broadly they would perform the following coordinating functions:

- (1) coordinate with CSI in the implementation of guidelines outlined/ issued by NSC on statistical matters
- (2) provide information/ data/ statistics as may be needed by the MOSPI as the nodal Ministry for Statistics;
- (3) be responsible to the CSI in matters of core statistics and implement all the directions on 'core statistics'
- (4) Inform the CSI on the demands for more information/ data through surveys or other theoretical methods
- (5) advise and monitor the sharing of information among Centre and States and avoid duplication
- (6) advise CSI on HRD issues pertaining to statistical personnel of their Units

5.4.5 MOSPI will designate its officers of appropriate rank as liaison officers in each State/ UT to assist the CSI in the exercise of his mandate and to perform the functions given below:

- (1) Advise and assist the State/ UT in complying with the directions on core statistics in the State/ UT
- (2) Coordinate the sharing and flow of information between Centre and State/ UT on statistical matters
- (3) Ensure follow-up action on the recommendations of NSC to the State/ UT
- (4) Ensure follow-up action on the action points identified in the Conferences of Central and State Statistical Organisations
- (5) Assess and advise on the training needs on statistical matters including administrative statistics in the State/ UT
- (6) Monitor and evaluate progress of statistical programs carried out in the State/ UT wholly or partially with Central funds
- (7) Coordinate between the Centre and State/ UT in respect of quality standards on official statistics

5.4.6 As per the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules [in short, AOBR], the Central Ministries/ Departments other than MOSPI are responsible mainly for

administrative statistics. A few of them have been conducting periodic censuses and sample surveys and producing short term indicators. In view of this, statistical coordination in respect of administrative statistics will be decentralised in accordance with the AOB. Under these Rules, it is evident that some of the sectors, such as manufacturing, mining etc., are in the domain of more than one Ministry/ Department at the Centre. Partly, a few sectors, such as manufacturing, mining, agriculture, health and education, are in the domain of States as well. Administrative statistics are collected by all the Ministries/ Departments at the Centre and in the States to the extent they deal with each of the sectors. The Ministry/ Department at the Centre dealing with major chunk of each sector will be declared the nodal Ministry on administrative statistics for that sector. That Ministry/ Department will, in consultation with others, will evolve a standard template for compiling and disseminating data and establish data flow. Statistical cadres and other officers/ staff engaged in statistical work in different Ministries/ Departments at the Centre will be restructured to meet these requirements and other statistical requirements. It is proposed to decentralize the statistical coordination in the following way:

- (1) Each Department will be assigned the work of statistical coordination in a specific area at national level to be responsible for disseminating a set of products for that sector. The subject allocation will be aligned with the economic activity classification and other social sector requirements, besides the AOB. In addition, the Department will also be responsible for providing budgetary estimates as per the standards of the National Accounts Division (NAD) and for compiling and disseminating administrative statistics in respect of their Department.
- (2) The concerned Statistical Unit (of the national coordinator) will be functionally separated from other functions of the Department. The Head of the Unit As will have independence in respect of methods and results. He would directly report to the Secretary of the concerned Ministry/ Department, but not to any other officer of lower rank, and he should participate in all policy related meetings to keep himself update on requirements of data.
- (3) The national coordinator should liaise with other Ministries/ Departments having overlapping functions, with States/ UTs and with users of data on producing and disseminating statistical products in the subject area assigned to him and decide who would do what and how. He would also work for regular flow of data related to that subject among official agencies.
- (4) The MOSPI will, in consultation with the national coordinators, lay down general protocols and procedures for the coordination mechanism of the national coordinators besides standards and classifications. The national coordinators will be responsible to the CSI in respect of the methods they follow and the results/ data flow.

5.4.7 The MOSPI has also to be restructured in a manner consistent with this policy. Under the AOB, the Statistics Wing in the MOSPI is mainly allocated with the following four types of functions:

(A) Functions relating to production of statistics

1. National Accounts and related aggregates
2. Index of Industrial Production
3. Annual Survey of Industries
4. All India economic census and follow-up sample surveys
5. Nation-wide sample surveys on various socio-economic aspects
6. Consumer Price Index Numbers for rural and urban areas

(B) Advisory functions

1. Advising the Departments of the Government of India on statistical methodology and on statistical analysis of data.
2. Development of methodology for Environment Statistics/ National Resource Accounting
3. Undertaking methodological studies and pilot surveys

(C) Coordination functions

1. Planning integrated development of the statistical system in the country
2. Coordination with a view to identifying gaps in data or duplication and to suggest necessary remedial measures.
3. Laying down and maintenance of statistical norms and standards
4. Dissemination of statistical information to Government, semi-Government or private data users, and to international agencies
5. Giving grants-in-aid to registered non-governmental organisations and research institutions
6. Functioning as the Cadre Controlling Authority for the Indian Statistical Service
7. Administering the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008

(D) Regulatory functions

1. Conducting quality checks and auditing of statistical surveys/ data sets
2. Administering the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959

5.4.8 With regard to the advisory, coordinating and regulatory functions, the MOSPI does not have any dedicated unit or an arrangement distinct from production functions. In other words, these functions have become integrated with production of statistics, as a result of which they are treated as secondary activities.

5.4.9 The integration of production functions with other functions in the MOSPI has resulted in non-performance or low level performance, ignorance of some of the important nodal functions and not generating institutional memory/ inputs required in the official statistical system. For example, attempts are being made to identify data gaps without performing data integration. Administrative statistics is not being

compiled as a result of which not much was found to integrate. In the absence of these two, the system has been functioning mostly on the basis of ad hoc requirements. Most of the censuses are not followed up with detailed sample surveys.

5.4.10 The Divisions in the MOSPI need to be pruned up and restructured to ensure that statistical coordination could be effectively maintained throughout the system. It is also necessary that some of the urgent needs are met by the MOSPI in the context of growing user demands for data on newly emerging areas.

5.4.11 At present, the NSO, i.e. the Statistics Wing in MOSPI, is organised into two Offices, namely, the Central Statistics Office and the National Sample Survey Office. The Government resolved *vide* Notification No. 85 dated 1<sup>st</sup> June 2005 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-III-Section 4 that along with the establishment of the National Statistical Commission (NSC), the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) will be merged into a single entity called the National Statistical Organisation (NSO). The NSC was constituted on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and has been functioning since then. But, the CSO and NSSO have not been merged effectively, as the dichotomy has been continuing with a slight change in names. The CSO was renamed as Central Statistics Office and the NSSO was renamed as National Sample Survey Office. In order to achieve the objectives of this Policy, it is proposed to reorganise the MOSPI as detailed in the following paragraphs.

5.4.12 All the Divisions presently under CSO and NSSO will be treated as being under NSO and the usage of the names, CSO and NSSO, will be discontinued. The Divisions in the NSO would be reorganised into the following eleven Divisions, so as to delineate advisory, coordinating and regulatory functions from production functions:

1. National Statistical Coordination Division (NSCD)
2. National Data Integration, IT, Warehousing and Data Dissemination Division (NDIIWDD)
3. National Accounts Division (NAD)
4. Training, Research and Consultancy Division (TRCD)
5. Administrative Statistics Division (ASD)
6. Services Sector Division (SSD)
7. Index of Industrial Production Division (IIPD)
8. Price Statistics Division (PSD)
9. NSC Secretariat (including Audit)
10. Field Operations and Data Flow Division (FODFD)
11. Survey Design, Data Processing and Dissemination Division (SDDPDD)

5.4.13 The aforesaid eleven Divisions of the NSO will report to the CSI through the concerned Director Generals. Appropriate number of *ex-officio* positions of Joint Secretary and above would be provided in the NSO to facilitate national level coordination. The functions of the aforesaid Divisions are detailed at Annex-V.

5.4.14 Appropriate measures would be taken up to review statistical cadres, namely, the Indian Statistical Service and the Sub-ordinate Statistical Service to ensure that the recruitment processes thereof and the allocation of posts across Central Ministries/ Departments are consistent with this Policy.

5.4.15 Despite making very strong statutory provisions for ensuring compliance of the directions on core statistics, the decentralized statistical system poses a variety of problems. In a country like India with its unity in diversity, it is necessary to have a unified statistical system which caters to the needs of administration of economic and social justice both at the Centre as well as in the States. Official statistics need to be generated in an unbiased and independent way, irrespective of the stakes of the immediate administration.

5.4.16 The Indian Statistical System requires professional freedom to be provided for the official statisticians working in the Central Government as well as in the State Governments, to implement the directions on core statistics. The statisticians whether working in the Central Government or in State Governments must have a sense of belonging to one system, in achieving the goals set by the regulatory mechanism from time to time. This can only be achieved by unification of the statistical cadres all over the country.

5.4.17 For achieving the unification of the statistical cadres all over the country, it is necessary to constitute an All India Service by combining the Indian Statistical Service, State Statistical Services and other Group 'A' Statistical posts/ cadres in the Central and State Governments. In this context, the following observations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission are worth mentioning.

"47.4 The main objectives of the founding fathers in providing for the All India Services were:

1. to facilitate liaison between the Centre and the States;
2. to maintain a certain level of uniformity in standards of administration;
3. to enable the administrative machinery at the Union level to keep in touch with the ground realities in the States;
4. to help the State administrative machinery to acquire a broader outlook and exposure, and provide them with the best possible talent for manning senior positions; and
5. to ensure that political considerations, either in recruitment or in discipline and control were reduced to the minimum, if not eliminated altogether."

5.4.18 The above observations go to show that the constitution of an All India Service to man the statistical posts at the Centre and in the States is a minimum requirement for unifying the Indian Statistical system and regulating core statistics. The Rangarajan Commission also recommended, at paras-14.6.27 and 14.6.28 of



their report (2001), for constituting an all-India Indian Statistical Service which would benefit the statistical system at the Centre and in the States.

5.4.19 In view of the aforesaid considerations, it is proposed to constitute an all India Statistical Service. The posts available at State level are mostly of lower cadres. In most of the States, the senior most statistical officer is of the rank of Deputy Secretary. Hence, it would be necessary to create three senior level posts, equivalent to Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary and Director in the Government of India, in each of the major States and one or two senior level posts of appropriate rank in other States/ UTs. Initially, these newly created posts and the posts in the present Indian Statistical Service (which is a Group 'A' Central Service) may be integrated and constituted as an all-India Indian Statistical Service. The other statistical cadres/ posts at the Centre and in the States may be integrated in a phased manner into the all-India Indian Statistical Service so constituted, for which a detailed framework would be worked out by the Central Government. There is a need to create senior level statistical positions in some of the Departments at the Centre having substantial statistical functions. The Central Government may identify the Departments in consultation with the NSC and create new posts for that purpose also in the all-India Service. This would effectively integrate the official statistical system. Hence, it is proposed to initiate consultancy process with the States for constituting an all India Service.

5.4.20 The CSI, ably assisted by nodal officers in statistical coordination and aided by the officers of the All India Service in following the directions on producing core statistics, will provide the implementation mechanism. Persons involved in activities relating to core statistics belong to different cadres and work in different offices. They will be provided adequate legal protection from being victimised, by the administration under which they are working, in the course of their performing any duty of implementing or complying with any direction on core statistics.

5.4.21 At times, production of core statistics may suffer due to resource constraints. In order to cater to this requirement and the increasing demand for professional statistical services within the Government, Central Government will establish a society with an initial endowment fund Rs. 2,000 crores, to be registered under the Societies Act, with its Headquarters at New Delhi. The Society will be assigned mainly with (a) training of manpower engaged from time to time in statistical activities of the Government, (b) conducting statistical surveys (censuses, sample surveys, evaluation studies, case studies, methodological studies etc.,) of the Central Government and of the States/ UTs, (c) analytical and research work, and (d) providing statistical plans to address various issues. As the Society, after its establishment, shall take up all statistical activities of the Government at the Centre which cannot be taken up within the setup, the Government Departments at the Centre may not outsource any statistical project to any other person or organisation. Reasons for making this kind of an arrangement are given at Annex-VI.

## 5.5 Identifying statistical products required through committees

5.5.1 In the decentralized federal statistical system of India, there is a need to identify from time to time statistical products/ services that would be required for policy formulation and promoting informed debate, in accordance with the division of powers between the Centre and the States. The types of statistical products/ services would be as follows:

1. Statistical registers/ frames
2. Satellite accounts
3. Administrative statistics
4. Performance indicators
5. Short-term indicators (Indices etc.)
6. Censuses
7. Sample surveys
8. Evaluation studies
9. Case studies
10. Methodological studies
11. Training on official statistics for different target groups
12. Statistical Project monitoring
13. Data integration, linking and mapping
14. Data storage and Dissemination of data and metadata
15. Statistical coordination on filling data gaps, integrating systems, core statistics, coordination with States/ UTs & line Ministries
16. Implementation of NSC Recommendations
17. Setting standards, classifications etc., for different purposes
18. Reviewing the system, weeding out obsolete products, modifying existing products and evolving new products
19. Data warehousing and data service to customers
20. Advising States/ UTs and line Ministries on statistical matters
21. Statistical documentation
22. Statistical networking and IT solutions for regular statistical activities, web portals
23. National and sub-national accounts
24. Natural resource accounting and national balance sheet
25. Statistical practices, protocols and manuals
26. Sectoral/ occupational/ geographical distributions of economic, social and environmental parameters
27. Data collection
28. Data processing
29. Internal statistical audit (Field supervision/ scrutiny etc.)
30. Resource planning on statistical matters

5.5.2 Appropriate professional committees would be constituted to enlist the products/ services in each sector. Statistical coordination for the purpose in different Ministries/ Departments includes the following, namely, -

1. Deciding, in consultation with users within and outside the Government, the products/ services required for the subject area

2. Deciding, on the basis of mutual consultation, arrangements with the official agencies at the Centre and in the States/ UTs to produce/ disseminate each product/ service including confidentiality/ security of data
3. Planning and executing training of staff that would be involved in the process
4. Enabling sharing of data without compromising on confidentiality/ security of data
5. Facilitating flow of information among different official agencies at the Centre and in the States/ UTs
6. Facilitating observance of statistical standards/ norms/ protocols/ classifications laid down by the MOSPI/ NSC
7. Taking steps that may be necessary to maintain quality, credibility and timeliness of data
8. Ensuring coordination between agencies handling administrative statistics with other agencies

## 5.6 Quality Assurance

5.6.1 Quality of data is maintained by different Government Departments through in-house measures, such as on-the-spot field inspections during data collection, scrutiny and validation of data. Statistical products, and in particular those that are regularly or periodically produced by any office, require statistical audit through an external expertise. Internal quality control instruments, more often than not, address implementation processes and do not cover the entire gamut of activities. Many countries are moving towards establishing quality control frameworks and statistical audit mechanisms.

5.6.2 The development of the Template for a Generic National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) and the Guidelines to accompany the Template was undertaken by the Expert Group on NQAF in response to a request by the UNSC at its forty-first session in 2010. The Template is intended to be used as a tool to provide the general structure within which countries that choose to do so can formulate and operationalize national quality frameworks of their own or further enhance existing ones. At its forty-third session in 2012, the UNSC fully endorsed the generic national quality assurance framework template and encouraged countries to use it. The MOSPI notified General Guidelines on Quality Assurance for Official Statistics, *vide* Notification no. 124 dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018 published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-I Section-I, for use and voluntary compliance by the Official agencies.

5.6.3 Consistent with Principle 2 of the Fundamental Principles, policy initiatives in this subject are to:

- (1) apply NQAF to each product of official statistics and evolve specific Quality Assurance Framework for the product consistent with NQAF;

- (2) promoting compliance to NQAF through appropriate incentives/ awards; and
- (3) conduct statistical audit periodically through independent agencies on all the major statistical products covering collection, processing and dissemination, and place the findings of the audit and consequent improvements made in the system in the public domain.

## 5.7 Code of Statistical Practice

5.7.1 Government is not only the biggest producer but also the biggest user of official statistics. But, there are other users outside the Government setup. Users may be classified into two major categories: Institutional Users and Non-Institutional Users. Institutional users generally need data for governmental and administrative decision making. Their data needs are considerable and usually have priority in terms of demands that are met by data producers. Furthermore, data for Institutional Users typically need to allow for comparison over time and space in order to verify the impact of decisions. Non-Institutional users, for example journalists, have different needs, focused particularly on having statistics ready for communication and diffusion to wider audiences. For them, it is important to be able to show new trends of interest and importance on developments in the everyday life of citizens. User needs may also differ according to the national or regional interests of users.

5.7.2 The Institutional users include organisations, such as the Parliament, State Legislatures, Government at different levels, instrumentalities of the Government, Financial institutions, Business entities, Societies and Cooperative institutions, Trade unions, and Confederations.

5.7.3 Non-institutional users are individuals (may or may not belong to institutions) such as Users (Journalists and media, citizens, Students and Teachers) with a general interest (e.g., economic growth), Users (Policy analysts, Marketing analysts, Experts in a specific field) with a specific subject/domain interest (e.g., health) and Users (academia, researchers, and Consultants) with a research interest (e.g., innovation in enterprises).

5.7.4 Some of the users use compiled/ aggregate statistics on a daily basis, some use disaggregated and micro data, and some use occasionally without looking at metadata. General public need statistics for assessing performance of Government and for informed debate and policy makers need statistics for informed decision making.

5.7.5 In the decentralized federal statistical system of India, the types of statistical products required by different types of users are as follows:

- (1) Statistical frames/ registers

(2) Performance indicators (short term/ long term, periodic) for each subject domain/ component/ segment

(3) Unit-level data (integrated from different sources)

5.7.6 A fundamental requirement for official statistics is protecting confidentiality. This requirement is expected to be strictly implemented in each and every aspect of the statistical process, from survey planning to dissemination of statistical products.

5.7.7 Under the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008, the strong power given to Statistical agencies to collect and access information is counterbalanced by a guarantee of confidentiality. All Statistical agency employees are personally liable for ensuring statistical confidentiality, and even courts cannot have access to individually identifiable statistical information without the informed consent of respondents.

5.7.8 Besides, a Statistical Disclosure Control Policy would be evolved to ensure proper access and protection of individual data and coordinate research for the protection of respondent confidentiality in data disseminated by Statistical agencies.

5.7.9 All statistical surveys represent a degree of privacy invasion, which is justified by the need for an alternative public good, namely information. The relevant issues are the methods used to ensure that questionnaire content is minimally intrusive, that respondents are informed of the purposes to be served by the data collection, and that the total reporting burden imposed on the population is regularly measured, controlled, and equitably distributed.

5.7.10 A special issue relates to the very sensitive topic of record linkage. Given the wide scope for record linkage within the statistical system, which has broad access to the data holdings of different Departments, the NSO has to develop a multi-level review procedure, as well as extensive on-going consultation mechanisms with stakeholder groups. These mechanisms aim to ensure that all record linkage activities serve a clear public-interest purpose and that linked data will be retained only as long as operationally required.

5.7.11 Consistent with Principle No. 6 of the Fundamental Principles and to meet the legitimate expectations of users within and outside the Government, the policy initiatives in this subject area are:

- (1) Developing archival processes and methods used in producing official statistics including easily accessible metadata meant to facilitate better understanding of data.
- (2) Setting up standards for protecting confidentiality, including a guarantee that no statistics will be disseminated that are likely to identify an individual informant unless specifically agreed with him or her and release unit level data without compromising confidentiality of the informants.

- (3) Promoting use of Information Technology (IT) tools widely and intensively in data collection, processing, storage, integration, matching and linking, dissemination, network development and documentation systems for timely generation of data and for providing wider access.
- (4) Providing data clearly and accurately to the widest possible audience on an equitable basis at an affordable cost and make available reports in soft copies free of cost to users and the public at large, through designated institutions, such as Universities, Research Institutions and Government Offices, to promote research.
- (5) Releasing Official Statistics in accordance with a pre-specified publication calendar, and ensure pre-release access to data to only those people involved in their production and publication.
- (6) Informing methodological changes before the release of official statistics, wherever new methodology is used.
- (7) Declaring Data Production and Management Policy for each agency responsible for producing official statistics.
- (8) Providing Core Statistics as well as *Headline Official Statistics* which are of public interest free on the internet.
- (9) Making implementation of the Code of Statistical Practice given at Annex-III mandatory in respect of core statistics and promoting compliance to the Code among producers of other statistics including private producers of statistics through grant of appropriate incentives/ awards.
- (10) Initiating appropriate measures to promote public awareness on the importance of statistics and statistical methodologies, particularly in understanding changes in the economy and society.

## 5.8 Data documentation

The MOSPI may, in consultation with the NSC, notify, from time to time, a Data Documentation Policy covering *inter alia*: (a) Metadata, (b) Data structure and instructions for users, (c) Outputs of technical committees appointed at the Centre and in the States and UTs on statistical matters, (d) Technical monographs on methodological studies, pilot studies, type studies or any other study arising from recommendations made by technical committees, and (e) Instances of erroneous interpretation of data and clarifications furnished thereof by the Government. These data elements will be provided through a Digital Library with online access.

## 5.9 Data sharing

5.9.1 The Central Government notified a National Data Sharing and Accessibility (NDSA) Policy, which was published in the Gazette of India (Weekly) Part-I, Section-1, Reference No. 501GI/2011, Issue No. 11, dated 17<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The NDSA policy applies to all data and information created, generated, collected and archived using public funds. Data sets generated are classified in to sharable and non-shareable data. Shareable data are reports, ad-hoc and regular publications, tables and validated data at unit/ household/ establishment level. Non-shareable data are of sensitive nature or collected under confidentiality clauses. Important features of the NDSA policy are as under:

- i. All sharable data will be made available on 'as-is where-is' basis.
- ii. Pricing of data, if any, would be decided by the data owners and as per the Government policies.
- iii. data.gov.in will have the meta data and data itself
- iv. All data sets are to be uploaded regularly every quarter.
- v. All the data users who are accessing/ using the data will be required to acknowledge the Ministry/ Department in all forms of publications.

5.9.2 As per the NDSA policy, all the official statistics producing agencies in various Ministries/ Departments are required to notify sharable and non-sharable data in data.gov.in. Further, the Ministries/ Departments under whose control these agencies function are required to ensure that sharable data in the form requested with or without payment becomes available to users without any delay or discomfort. In the beginning of every year, Ministries/ Departments may also announce data release calendar giving details of data, frequency and the date of release in their websites and also in data.gov.in. These agencies will ensure that yearly release calendar is strictly adhered to. In the domain of official statistics, implementation of NSDA is work under progress.

5.9.3 The policy initiatives in this crucial area are as follows:

- (1) Arranging an IT platform for sharing of data by networking major official statistical producers (including those producing administrative statistics) in the country
- (2) Developing appropriate anonymisation rules and security provisions to protect confidentiality of data
- (3) Publishing details of sharable official statistical datasets from time to time
- (4) Publishing details of non-sharable official statistical datasets from time to time along with reasons

- (5) Conducting survey of users of data periodically to improve the system

#### 5.10 Data integration

The harmonizing and dovetailing of statistical compilations and of published measurements represents a very important type of cooperative relationship among Government Departments. When official agencies agree to fit their data together through data integration, it would lessen the burden on respondents. Administrative Statistics Division in the NSO would promote and advise on data integration and data/ indicator pooling as per requirements and similar exercises for providing reliable indicators of development at the national and sub-national levels required for planning. Appropriate procedures and protocols to promote data matching, linking and data integration will be developed, particularly in respect of administrative statistics to provide usable frames for censuses and sample surveys, using Information Technology (IT) and sharing of data among Government Departments and public institutions such as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA).

#### 5.11 Guidelines for outsourcing statistical activities

Recognising the fact that outsourcing statistical activities (that cannot be accommodated with the available resources in the Government setup) may be inevitable for the Government agencies, guidelines have been formulated for use by the Government agencies when outsourcing is resorted to, so as not to compromise on professional approach and quality in collection and dissemination of statistics. The guidelines are given at Annex-VII.

#### 5.12 Statistical Services to the nation

The policy makers, the researchers, the students and the public at large will be provided the following services by the concerned official statistical agencies including MOSPI:

- (1) Placing in public domain statistical frames & registers prepared through data integration from different sources along with summary information and relevant metadata
- (2) Placing in public domain administrative statistics at appropriate disaggregated level, in particular at electoral constituency level, along with relevant metadata
- (3) Placing in the public domain the reports of censuses and other surveys along with metadata and unit level data (after observing appropriate procedures to anonymise the data to protect the identity of respondents from being disclosed)



- (4) Providing advisory and audit paid services through NSC to producers of statistics in the private sector in respect of their statistical products
- (5) Bringing out special summaries on socio-economic data from time to time for updating relevant material in text books for the use of student community
- (6) Convening conferences/ workshops from time to time to sensitize users on the fitness to use of various statistical products and obtaining the views and suggestions of users to further improve the products
- (7) Evolving mechanisms to settle grievances/ complaints and provide clarifications in respect of statistical matters through officers of appropriate rank notified for the purpose as spokes persons and placing the summary of the outcomes thereof in the public domain

### 5.13 Capacity Development

The issue of imparting training to sizeable number of officers/ staff at the Centre and in the States/ UTs in a time bound manner needs to be addressed. This involves a systematic assessment and implementation of the following aspects:

- (1) Identifying topics on which training is to be imparted to different target groups, both institutional and on-the-job
- (2) Scheduling the training programmes through various means such as summer workshops, broadcasts/ web casts through electronic media/ internet, producing video CDs/ DVDs for distribution to Govt. offices and universities, sensitization programmes for different segments of population
- (3) Introducing administrative statistics as a topic in the training curriculum of various training institutes/ academies imparting training to service personnel like the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Police Service (IPS), the Indian Forest Service (IFS), the Indian Revenue Service (IRS) etc.
- (4) Introducing appropriate courses on official statistics at the training institutes/ academies to be recognized for preparing private practitioners in statistics
- (5) Strengthening training institutes/ academies to execute and monitor all aspects of training in official statistics
- (6) Establishing Research Units at training institutes/ academies
- (7) Identifying various reports or parts thereof for disseminating them to students at different levels

## 5.14 International cooperation

5.14.1 Over the years, India has been working closely with multilateral agencies and other countries for developing and promoting internationally accepted concepts, definitions, methods and practices relating to official statistics. As a signatory to numerous international treaties, conventions and commitments, India is responsible for providing statistical information on a wide variety of indicators.

5.14.2 Under the AOB, the MOSPI is mandated for dissemination of data, on request, to United Nations Agencies like United Nations Statistics Division, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, International Labour Organisation and other relevant international agencies. Under the AOB, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare is mandated to liaise with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Similar function with respect to ILO is with the Ministry of Labour and Employment and of WHO is with the Department of Health and Family Welfare. International Agencies connected with Trade Policy (e.g. UNCTAD, ESCAP, ECA, ECLA, EEC, EFTA, GATT/WTO, ITC and CFC) on similar lines fall under the domain of Department of Commerce.

5.14.3 In all areas of official statistics, it is desirable that Indian official statistical agencies collaborate with their counterparts from other countries and international agencies to evolve statistical products and standards suitable for Indian context and to produce and disseminate internationally comparable statistics. Principles 9 and 10 of the FPOS lay down the requirement of following international methodological standards on statistics and bilateral/ multilateral statistical cooperation.

5.14.4 The MOSPI and other Ministries handling different subject domains may have to develop collaborative programs. The MOSPI may also have to establish systematic collaboration with international agencies and other countries to enhance capacity creation on statistical matters both in India and in other countries. Adherence to international standards on statistical matters is necessary to assess India's relative position on different facets among the nations in the world and to improve the statistical systems in all dimensions. Comparability is an important dimension of quality. Without common standards, frameworks, classifications and metadata, comparability between countries would not be possible.

5.14.5 International standards are to be applied by NSO as much as possible, and are adapted to national circumstances in fields such as national accounting, census and demographic statistics, social statistics, and environment statistics. In providing technical assistance to other countries, the NSO should always promote the use of internationally recognized standards of classification and methods.

5.14.6 In addition, NSO should actively participate in international discussions, deliberations and elaboration of standards and guidelines and where feasible, provide technical leadership in developing international classifications and concepts. NSO should actively participate in developing bilateral and multilateral co-operation to improve data quality by sharing lessons learnt and best practices.

5.14.7 NSO should share statistical technical expertise and best practices, and work co-operatively to develop international standards and statistical classifications, as well as frameworks for the international and national development of official statistics. The NSO should be actively involved with international organizations, such as the United Nations Statistical Commission, ILO, FAO, IMF, UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF, OECD etc. Senior officers of NSO should be members of different international working groups responsible for developing international standards.

5.14.8 Consistent with Principles No. 9 and 10 of the Fundamental Principles, the policy initiatives in this crucial area are as follows:

- (1) Collecting international statistical standards (in the form of UNSC manuals in many cases), customizing them for the Indian context and publishing them for guidance to all official statistical agencies
- (2) Enlisting statistical requirements and furnishing of statistical information, as per international commitments and publishing the details from time to time
- (3) Studying the processes of development of statistical products (including administrative statistics) in other countries and finding ways and means of introducing the processes in India
- (4) Making systematic collaboration arrangements with other countries and UN and other international agencies on statistical matters
- (5) Publishing statistical manuals, on the basis of international statistical standards, suitable for Indian context for each sector
- (6) Participating in capacity development programs organised by international agencies and providing such services to other countries
- (7) Deputing teams for studying international best statistical practices and procedures

#### 5.15 Strengthening sub-national statistical systems

The following policy initiatives would be recommended to States/ UTs for further development of sub-national statistical systems:

- i. Periodical review of statistical systems in each Department and local Governments in each State/ UT may be undertaken through the concerned DES and the concerned subject matter Central Ministry. This review may be intended to decide whether existing products should be continued or discontinued or continued in a modified form and to decide

on new products to be introduced through strengthening administrative statistical system or conducting surveys.

- ii. Expert Groups may be constituted to review methodology in respect of existing products and those to be continued in a modified form and to formulate methodology for new products.
- iii. Statistical products that are important and critical at the State/ UT level may be identified and the DES may be empowered to regulate on their quality, timeliness and credibility. Such products may be placed in the public domain through single window system as per an advance calendar to be announced.
- iv. Use of common definitions, classifications etc. by different statistical offices and administrative units may be promoted to obtain databases on different subjects available with them and integrate them. The integrated databases will enhance their statistical potential and hence, may be placed in public domain.
- v. Human resources and other resources available for producing statistics that are important and critical at the State/ UT level may be reviewed and shortages may be met through adequate augmentation.

## 6. Implementation of the Policy

6.1 Each Ministry and Department in the Central Government will designate an officer of the rank of at least Joint Secretary or equivalent as the 'nodal officer' responsible for all statistical activities concerning that Ministry/ Department. The Ministry/ Department will also identify a nodal officer of appropriate rank in each Public Sector Undertaking and Autonomous institution having substantial statistical functions under its administrative control. The nodal officers shall submit statements to the MOSPI on adherence to this policy by the concerned Ministry/ Department/ Organisation in such format and with such periodicity, as may be prescribed by the MOSPI from time to time. The nodal officers shall also:

- i. assist the Chief Statistician of India in evolving specific strategies in respect of implementing this policy and in bringing up, where necessary, specific proposals relating to implementation of this policy for consideration and decision of the Government at appropriate level;
- ii. coordinate implementation, of the strategies evolved and decisions made, in their respective Ministries/ Departments/ Organisations, as the case may be, and
- iii. submit periodical reports to the CSI from time to time on the process of implementation.

6.2 This Policy would be implemented through a regular process of consultation/ discussion by the Committee comprising the following officers:

- 1) The Chief Statistician of India (CSI)
- 2) Senior officers of the MOSPI nominated by MOSPI
- 3) Nodal Officers of all the Ministries/ Departments of Central Government and their autonomous bodies and Public Sector Undertakings.

6.3 The meetings of the aforesaid Policy Implementation Committee will be chaired by the CSI. The meetings of the Committee may be held at least once in a year. In addition, subject specific meetings of nodal officers of relevant Ministries/ Departments may be held, as and when required.

6.4 The State Governments and the UT Administrations will be invited to participate in the above consultation process, by nominating their nodal officers of appropriate rank. This would facilitate the States and UTs in knowing the processes evolved and implemented from time to time by the Centre and in taking up similar initiatives in their respective statistical systems.

## 7. Resources for implementation

The existing institutional framework and the institutional arrangements will be suitably augmented to ensure implementation of this Policy. Additional resources would be provided where appropriate with competent approval; in particular, in respect of using IT tools/ platforms with networking arrangements and creating a Data Warehouse on core statistics, for preparing digital library, for engaging experts, providing incentives/ awards for compliance to Code of Statistical Practice and NQAF, for establishing a Consultancy wing in the form of a registered society with an initial seed capital, and for deputing teams for studying international best statistical practices and procedures. With regard to institutional strengthening, additional resources required would be provided for re-constituting NSC, strengthening NSC Secretariat and for conducting statistical audit and manning the Warehouse.

## 8. Review of the Policy

8.1 The CSI shall submit annual reports to the Government on the implementation of the policy. The annual reports shall be placed in the public domain.

8.2 On the basis of annual reports of the CSI, this Policy may be reviewed periodically, say, once in five years, and modifications, if necessary, may be incorporated in the Policy.

## Annex-I : Existing features of the Indian Statistical System and challenges

1. The Statistical System presently functions within the overall administrative framework of the country. The federal structure within the constitutional scheme of division of powers under the Union, State and Concurrent Lists has influenced the organisation of the statistical system as well. At the Centre, the responsibilities are further divided amongst the various ministries and departments, according to the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961. The collection of statistics on any subject generally vests in the authority (Central Ministry or Department or State Government Department) that is responsible for that subject according to its status in the Union, State or Concurrent Lists. By and large, the flow of statistical information emanates from the States to the Centre except in cases where the State-level operations are an integral part of Centrally-sponsored schemes or data are collected through national statistical programs.

2. The collection of statistics for different subject-specific areas, like agriculture, labour, commerce, industry, etc., vests with the corresponding administrative ministries. More often than not, the statistical information is collected as a by-product of administration or for monitoring the progress of specific programmes. Some of the Ministries, like Agriculture, Water Resources, Health, etc. have full-fledged statistical divisions, while most others have only a nucleus cell. Large-scale statistical operations like the Population Census, Annual Survey of Industries, Economic Census, etc., are generally centralised, and these cater to the needs of other Central Ministries and Departments, as well as State Governments. In a few Central Ministries/ Departments, officers of the Indian Statistical Service (ISS) and the Sub-ordinate Statistical Service (SSS) perform the statistical functions. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) is the nodal agency for a planned and integrated development of the statistical system in the country and for bringing about coordination in statistical activities among statistical agencies in the Government of India and State/ UT Directorates of Economics and Statistics.

3. The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) under the MOSPI conducts nation-wide multipurpose sample surveys as per the directions of the National Statistical Commission. The States/ UTs also participate in these survey programs on matching sample basis.

4. The Statistical System in the States is similar to that at the Centre. It is generally decentralised laterally over the Departments of the State Government, with major Departments, such as, agriculture or health, having large statistical divisions for the work of departmental statistics. At the apex level is the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), which is formally responsible for the coordination of statistical activities in the State. The DESs declared as nodal agencies on statistical matters at State level have large organisations at the headquarters, with statistical offices in the districts and, in some cases, in the regions of the State. The statistical activity of the DESs is more or less uniform. They publish statistical abstracts and

handbooks of the States, annual economic reviews or surveys, district statistical abstracts, and State budget analysis; work out the estimates of the State Domestic Product and engage in such other statistical activities as is relevant to the State. With regard to the large scale statistical operations such as national level censuses and surveys conducted by the Central Government, the actual field operations are carried out by the States. In the case of nation-wide socio-economic surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Office, the States/ UTs participate on a matching sample basis. The DESs are sub-ordinate offices under the Planning Ministry in most of the States. Some of the States have a common statistical cadre.

5. The National statistical system is laterally decentralised among the Ministries of the Government of India (GOI), and in every one of them, vertically decentralised, between the Centre and the States. The bond between the State Departments and the Central Ministries in the field of statistics has always been strong. The main features of the Indian Statistical System are summarised as follows:

- (a) The Administrative Statistics System is its major component.
- (b) It is laterally and vertically decentralised.
- (c) In it, not only data collection but also compilation, processing and preparation of results are carried out by the States for most of the sectors.
- (d) It is the State-wise results, which flow to the Centre, and statistics at the all-India level are obtained as the aggregates of State-level statistics.
- (e) The professional statistical work at the Centre and in the States is carried out in a few cases by professional statistical cadres and mostly by non-professionals. This arrangement had its implications on quality of data, standardisation (due to lack of uniform training), credibility and timeliness of statistical products.

6. Statistics is mostly collected as a by-product of administration, either at the time of registration/ licensing of units under various laws or in exercise of power to obtain information under various statutes/ rules/ regulations. However, there are also exclusive statistical laws. The statistical laws and a few other related laws that have been in force in the country are given below:

- (1) The Census Act, 1948
- (2) The Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969
- (3) The Collection of Statistics Act, 2008
- (4) The Jammu and Kashmir Collection of Statistics Act, 2010

7. The Government of India appointed a National Statistical Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan. The Commission submitted its report to the Government in 2001. The key recommendation of the Rangarajan Commission is creation of a permanent and statutory National Commission on Statistics responsible to the Parliament and constituting a Commission with a modicum of authority, through a Government Order for the purpose of evolving such a Commission taking into account the ground realities, the emerging requirements, etc.

8. Accordingly, it was decided, *vide* Government Resolution dated 1<sup>st</sup> June 2005, to constitute a National Statistical Commission (NSC) with a modicum of authority with the mandate to evolve suitable statute for the purpose. Based on this Resolution, the NSC was constituted on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and it has been functioning since then. The Commission consists of a part-time Chairperson, four part-time Members and an ex-officio Member (Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog).

9. The Statistics Wing in the MOSPI comprises the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) and the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). The aforementioned Notification dated 1<sup>st</sup> June 2005 provided *inter alia* for the merger of the CSO and the NSSO into a single entity called the National Statistical Organisation (NSO), along with the establishment of the NSC. The NSO is expected to function as the executive wing of the Government of India in the field of statistics and act according to the policies and priorities as laid down by the NSC. The Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is the head of the NSO and is also the Secretary to the NSC. He is also the Secretary of the Government of India in the MOSPI.

10. The constitution of the present NSC was done as an interim measure with the mandate to evolve, within one year, the statute in the light of its own operational experience and to identify core statistics (statistics of national importance). In the words of the Rangarajan Commission, the main purpose of having a statutory Commission is to ensure that the production of core statistics and their release are free from Government influence, to meet the problem of coordination and to ensure public trust in statistics.

11. The NSC, since its inception, made a number of recommendations through its Annual Reports to improve the statistical system. Appropriate measures have been included in this Policy to implement the recommendations.

## **Challenges**

12. Despite continuing efforts being made by the Statistical agencies to improve their systems, certain systemic deficiencies continue to exist in the statistical system, as noted by the Rangarajan Commission, such as: existence of gaps in availability of needed information; delays in publication of results; large and frequent revisions of published results; gross discrepancies between official statistics from different sources; and lack of transparency in statistical operations. These deficiencies raise questions on the credibility of official statistics and throw up a few challenges to the decentralized system, as below:

(1) With the rapid changes that are taking place in Indian society and economy, there is a constant need to assess the data requirements of a wide variety of stakeholders in the country and abroad. There is as yet no structured system of making such an assessment, and this function is carried out on an ad hoc basis internally by the Ministries/ Departments concerned. There may be a potential conflict of interest between the Government agencies and the wider community of



stakeholders in terms of the type of data that needs to be generated by the official statistical system. If an office has been producing a specific product, which of late, it has not been using, the office tends to stop its production or tends to produce it without the same quality and timeliness as was the case earlier. This puts the work in other user offices in disarray.

(2) There is a need to clarify and make consistent government policy protecting the privacy and confidentiality of individuals or organizations who furnish data for statistical programs. There is also a need to assure respondents that their responses will be held in confidence and would not be used against them in any government action. At present, this assurance is available only in respect of data collected on statutory basis, such as the ones collected under the Census Act, 1948 and the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008.

(3) Official statistics is a large domain. Managing the enormous data that the system generates year after year and maintaining confidentiality of personal information contained in the data is a huge task. There is a need for complete transparency in the procedures being followed in official statistics. There is also a need for establishing some good practices to meet the legitimate expectations of the users and the public at large.

(4) Over the years, the system of statutory administrative returns, which are the major sources of official statistics, have been seriously weakened. The administrative statistics being in the domain of the concerned Ministries/ Departments, a kind of compartmentalization has automatically crept in, into the system. These issues coupled with the problem of different cadres of personnel working in different offices under a, by and large, disconnected system have led to lack of harmonization, quality, and timeliness. It also led to avoidable duplication and at times, conflicting statistics. Review of forms used by Government Departments for data collection is the keystone of the structure of coordination to reduce respondents' burden.

(5) Policies and procedures have to be evolved to guarantee the consistent and uniform application of confidentiality and also address the legal impediments to sharing of administrative and tax data for statistical purposes. Problems, if any, in case of census data and taxation data have to be resolved.

(6) Lack of transparency in statistical operations, quality standards and protocols has been the main cause of the system not being able to acquire public trust in statistics. Enlisting public trust in statistics is a great challenge. Transparency in statistical operations, laying down protocols for the purpose and observing them would promote public trust in statistics. These measures would lead to making statistics a public good.

(7) The professional statistical work at the Centre and in the States is carried out only in a few cases by professional statistical cadres and in the rest by non-professionals. Due to shortage of human resources in the Government setup, some of the statistical activities are carried out through outsourcing. These arrangements

had their implications on quality of data, standardisation (due to lack of uniform training), credibility and timeliness of statistical products.

(8) There are private producers of data and their data is being used by official agencies when official data is not available. Such private data is not subject to any quality standards.

(9) Due to the large size of the nation with wide diversity, it has become difficult even to know the list of users of data. Even in cases, where the users are known, the manner in which statistics are used by them is not known, which widened the gap between policy makers/ users and statistical offices. In some cases, the policy makers require very quick products even of less quality than what is desirable, which is not appreciated or at times not in the knowledge of concerned statistical offices.

(10) Absence of a human resource development policy has been responsible for a marked lack of motivation of official statisticians. Use of Information Technology has been restricted mainly to processing survey data. It has not been used in any significant way to improve the efficiency of the statistical system at large.

(11) Widening gap between academic pursuits and official statistics and between Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and its usage in the statistical system are external challenges.

(12) There is no policy-making and coordination body with legal authority, independent of the producers of statistics and free from covert or overt political and bureaucratic pressures that can serve as a link between the producers and users of statistics.

Annex-II : List of official statistical products identified as core statistics

S. No.	Product/ Indicator/ Data set	Periodicity	Source	Office
<b>1: National Income</b>				
1.	Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at factor cost	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
2.	Net factor income from abroad	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
3.	Consumption of fixed capital	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
4.	Indirect taxes	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
5.	Subsidies	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
6.	Private final consumption expenditure in domestic market	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
7.	Government final consumption expenditure	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
8.	Gross Domestic capital formation (adjusted)	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
9.	Net Domestic capital formation (adjusted)	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
10.	GDP at current market prices	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
11.	Domestic savings	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
12.	Household sector savings	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
13.	Private corporate sector savings	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
14.	Public sector savings	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
15.	Gross capital formation by type of institutions at current prices	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
16.	Net capital stock	Quarterly/	Analytical	NSO

	by type of institution	Annual	statistics	
17.	Capital-output ratio	Quarterly/ Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO
18.	Per capita Gross State Domestic Product	Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO, States/ UTs
19.	Per capita Net State Domestic Product	Annual	Analytical statistics	NSO, States/ UTs
20.	Input-output transactions table	Quinquennial	Analytical statistics	NSO

S. No.	Product/ Indicator/ Data set	Periodicity	Source	Office
<b>2: Production &amp; Services sectors</b>				
21.	Landholdings Number, area, tenancy, land utilization, cropping pattern, irrigation particulars of different size classes	Quinquennial	Landholdings, Agriculture Census, Irrigation Census	D/o Agriculture & Cooperation, M/o Water Resources
22.	Land Use statistics and crop area statistics generated through TRS/ EARAS Schemes	Agricultural Season	Administrative Statistics	D/o Agriculture & Cooperation, States/ UTs
23.	Production (quantity) of major agricultural crops	Agricultural Season	Administrative statistics, Sample Surveys	Department of Agriculture and Cooperation
24.	Yield (quantity) per hectare of major agricultural crops	Agricultural Season	Sample Surveys	Department of Agriculture and Cooperation
25.	Value of output from agriculture, horticulture, and livestock	Annual	Administrative statistics, Sample Surveys	Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries
26.	Value of input from agriculture, horticulture, and livestock	Annual	Administrative statistics, Sample Surveys	Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Department of

				Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries
27.	Livestock, Poultry, Agricultural Machinery and Implements and Fisheries Statistics	Quinquennial	Livestock Census	D/o Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries
28.	Production of marine fish, inland fish and cultivated fish	Annual	Sample Survey	D/o Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries
29.	Area, production and prices of forest products	Annual	Sample Surveys	Ministry of Environment and Forests
30.	Output, input, value added, capital and employment in Mining and Quarrying	Annual	Administrative Statistics, Sample Survey	Directorate General of Mines Safety, Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Coal
31.	Output, input, value added, capital and employment in Manufacturing	Annual	Administrative Statistics, Sample Survey	Concerned Administrative Ministries, NSO
32.	Output, input, value added, capital and employment in Electricity, installed capacity, generation, electricity consumption/ per capita availability, no. of villages/ households electrified, electricity transmission and distribution system, T & D losses	Annual	Administrative Statistics	Central Electricity Authority
33.	Output, input, value added, capital and employment in Construction	Annual	Sample Survey	National Buildings Organisation
34.	Output, input, value added, capital and employment in unorganised/ informal sector	Quinquennial	Economic census and Sample survey for each sector	NSO
35.	Index of Industrial Production	Monthly	Administrative Statistics	NSO
36.	Performance of infrastructure sectors, namely, civil aviation,	Annual	Administrative Statistics	Concerned Ministries, NSO

	power, railways, telecommunication, roads & highways, ports, cement etc.			
37.	Foreign Trade Statistics of India (Principal commodities and countries)- quantum and value	Half-yearly	Administrative Statistics	Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S)
38.	Statistics of Foreign & Coastal cargo Movement of India and the Inter-State Movements/ Flows of Goods by Rail, River and Air	Annual	Administrative Statistics	DGCI&S
39.	Statistics on area, yield, manufacturing, imports & exports, employment, in respect of tea, coffee, spices and rubber	Annual	Administrative Statistics	D/o Commerce
40.	Volume and other related characteristics of Inter-State trade		Administrative Statistics	Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), DGCI&S
41.	Indices of Unit Value and Quantum of Foreign Trade	Quarterly Annual	Administrative Statistics	DGFT, DGCI&S
42.	Performance Indicators for Chemicals & Petrochemicals	Annual	Administrative Statistics	D/o Chemicals & Petrochemicals
43.	Performance Indicators for Steel	Annual	Administrative Statistics	Ministry of Steel
44.	Production, imports and consumption of coal and lignite	Annual	Administrative Statistics	M/o Coal
45.	Production imports and consumption of fertilizers (N, P, K)	Annual	Administrative Statistics	D/o Fertilizers
46.	Production of crude oil, all petroleum products, natural gas, LNG, imports/ exports of oil & petroleum products and consumption of	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Petroleum and Natural Gas

	petroleum products			
47.	Performance indicators for Railways, construction of railway lines, passengers and cargo carried etc	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Railways
48.	Road statistics-length of roads constructed, total highways, no of vehicles registered	Annual	Administrative statistics	Ministry of Surface transport
49.	Air transport- no of passengers, including airport statistics cargo carried, passenger and cargo earnings	Annual	Administrative statistics	Ministry of Civil Aviation
50.	Water transport including port statistics, passengers and cargo handled	Annual	Administrative statistics	Ministry of Shipping
51.	Communication statistics- no of subscribers- landline and wireless, average revenue per user, average minutes usage, usage of internet, tele-density	Monthly Annual	Administrative statistics Analytical	D/o Telecommunications, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
52.	Tourist Arrivals Foreign Exchange earnings	Annual	Administrative Statistics	Ministry of Tourism
53.	Output, Input, value added, capital and employment in unorganized/ Informal sector	Quinquennial	Sample survey	NSO& States/ UTs
54.	Statistical Data obtained under the Companies Act	Annual	Administrative Statistics	M/o Corporate Affairs
55.	Public Enterprises-Survey- Number, turnover, capital employed, Profitability ratios, Investment,	Annual	Administrative Statistics	D/o Public Enterprises

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Product/ Indicator/ Data set</b>	<b>Periodicity</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Office</b>
<b>3: Budgetary Transactions</b>				
56.	Revenue receipts (actuals)	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
57.	Capital receipts (actuals)	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
58.	Non-plan expenditure (actuals) on revenue account	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
59.	Non-plan expenditure (actuals) on capital account	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
60.	Plan expenditure (actuals) on revenue account	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
61.	Plan expenditure (actuals) on capital account	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
62.	Revenue deficit (actuals)	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
63.	Fiscal deficit (actuals)	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments
64.	Primary deficit (actual)	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Finance and State/ UT Governments

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Product/ Indicator/ Data set</b>	<b>Periodicity</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Office</b>
<b>4: Money and Banking</b>				
65.	Currency with the public	Annual	Administrative Statistics	Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
66.	Deposit money with the Public	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI
67.	Post office savings bank and other	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI



	deposits			
68.	Time Deposits with Banks	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI
69.	Credit-deposit ratio of scheduled commercial banks	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI
70.	Investment-deposit ratio of scheduled commercial banks	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI
71.	Outstanding credit of scheduled commercial banks by type of occupation	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Product/ Indicator/ Data set</b>	<b>Periodicity</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Office</b>
<b>5: Capital Market</b>				
72.	Resource Mobilisation from Primary Market	Annual	Administrative Statistics	Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
73.	Resource Mobilisation by Mutual Funds	Annual	Administrative Statistics	SEBI
74.	FII investments	Annual	Administrative Statistics	SEBI
75.	Trading value of capital market segment	Annual	Administrative Statistics	National Stock Exchange
76.	Trading value of Futures and options market segment	Annual	Administrative Statistics	National Stock Exchange
77.	Exchange Traded Derivatives Instruments other than commodities	Annual	Administrative Statistics	SEBI
78.	Trading value of WDM segment	Annual	Administrative Statistics	RBI, SEBI

S. No.	Product/ Indicator/ Data set	Periodicity	Source	Office
<b>6: Indices and other short term indicators</b>				
79.	Wholesale Price Index	Monthly	Sample Survey	Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion
80.	Consumer Price Index (Rural/Urban)	Monthly	Sample Survey	NSO
81.	Consumer Price Index for industrial workers	Monthly	Sample Survey	Labour Bureau
82.	Consumer Price Index for agricultural labourers	Monthly	Sample Survey	Labour Bureau
83.	Service Price Index	Monthly	Sample Survey	Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion
84.	Housing price Index	6 monthly	Sample Survey	National Housing Bureau
85.	Index of Service production	Monthly	Sample Survey	NSO
86.	Quarterly financial results of companies listed on stock exchanges	Quarterly		SEBI, RBI

S. No.	Product/ Indicator/ Data set	Periodicity	Source	Office
<b>7. External Sector</b>				
87.	Foreign Exchange Reserves	Monthly	Administrative statistics	RBI
88.	Balance of payments	Annual	Administrative statistics	RBI
89.	Exchange rate for Indian rupee vis-à-vis other countries	Monthly	Administrative statistics	RBI
90.	Indices of Real Effective Exchange	Monthly	Administrative statistics	RBI

	Rate (REER) and Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER)			
91.	Value of exports by commodity group	Annual	Administrative statistics	RBI
92.	Value of imports by commodity group	Annual	Administrative statistics	RBI
93.	Value of exports and imports with major trading countries	Annual	Administrative statistics	RBI
94.	Foreign investment inflows	Monthly	Administrative statistics	RBI

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Product/ Indicator/ Data set</b>	<b>Periodicity</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Office</b>
<b>8: Demography, Social and Environment Sectors</b>				
95.	Vital statistics, literacy and population by identified social groups	Decennial	Census	O/o Registrar General and Census Commissioner (ORGI)
96.	Population projections	Annual	Analytical	ORGI
97.	Vital Statistics	Annual	Administrative statistics	ORGI
98.	Vital rates/ ratios	Annual	Sample Survey	ORGI
99.	Consumer expenditure by State and by rural/ urban sectors	Quinquennial	Sample Survey	NSO
100.	Number of persons employed according to usual status and current weekly status by State and by rural/ urban sectors	Quinquennial	Sample Survey	NSO
101.	Labour Force participation rate	Quinquennial	Sample Survey	NSO

	(LFPR) and Work Force participation rate (WFPR) by State and by rural/urban sectors			
102.	No. of gainfully employed persons by type of economic activity	Quinquennial	Sample Survey	NSO
103.	Health characteristics by identified social groups	Quinquennial	Surveys	M/o Health & Family Welfare
104.	Health care facilities (hospitals/ beds/ dispensaries), medical manpower (doctors), medical education (under-graduate, Post-graduate and paramedical courses) and licensed pharmacies	Annual	Administrative statistics	M/o Health & Family Welfare
105.	Indicators on maternal health, child health, family planning etc.	Annual, periodical	Surveys, Health Management Information System	M/o Health & Family Welfare, ORGI
106.	Statistics on number of institutions, enrolment, number of teachers, allocation and expenditure on education	Annual	Administrative Statistics	D/o Higher Education
107.	Vital statistics under the Civil Registration System	Quarterly	Administrative Statistics	ORGI, States/ UTs
108.	Vital statistics under Sample Registration	Annual	Sample Survey	ORGI

	System			
109.	Data on quality and availability of drinking water and safe/ improved sanitation facility	Monthly	Administrative Statistics	Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
110.	Allocation and off take of food grains under PDS	Annual	Administrative Statistics	D/o Food & Public Distribution System
111.	Statistics on land records	Annual	Survey under National Land Records Modernisation Programme	D/o Land Resources
112.	Poverty – Head Count Ratio	Quinquennial	Analytical Statistics	NITI Aayog
113.	Sustainable Development Goals	Annual	Administrative Statistics	NSO with the support of respective Ministries
114.	Diet and Nutritional Status of Population in Rural areas	Annual	Sample Survey	National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau, Indian Council of Medical Research
115.	Ambient air quality in major cities	annual	Administrative Statistics	Central Pollution Control Board
116.	Total Absolute Emissions of CO2 from the Power Sector	annual	Administrative Statistics	Central Electricity Authority
117.	Gross and Net production and utilisation of Natural Gas in India	annual	Administrative Statistics	M/O Petroleum and Natural Gas
118.	Monsoon Performance	annual	Administrative Statistics	Indian Meteorological Department
119.	Water, oceans, lakes, ground water and rivers	annual	Administrative Statistics	Central Ground Water Board (M/O Water Resources), Central Water Commission
120.	Solar Power	annual	Administrative Statistics	M/O New and Renewable Resources

***Need for a Code of Statistical Practice***

**1.** The Indian Statistical System is a decentralized system. The official statistics are generated as a by-product of administration and through censuses and surveys, including evaluation studies and case studies. There are also occasions when statistics produced in the private sector are used by government agencies. Besides, the private sector also produces some statistics which are disseminated by them from time to time. There are also cases where the private sector enterprises procure statistical data/ reports from the Government Departments and disseminate them with or without value addition, at times even without disclosing the source from which the data/ reports were obtained. These situations are likely to cause confusion among the public, particularly the users. Multiplicity of producers of data, particularly on same or similar characteristics have been giving rise to conflicting statistics, being placed in the public domain.

**2.** It may not be possible to restrict production of statistics by multiple agencies, particularly when private agencies intend to produce statistics that are same or similar to those being produced by government agencies. But, it may be possible and also necessary to lay down a set of principles in the form of good practices, which if the agencies choose to, could follow.

**3.** The statistical reports and/ or the unit level data are either not disseminated regularly or disseminated without specifying the sources and methodology used. As a result, the users and the public at large are inconvenienced, mainly in the following ways, -

- (1) They have no way by which release of a statistical product could be expected by a certain time, as the number of government agencies is very large and distributed geographically across the country.
- (2) If the sources and methodology are not known, the users may not understand the manner in which they can use the products and the limitations in the use of data.
- (3) If a statistical report is disseminated and the corresponding unit level data is not disseminated, the users may not believe in the product.
- (4) The unit level data could be used for statistical purposes in a manner other than what the producer of a report from that data could have envisaged. In the absence of availability of unit level data, the users will have to be satisfied with the manner in which the data has been summarised or aggregated in the reports by the concerned agencies.

**4.** In addition to the above, there are a few other situations, such as not advising the informants about the purpose of collecting data and the manner in which their identities would be kept confidential, and no precautions being taken while storing data, which need to be addressed while laying down good practices.

### ***Scope***

**5.** In view of the aforesaid reasons, it is necessary to lay down some principles in the form of good practices, which may be followed by government as well as private agencies. The principles, if followed by the concerned agencies, would facilitate users, the media and the public to understand and assess the veracity and credibility of the products.

### ***Whom it would apply***

**6.** The principles laid down hereunder are intended to be followed voluntarily by the government as well as private agencies. The agencies may, while collecting data or disseminating statistical reports and/ or unit level data, on their own declare whether they have followed all or any of the principles and on the contrary also may declare the reasons as to why all or a few of the principles could not be followed by them. If feasible, they may pre-announce deviations from the principles and the reasons thereof, in respect of each statistical product.

### ***Terminology used***

- 7.** In this Code of Statistical Practice, unless the context otherwise requires,
- (1) "official statistics" means statistics derived by the Government agencies from statistical surveys, administrative and registration records and other forms and papers, the statistical analyses of which are published regularly, or planned to be published regularly, or could reasonably be published regularly;
  - (2) "government agency" means any Ministry or Department or its instrumentality, in the Union Government or in a State Government or in a Union territory Administration, or any local government that is to say, Panchayats or Municipalities, as the case may be; and
  - (3) "informant" means any person, who supplies or is required to supply statistical information and includes an employee of any Government agency and a owner or occupier or person in-charge or his authorised representative in respect of persons or a firm registered under the Indian Partnership Act, 1932 or a co-operative society registered under any Co-operative Societies Act or a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or any association recognised or registered under any law for the time being in force.

## **Principles**

**8.** The following principles in respect of different types of statistical activities are laid down under the Code of Statistical Practice.

### ***Collection of data***

(1) At the time of data collection, the informants shall be told of the purpose for which data is being collected from them and the manner in which the data collected would be disseminated.

(2) The informants shall be told of the manner, the sources to be tapped and the persons to be contacted for the purpose of accessing data collected from each of them or about them.

(3) At the time of data collection, each informant shall be told whether furnishing data by him is voluntary or a statutory requirement and in case of statutory requirement, the consequences of not furnishing data and of furnishing false data.

### ***Release of statistical reports and unit level data***

(4) An agency producing statistics shall publish a calendar of release in respect of all its regular statistical products.

(5) In case of pre-release of calendar for regular statistical products, each agency shall publish the reasons for deviation, if any, for delay in release of any product as per the calendar.

(6) Unit level data needs to be placed in the public domain in respect of all the statistical reports and publications released.

(7) The unit level data must be disseminated only after suppressing or deleting identification details of informants and in a manner that even after such suppression/ deletion, no data could be identified as pertaining to a particular informant by the process of elimination.

(8) All statistical releases and publications including unit level data shall provide references to metadata, methodologies used, sources of detailed concepts and definitions followed for its production.

**Explanation:** Metadata or 'data about data' is a specific form of documentation and refers to the information that is made available to users in order to improve their understanding of the data. Comprehensive and complete metadata helps users to make informed and full use of data and minimises the likelihood of misuse.



(9) Metadata in respect of all the statistical releases and publications including unit level data shall also be made available to the widest possible audience through appropriate electronic portals and other dissemination channels.

(10) 'Discovery metadata', i.e., information enabling users to identify and access data relevant to their needs shall be compiled for every resource and shall be made available in a comprehensive catalogue in both paper and electronic format.

**Explanation:**

(a) The details shall be kept up to date, be easily accessible and shall contain information about the title, content, geographic context, timeliness, availability and accessibility of each resource together with appropriate contact details. Access shall be enhanced through the provision of indexes, and availability through web-based search engines.

(b) Additional metadata shall be made available to users concerning the more technical details of each resource. This will comprise, among other things, a description of the data collection arrangements including sample design, questionnaires, coding instructions and classifications, editing, validation procedures including auto-corrections if any made in the data, methodologies, and method of data collection, quality of data, confidentiality and anonymisation procedures and any other relevant materials.

(c) Metadata attached to electronically held data which is to be preserved permanently, or for a significant length of time, shall include information about the software used to arrange and process the resource. This is to ensure that the data can continue to be understood, manipulated and accessed over time.

(11) In respect of reports or data disseminated on the basis of data or reports of any other statistical agency, reference to such sources and the value addition made before dissemination needs to be explained. In case, there is no value addition, the product shall not be sold even at negligible cost to customers without the consent of the original producer. Even while disseminating such products free of cost, the source of production and the manner in which it was acquired needs to be quoted.

(12) All statistical publications and unit level data, including those put out in websites, shall indicate contact details of persons whom the users can approach for any clarifications.

(13) In case of periodical statistical reports/ publications and data releases, a separate section should indicate changes made in methodologies, practices, concepts as applicable to the publication/ data from the previous publication.

(14) In all cases of periodical release of key statistical indicators, the following aspects should be clearly brought out in each release.

- Extent of new data actually used, either as percentage of responses or as a percentage of estimates based on direct data
- Revisions made in the figures already released and reasons for the revisions
- Impact of revisions in terms of percentage change
- Date of next release

(15) All releases in respect of reports of sample surveys should provide for the estimates of sampling errors of key estimates.

(16) Identities of informants shall not, without their consent, be revealed to anyone not directly involved in the statistical work in the concerned agency and, shall not be used for any non-statistical purposes.

(17) The measures taken to store statistical reports and unit level data and the manner in which confidentiality of data to prevent its misuse particularly where it contains details of informants would be maintained, shall be spelt out.

(18) The prices to be collected from customers purchasing statistical reports/ publications and unit level data, the manner in which prices are arrived at and the conditions, if any, prescribed in their use shall be spelt out.

(19) The mechanism of receiving complaints and queries from users, customers and informants needs to be evolved and made public. The action taken on the complaints also needs to be made public through periodic reports.

#### Annex-IV : Salient features of the National Statistical Commission Bill

- (1) The National Statistical Commission (NSC) will be a body corporate with its headquarters at New Delhi, which can establish its offices at other places.
- (2) The NSC shall consist of a Chairperson and, not less than four other Members, all full-time, who will be appointed by the President after obtaining the recommendations of a Selection Committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Finance Minister, Minister of Statistics, and the Leaders of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha. The Selection Committee will be assisted by a Search Committee headed by the Vice-Chairperson, NITI Aayog.
- (3) A tenure of five years for the Chairperson/ Members of the Commission has been prescribed. They shall not be eligible for future employment in the Government at least for two years on completion of their tenure, except in respect of such academic and research assignments, as may be prescribed by the Government.
- (4) For the purpose of determination of policy issues, relating to official statistics at the national level and giving directions to the Commission on such issues, there shall be a National Statistical Development Council consisting of Prime Minister, Minister of Statistics, Chief Ministers of six States, Vice-Chairperson, NITI Aayog, Chairperson and Members of the NSC, Cabinet Secretary and the Governor, Reserve Bank of India.
- (5) The official statistical products specified in this Policy and those emanating from national level censuses and surveys shall be treated as core statistics. The list may be modified by the Government on receiving recommendations of the NSC to do so.
- (6) The Central Government will notify standards for production, dissemination and monitoring implementation of the standards in respect of core statistics on the basis of advice of the NSC.
- (7) The NSC will have advisory functions on any matter relating to official statistics including administrative statistics. It may advise States on statistical matters, important and critical, at that level.
- (8) The NSC will have its own secretariat headed by a Secretary. It will also have a National Statistical Appraisal and Assessment Organisation headed by Chief Statistical Auditor to assist the NSC in conducting statistical audit on core statistics and other official statistics. The NSC may also provide audit service to private producers of statistics.

- (9) The National Statistical Organisation shall be responsible for implementing the policies and priorities as laid down by the NSC and the Chief Statistician of India shall act in support of the efficient discharge of the functions of the NSC.
- (10) Every Government agency engaged in any activity in respect of core statistics shall implement the directions of the Central Government on core statistics. The NSC will have power to censure a Government agency, in case of failures.
- (11) The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, make to the NSC an initial endowment grant of such sum as may be adequate to establish the NSC. Not less than five percent of the budgetary grant allocated by the Central Government to the National Statistical Organisation in each financial year shall devolve automatically as a Grant to the Commission. The NSC shall constitute the National Statistical Fund and credit all the moneys received by it in the Fund. Expenditure of the NSC shall be met from this Fund.
- (12) The NSC shall submit annual reports and special reports to the Central Government and to the State Government concerned. The concerned Government shall cause the annual and special reports to be laid before each House of Parliament or the State Legislature, as the case may be, along with a memorandum of action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations of the NSC and the reasons for non-acceptance of the recommendations, if any.
- (13) The NSC will have power to issue regulations on matters that it has to regulate.

## Annex-V : Functions of the restructured Divisions in the NSO

1. All the statistical activities, for which data is collected in the field by the MOSPI, including Economic Census and its follow-up surveys will be taken up under the administrative control of DG (Survey) in a manner that it provides an end to end solution to each product. In other words, the entire gamut of activities, starting from planning to dissemination, will be performed by the DG (Survey) and his team. The work will be carried out through two Divisions, namely, Field Operations and Data Flow Division and the Survey Design, Data Processing and Dissemination Division.

2. The Field Operations Division will be renamed as the Field Operations and Data Flow Division. It will undertake the responsibility of data flow in electronic mode through its Regional and Sub-Regional Offices, in respect of all the data collected in the field.

3. The Survey Design and Research Division, the Data Processing Division, the Industrial Statistics Wing and the Agriculture Statistics Wing will be merged into one Division, namely, Survey Design, Data Processing and Dissemination Division.

4. The functions, at present being carried out by different Divisions in the CSO will, depending on the nature of the job, get assigned to the following nine Divisions:

1. National Statistical Coordination Division
2. National Data Integration, IT, Warehousing and Data Dissemination Division
3. National Accounts Division
4. Training, Research and Consultancy Division
5. Administrative Statistics Division
6. Services Sector Division
7. Index of Industrial Production Division
8. Price Statistics Division
9. NSC Secretariat (including Audit)

5. The aforesaid eleven Divisions of the NSO will report to the CSI through the concerned Director Generals. The functions of the aforesaid Divisions are detailed in the following paragraphs:

### **National Statistical Coordination Division**

6. As already stated, the statistical coordination is proposed to be decentralised in accordance with the AOB. However, the nodal functions have to remain with the MOSPI. For this purpose, the National Statistical Coordination Division will *inter alia* handle the following functions.

7. The nodal statistical functions will be handled by the National Statistical Coordination Division in the NSO, which will include the following functions:

- (1) Integrated development of the official statistical system in the country
- (2) Legislative requirements relating to official statistics
- (3) Administration of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008
- (4) Coordinating implementation of the recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission and the present NSC
- (5) General collaboration between Centre & States through COCSSO, ISSP etc.
- (6) Coordination within the NSO
- (7) Budgetary issues of the NSO
- (8) National policies, priorities, norms and standards, and classifications in the field of official statistics
- (9) National strategies for human resource development, information technology and communications infrastructure in relation to official statistics
- (10) International collaboration
- (11) Administration of the technical aspects of the ISI Act, 1959
- (12) Monitoring implementation of the Generic National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) recommended by the UN Statistical Commission
- (13) Implementation of the Data Dissemination Policy and Data Sharing Policy of the Government

### **National Data Integration, IT, Warehousing and Data Dissemination Division**

8. This Division will evolve standards for data integration, monitor implementation of these standards and handle integration of data from different sources, such as administrative records, censuses and surveys. Eventually, it will facilitate dissemination of integrated data as also identification of data gaps. It will also enable identification of duplication in statistical programmes. This Division will be hub for data dissemination in respect of all products of the MOSPI, integrated data and for core statistics. Thus, it will be a warehouse and a single window for dissemination of statistics. This Division will subscribe and take part in Statistical Data and Metadata exchange (SDMX) programme, which helps in harmonisation across different fields of statistics within and outside country.

### **National Accounts Division**

9. The National Accounts Division will, as usual, perform the following functions:

- (1) National Accounts and Natural Resource Accounting
- (2) Advising States/ UTs on compiling State/ UT Domestic Product data
- (3) Preparation and release of the relevant statistical products
- (4) Laying down norms for obtaining data from other sources for compiling National Accounts
- (5) Compiling Input-Output Tables at least once in five years
- (6) Guiding other Ministries/ Departments in compiling satellite accounts

## **Training and Research Division**

10. This Division will handle all domestic and international training of the MOSPI. Besides, this Division will have to address the issue of imparting training, in a time bound manner, to sizeable number of statistical officers/ staff, in particular those who belong to other services but handle statistical functions incidental to their work, at the Centre and in the States. Sensitising the colleges, universities, research institutions and the general public for informed debate is also the function of this Division. Hence, this Division will handle the following functions.

- i. Identifying topics on which training is to be imparted to different target groups, both institutional and on-the-job
- ii. Scheduling the training programmes through various means such as summer workshops, broadcasts/ web casts through electronic media/ internet, producing video CDs/ DVDs for distribution to Govt. offices and universities, sensitization programmes for different segments of population
- iii. Introducing administrative statistics as a topic in the training curriculum of various training institutes/ academies imparting training to service personnel like IAS, IPS, IFS, IRS etc.

11. This Division will also take up and promote all activities relating to research in official statistics.

## **Administrative Statistics Division**

12. Administrative Statistics is generally collected by the Government (at different levels), consisting of statutory administrative returns and data derived as a by-product of general administration. The Rangarajan Commission recommended that the first step to improve credibility, timeliness and adequacy of the Indian Statistical System is to reform in the administrative structure of the Indian Statistical System and upgrading its infrastructure so as to ensure its autonomy. The Commission identified that Administrative Statistics is the major component in the statistical system. Administrative Statistics are very much needed for effective planning of other statistical sources, namely, censuses and sample surveys.

13. There are definite advantages in the system of collection of statistics through the administrative setup. The collection of data by departmental agencies does not involve special costs. The collection is oriented to definite purposes, and the record and verification of information is part of administration. Departmental agencies and officials have not only good knowledge of the subject, but also of local language and local conditions. There is an identifiable purpose in their data collection and they are in the best position to interpret the data. All this has lent a solid foundation to the decentralised administrative statistical system, and in turn, to the Indian Statistical System.

14. The breakdown of the Administrative Statistical System needs immediate attention. The authorities responsible for implementing different Acts and Rules

should be trained to obtain statutory statistical returns and other data periodically, to take necessary action against the defaulting units, to computerise the data, to tabulate it and to disseminate it. This data will be used in the system as statistical frame for further data collection, where necessary.

### **Services Sector Division**

15. The services sector has been contributing to more than 50 % of the economy. But, no reliable statistics are available at present for this sector. It would be necessary to develop methodologies for different products to measure the structure of this sector, prepare and maintain sources of information, identify agencies to provide information.

### **Index of Industrial Production Division**

16. This Division shall, as usual, compile and disseminate monthly Index of Industrial Production (IIP). It should also maintain an inventory of not only its own unit-level data base, but also the data of other official agencies compiling IIP in the Centre and at State level.

### **Price Statistics Division**

17. This Division shall, as usual, compile and disseminate monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) for rural and urban areas. It should also maintain an inventory of not only its own unit-level data base, but also the data of other official agencies compiling CPIs in the Centre and at State level.



## Annex-VI : Augmentation of statistical resources through a registered Society

1. The Rangarajan Commission recommended that a Consultancy Wing may be established as a new office in the NSO to cater to the increasing demand for professional statistical services, especially within the Government. The Commission was of the view that a Consultancy wing would be needed because of questionable competence of private agencies and because of the Government not being able to meet its own demand on new statistical items of work with the existing establishment. The Commission was also of the view that engaging private agencies cannot be totally done away with, but it would be possible to formulate necessary guidelines to address the issues of quality. The Commission also recommended at para-14.9.3 of its report (2001) that the function of certification of the quality of statistics by the Commission may be extended to private producers of statistics on a voluntary basis.

2. Some of the aforesaid issues have been examined and suitable recommendations were made by the NSC to the Government in its Annual Reports. In the Annual Report for the financial year 2010-11, the NSC recommended a Code of Statistical Practice, which may be prescribed to be followed by private statistical agencies on voluntarily basis. Recognising the fact that outsourcing statistical activities may be inevitable for the Government agencies, the NSC also recommended in this Report, guidelines to be followed by the Government even when outsourcing is resorted to, so as not to compromise on professional approach in collection and dissemination of statistics. With regard to the concerns on quality of statistics produced by private agencies, the NSC provided appropriate measures in the National Statistical Commission Bill recommended in Chapter-II of its Annual report for the financial year 2011-12. The Bill provides for statistical service on quality assurance to private agencies.

3. With regard to engaging private agencies by the Government for statistical work, it is a matter of common knowledge that private agencies undertake the work with a profit motive. To that extent, the Government agencies will have to incur additional expenditure to the exchequer. While it may not be possible for the Government to enhance its establishment to meet its ad hoc statistical needs from time to time, it would be prudent for the Government to establish an organisation with its administrative oversight (not direct administrative control), which would serve the purpose without any compromise on quality, but with a little extra cost which would be much smaller than the cost that it may have to shell down to private agencies in terms of their profit for the same purpose. Most of the private agencies engage persons for each project and the cost to be paid to a private agency includes mainly the staff cost, material cost, management cost and profit. If the Government can meet the first three components without adding a regular staff component to its establishment, in the manner it is done by private agencies, and get jobs done in a project mode, it would save lot of expenditure. Hence, Consultancy Wing, if established, would be beneficial to the Government.

4. In view of the above, the following steps are considered necessary:
- (1) There is a need for an institution which undertakes, in a professional way, statistical projects that cannot be accommodated or taken up in the existing setup of the Government. For this purpose, the MOSPI may establish a Society to be registered under the Societies Act, with its Headquarters at New Delhi. The Society has to be under the administrative oversight (not direct administrative control) of the MOSPI, and it has to undertake its activities with a non-profit motive.
  - (2) The Society may be assigned mainly with - (a) training of manpower engaged from time to time in statistical activities of the Government, (b) conducting statistical surveys (censuses, sample surveys, evaluation studies, case studies, methodological studies etc.) of the Central Government and of the States/ UTs, (c) analytical and research work, and (d) providing statistical plans to address various issues. It may also take up consultancy projects/ services offered by private sector.
  - (3) Further details on the structure, seed money requirements etc., for the Society may be worked out, duly keeping in view the need for adequate delegation of powers to the society for its smooth functioning. The Society may be provided with a minimum contingent of staff, so that it could take up activities through outsourcing.
  - (4) The Society has to follow the Code of Statistical Practice and the Guidelines on outsourcing statistical activities given in this Policy, so as not to compromise on professional approach in collection and dissemination of statistics.
  - (5) As the Society, after its establishment, shall take up all statistical activities of the Government at the Centre which cannot be taken up within the setup, the Government Departments at the Centre shall not outsource any statistical project to any other person or organisation.

### ***Background***

**1.** Statistical activities include activities such as designing methodology for surveys and censuses, data collection, including administrative statistics, data entry in electronic media, data validation, data processing and compilation, tabulation and report writing, data storage, providing access to data and dissemination of data and reports. These activities have to be performed in a professional way to earn public confidence in statistics, particularly when the statistics are produced within the Government.

### ***Identification of statistical activity for outsourcing***

**2.** For the purpose of identifying a statistical activity for outsourcing, the following points are normally kept in view.

- (1) A statistical project needs to be framed in such a way that its objectives are clear and it is intended to fulfill the objectives sought to be achieved.
- (2) All possible methodological alternatives suitable for a statistical project and the corresponding advantages and disadvantages need to be studied and the best possible alternative in accordance with the judgment of the concerned Government agency needs be arrived at.
- (3) In cases where technology appropriate for the job is not known to the Government agency, it is advisable to initially go for a pre-qualification bid to obtain suggestions from the bidders on the available technological options.
- (4) In case of a Census or a sample survey or a case study or an evaluation study, the list of indicators which are required to be measured and the level (say, geographical unit) at which estimates or measurement values are required is to be identified.
- (5) Wherever feasible, tabulation plan and list of parameters to be estimated need to be specified first and the methodology including data collection formats should be prepared to meet the requirements so specified.

### ***Need for guidelines***

**3.** In the Government setup, need arises to take up statistical activities as a onetime exercise or for the purpose of augmenting resources to meet some time bound goals in respect of regular statistical activities. Outsourcing is a solution in such situations. These guidelines are intended to bring to the notice of the concerned authorities about the requirements that they may keep in view while entering into contracts on outsourcing. The main goal of outsourcing a statistical activity should be to satisfactorily complete the activity within a time frame.

### ***Terminology used***

**4.** In these guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires,

- (1) "official statistics" means statistics derived by the Government agencies from statistical surveys, administrative and registration records and other forms and papers, the statistical analyses of which are published regularly, or planned to be published regularly, or could reasonably be published regularly;
- (2) "Government agency" means any Ministry or Department or its instrumentality, in the Union Government or in a State Government or in a Union territory Administration, or any local government that is to say, Panchayats or Municipalities, as the case may be;
- (3) "statistical project" includes any item of work on official statistics decided to be taken up by any Government agency through outsourcing relating to designing methodology for a Census or a sample survey or a case study or an evaluation study, collection of data either primary or secondary by any method including observation method and from administrative records, data preparation electronically on the basis of data collected/ records maintained, field supervision of data collection, quality scrutiny and validation of data, tabulation of data, preparation of general and analytical reports, storage and security of data and includes planning and project management activities, documentation and other activities incidental to all these activities;
- (4) "outsourcing" means execution of a statistical project through an arrangement which involves a Government agency making use of a service from a private service provider;
- (5) "informant" means any person, who supplies or is required to supply statistical information and includes an employee of any Government agency and a owner or occupier or person in-charge or his authorised representative in respect of persons or a firm registered under the Indian Partnership Act, 1932 or a co-operative society registered under any Co-operative Societies Act or a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or any association recognised or registered under any law for the time being in force;
- (6) "sensitive information" means information or an opinion about an identified individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinion, membership of a political association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of a professional or trade association, membership of a trade union, sexual preferences or practices, criminal record; health information about an individual; or genetic information about an individual that is not otherwise health information; and
- (7) "contractor" means a service provider, private or otherwise, to whom a statistical project may be outsourced.

## ***General Guidelines***

- 5.** No core statistical activity of a Government agency should be outsourced on a regular basis to the extent possible.
- 6.** A Government agency may outsource a statistical project to any contractor, who in turn may engage agencies or persons to perform different jobs relating to the project or in the alternative, the Government agency may directly engage persons on contract basis for performing the jobs. Both these situations are outsourcing arrangements.
- 7.** A Government agency must clearly identify the components of a statistical project to be outsourced with all appropriate technical details and action plan. Main goal shall be to ensure statistical product quality and timeliness of completion of outsourced statistical project.
- 8.** The following aspects may be considered while drawing-up an outsourcing contract.
  - (1) It is advisable that every outsourcing arrangement in respect of a statistical project by any Government agency shall be in the form of a written executable contract.
  - (2) Any statistical project to be outsourced must always be awarded according to the principles of fair competition, as generally understood and accepted.
  - (3) On completion of an outsourced statistical project by a contractor, the contractor shall have no priority claim in future for similar statistical projects.
  - (4) The job description for each person engaged in a statistical project needs to be specified. This is necessary for projects given to individuals or directly handled by Govt. agencies. In case of projects handled by contractors, the project proposals should include details of various types of persons who could be engaged along with their job descriptions and minimum qualifications.
  - (5) The Contractor may be required to inform the concerned Government agency if the work to be carried out for that Government agency is to be combined or syndicated in the same project with the work for other Government agencies or private agencies.
  - (6) The Contractor shall be required to inform the concerned Government agency, when any part of the work for that Government agency is to be subcontracted outside the Contractors' own organisation (including the use of any outside consultants), the identity of any such sub-contractor.
  - (7) Contractor shall be obliged to avoid possible clashes of interest between the services provided to a number of Government agencies.
  - (8) Contractors and persons involved in any outsourced statistical project must not, whether knowingly or negligently, act in any way that could bring discredit on the statistical profession or lead to loss of public confidence.

- (9) The contract shall stand automatically terminated at the expiry of contractual period. The notice period required from either side for termination of contract needs to be specified.
- (10) Contractors and persons engaged in a statistical project may be required to ensure the security and confidentiality of all statistical records in their possession, during the execution and after the cessation of the contract. They may be required not to disclose or use any information or record that has been in their knowledge in the performance of contract.
- (11) During the course of the contract or thereafter the Contractors may be required not to undertake any non-statistical activities like database marketing involving data about individuals which could be used for direct marketing and promotional activities.
- (12) The conditions, such as being guilty of any insubordination, intemperance or other misconduct or any breach or non-performance of any of the provisions of the contract or of any rules pertaining to breach of public service, by which the Government agency may terminate the contract without notice may also be specified.
- (13) When a Government agency decides to directly augment manpower on contract basis for performing different jobs, it is advisable to pick up persons for the contract from the place or its surroundings where the contractual work needs to be performed. The manner of identifying persons suitable for the contract may be advertised in that area in the local media as also to the Employment Exchanges located thereof. The results of the identification process shall be declared immediately on its conclusion.
- (14) All items such as machinery, equipments and consumables acquired with the cost of a Government agency for the purpose of execution of a statistical project as a part of the contract may be treated as Government assets.
- (15) The Contractors may be required to maintain proper accounts of the expenditure incurred for any statistical project. Most importantly, they may be required to furnish supporting documents of payments made to persons engaged by them.
- (16) Each Contract may specify schedule of payments between parties and to persons engaged in a statistical project. It may also specify penalties, if any, for delays as well as indemnifications against any and all responsibilities, claims, demands, suits, judgments, damages and losses, including the costs, fees and expenses in connection therewith or incidental thereto for: (i) any injury, illness or death to the persons engaged in the project, attributable to the performance of services under the terms of the contract; (ii) any losses, thereof, damage to, or destruction of any of properties; arising out of, or in any way connected with performance of the contract.
- (17) The Contract may contain the usual provisions relating to performance security, earnest money deposit and production of Bank guarantee against advances payable.
- (18) The Government agency or its representative shall have the right to inspect and/ or to test the material and services to confirm their conformity to the

Contract. The specifications in a Contract may include what inspections and tests the Government agency requires and where they are to be conducted. The Government agency may notify the Contractor in writing of the identity of any representatives deployed for these purposes.

- (19) The Government agency's right, to inspect, test and, where necessary, reject the material and services may in no way be limited or waived by reason of the same having previously been inspected, tested and passed by the Government agency or its representative. The Contractor may make available for inspection and examination such records, plans and other documents, as may be necessary.
- (20) Every Contractor may be required to report periodically the progress of work carried out, to the concerned Government agency.
- (21) A Government agency may reserve the right to omit any item(s) from the scope of a Contract or to increase or decrease the quantities of items by a certain degree (say 25 %) from the quantities indicated in the Contract specifications, without any change in unit price or other terms and conditions.
- (22) Where a contractor has to use his own equipment, software etc., in the execution of a statistical project, he may be required, at his cost, to take all necessary steps including replacement if necessary to maintain the equipment, software etc., used during the currency of the contract for the smooth flow of work as per the prescribed time schedule. During the period of maintenance/ repair of the equipment, software etc., the contractor may be required to hire such equipment, software etc., in order to ensure non-stoppage of the work.
- (23) The Government agency on receipt of any complaint shall immediately communicate the Contractor of only those details of the complaint, as may be necessary to minimize any breach or prevent further breaches of the contract.
- (24) If any Contractor engaged in a statistical project receives any complaint from any source, he shall immediately communicate the complaint to the concerned Government agency.
- (25) Persons engaged in a statistical project, shall be made aware of their obligations, not to access, use, disclose or retain personal information except in performing their duties of employment or contractual obligations; and are informed that failure to comply would render themselves liable to legal (civil and criminal) consequences.
- (26) Every contractor and every person engaged in a statistical project may, on completion of his work, be required to handover all the records and documents and furnish a certificate to that effect to the concerned Government agency or to an officer authorised for the purpose by that agency.

### ***Outsourcing collection of statistics***

**9.** In respect of contracts for collection of data, the following aspects may be considered for suitable incorporation into the contracts.

- (1) The identity of the Government agency and the Contractor may be made available to informants at the time of collection of data. Informants may also be told or be able to find without difficulty or expense, their contact details. Address, telephone numbers or websites of the Government agency and the Contractor may be provided so that informants can check the bonafides of the person collecting data without difficulty and significant cost to themselves. It is advisable that persons engaged for collection of data carry proper photo identity cards containing the aforesaid details.
- (2) Informants' identities must not, without their written consent, be revealed to anyone not directly involved in the statistical project or used for any non-statistical purpose.
- (3) Nobody shall be adversely affected or harmed as a direct result of furnishing information in a statistical project.
- (4) If informants' co-operation in a statistical project is entirely voluntary at all stages, they must be so informed when asking for their co-operation.
- (5) In cases of statutory data collection, the informants need to be told about the relevant provisions for data collection including legal consequences for failure to furnish information or furnishing false information.
- (6) Each informant may be informed of the manner in which the informant could access the data collected from the informant in a statistical project, as also of the measures taken to deny access on that information to others.
- (7) Persons engaged for data collection shall avoid interviewing informants at inappropriate or inconvenient times. They should also avoid the use of unnecessarily long interviews.
- (8) Contractors and those working on their behalf (e.g. persons engaged for data collection) must not, in order to secure informants' co-operation, make statements or promises that are knowingly misleading or incorrect – for example, about the likely length of the interview or about the possibilities of being re-interviewed on a later occasion. Any such statements and assurances given to informants must be fully honoured.
- (9) Children are defined as being 'less than 14 years' and young people are defined as being '14 – 17 years'. No child under 14 years shall be interviewed without parents'/guardians'/responsible adults' consent. In the case of young people, where the information to be collected is "sensitive information", the consent of a responsible adult must be sought. Where the data collection involves any subjects or circumstances that might reasonably be judged to be of concern to parents or guardians of the young person (e.g. violence, drug taking), but does not include "sensitive information", it is advisable to seek the consent of a responsible adult. Social norms, that varies community-wise, should not be crossed
- (10) It is advisable to avoid data collection in places where persons other than the informant or his family members have free access and where an informant could reasonably expect to be observed and/or overheard by other people present. In case of collecting sensitive information and any other information which an informant could reasonably feel inconvenience to furnish even in the presence of his family members, the data shall be collected in a manner



that the informant could not be observed and/or overheard by his family members.

- (11) The number of enumerators and supervisors needed for each geographical unit needs to be specified.
- (12) The minimum qualifications, including knowledge of local language and social norms, for the position of enumerator/ supervisor and the manner of identifying them for the contract job needs to be specified. They should not be taken on the regular rolls of the Government agency even on ad hoc basis. They should not be required to attend office of the agency on days where they are not required to perform any job relating to the contract. In other words, when there is no job under the contract to be performed on any day, the enumerator/ supervisor may be free to take up any other assignment.
- (13) It is advisable to identify enumerators, supervisors and other staff required in the contract or project on the condition that they shall not be entitled to get any claims, rights, interests or further benefits in terms of regularisation or consideration of further appointment to any equivalent post(s) or any other post(s) whatsoever, including any claims for further casual, ad-hoc, temporary or regular service in any Government agency.
- (14) Where female informants participate in data collection in a significant number, adequate number of female enumerators/ supervisors need to be recruited to eliminate gender bias in the data.
- (15) The data enumerators shall be provided with all the technical material for carrying out the work assigned to them, such as instruction manuals, data collection formats, and any equipment required for the purpose.
- (16) Before being put on the job, the enumerators and other supervisory staff need to be imparted detailed training on the methodology that they have to follow in data collection.
- (17) Where significant costs are to be incurred for imparting training to the enumerators and other supervisory staff and remuneration is to be paid to them for attending training programme, it is advisable to incorporate a condition in the contract that the remuneration for attending training would become payable only after certain amount of work is done after receiving training.
- (18) Specific time bound norms of work need to be prescribed for the enumerators and supervisors.
- (19) Norms for field work in a day/ week/ month needs to be specified keeping in view the requirement, if any, of covering seasonal activities of the informants.
- (20) Norms for field supervision (on-the spot as well as surprise) and levels of supervision need to be specified in such a way that it covers the work of as many enumerators as possible and spread evenly throughout the period of data collection.
- (21) At times when remuneration is fixed in terms of number of formats of data collection filled up, the enumerators may try to fill up more number of formats than what is normally possible, which affects the quality of data.

Similar situations could be there even in case of supervisors. This aspect needs to be kept in view while fixing the norms for data collection.

- (22) Paying piece rated remuneration to the enumerators and supervisors in terms of the quantum of work done by them subject to quality satisfaction is advisable. The deductions in payment as also termination of contract for not being able to fulfil the prescribed norms and standards of work need to be specified in very clear terms.
- (23) Place of work for each person engaged in the contract also requires to be specified.
- (24) Quality scrutiny of data collected and where required, making back-checks to the field to meet the concerned informants to ascertain the correctness of data from informants need to be provided for.
- (25) Where data collection work in a geographical unit, say a village or urban block takes more than 2-3 days for one enumerator, it is advisable to send a team of enumerators along with one supervisor to set-up a camp to get the work completed expeditiously. In case of prolonged work by one enumerator, it should be ensured that the quality of work does not suffer because of possible human lethargy/ home sickness.
- (26) The enumerators shall be encouraged to provide clarifications in respect of points raised during field inspections, and quality scrutiny by the concerned Supervisors.
- (27) The findings of supervisory staff and other officers who conduct field supervision (on-the spot as well as surprise) and quality scrutiny shall be documented.

### ***Outsourcing storage, security and dissemination of data***

**10.** The storage, security and dissemination of official statistics, reports and the individual data collected from the informants are very important activities. All care and caution has to be taken by every Government agency on these aspects. Where need arises to outsource these activities, the following safeguards may be kept in view.

- (1) De-identification means the removal from identified information of any details that identify the informant, or from which the identity of the informant can reasonably be ascertained, without retaining a means by which the information could be re-identified. De-identification is thus a permanent and irreversible process. Statistical projects should be designed in a manner that makes de-identification practicable.
- (2) All indications of the identity of informants must be permanently removed from the records of information that they have provided as soon as they are no longer necessary for statistical purposes. If information exists in a physical form that makes the removal of the identity of informants impracticable (e.g. on paper), the information should be recorded in another medium and the original records may be destroyed.

- (3) The requirement to destroy or delete records does not apply if the destruction, deletion or de-identification would involve the destruction or deletion of information relating to other individuals.
- (4) Where it is necessary to retain identifying details, they must be stored securely and separately from other information that the informants have provided (e.g. with the linkage maintained by the use of an intervening variable). Access to such material must be restricted to authorised personnel within the Contractor's own organisation for specific statistical purposes (e.g. field administration, data processing, panel or repetitive survey programmes like price data collection, or other forms of data collection involving recall interviews). There should be no attempt to make a separate duplicate copy of identity details.
- (5) Where data collected on paper formats is treated as confidential because of its containing identification details of informants, steps should be taken, wherever feasible, to remove that part of the paper formats where identification details are recorded and the rest may be given to the Contractor for preparing data electronically. If linkage of electronic data with the part of paper formats is required to be maintained, a system of linking numbers or codes need to be developed. In the alternative, the Contractor may be asked to perform the job in the premises of the Government agency where tight security measures could be imposed to avoid leakage of data in any manner outside the premises.
- (6) To preserve informants' anonymity not only their names and addresses but also any other information provided by or about them that could in practice identify them (e.g. their Company and job title) must be safeguarded. These anonymity requirements relate to any records from which the identity of the informant is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, including an informant's photograph, verbatim quotes and audio or video taped interviews.
- (7) The aforesaid anonymity requirements may be relaxed only under the safeguards, namely, (a) where the informant has given explicit written permission for this; and (b) where disclosure of names to a third party (e.g. a sub-contractor) is essential for any statistical purpose such as data processing or for further interview with the informant for an independent fieldwork quality check) or for further follow-up. The original Contractor shall be responsible for ensuring that any such third party agrees to observe the safeguards.
- (8) The Contractor must explicitly agree with the Government agency, specific arrangements regarding the responsibilities for security of data and for dealing with any complaints or damages arising due to faulty data/ services or data misuse. Such responsibilities will normally rest with the Government agency, but the Contractor must ensure that data are correctly stored and handled while in the Contractor's charge.
- (9) All documentation, data, reports and material/ data stored electronically that emerges out of the execution of a statistical project shall be the property of the concerned Government agency. The following records must remain the

property of the Government agency and must not be disclosed by the Contractors to any third party without the Government agency's permission:

- a) statistical project briefs, specifications, technical and training inputs, and other information provided by the Government agency.
  - b) the statistical data and findings from a statistical project (except in the case of syndicated or multi-Government agency projects or services where the same data are available to more than one Government agency).
- (10) If there is a requirement of post tabulation scrutiny and report writing, they are to be specified.
- (11) The manner and responsibility for releasing data or reports, if any, on completion of tabulation need to be specified.
- (12) While disseminating data, contractors shall ensure to inform users that the users are obliged a) to acknowledge the source of data in their publications and b) to accept responsibility of views expressed in reports based on the data.