

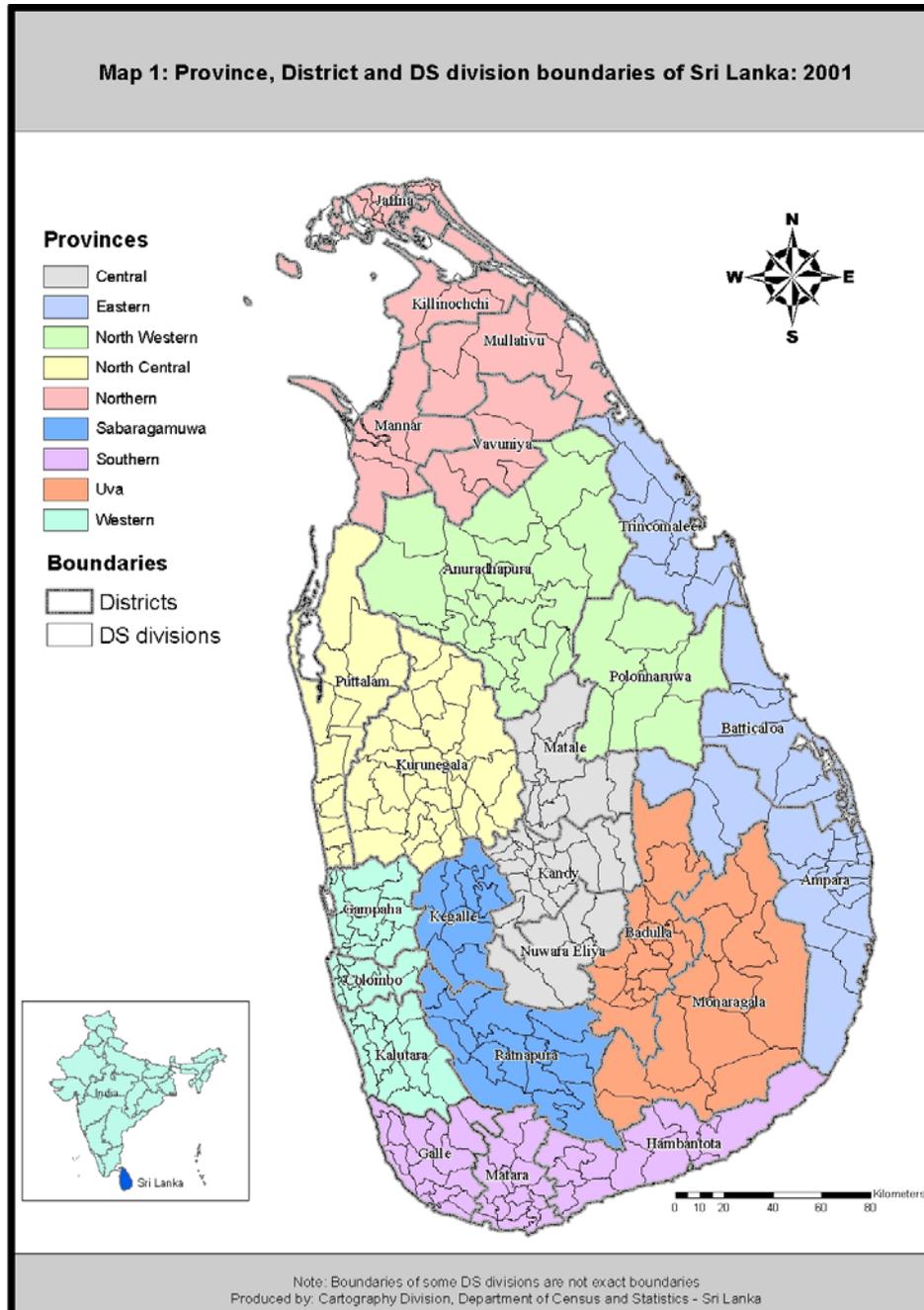
National Statistical System of Sri Lanka

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1. Map of Sri Lanka



2. Introduction

- **The Sri Lankan statistical system has evolved over time as a decentralized system with the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) serving as the central hub.**

It has responsibility for collection, compilation, analysis, and dissemination of a wide variety of statistics based on censuses, surveys of business establishments, household surveys and data generated by administrative processes.

- **DCS has the responsibility for setting standards and coordinating the system; statistical units in the line Ministries are staffed by personnel belonging to the DCS cadre.**
- **It provides statistical consultancy services to the agencies that require assistance on statistical matters, through its technical divisions.**

3. A short history of the DCS

- **The Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) is an amalgamation of two sections, the statistics section and the census section which functioned separately under the Donoughmore Constitution in 1944.**
- **The statistics section was part of the former Department of Commerce and Industries. The census section comprised the Census Department which was created in December 1944 for the purpose of taking the Census of Population in 1946. Both these units had been under the Ministry of Labour, Industry and Commerce.**
- **A new department namely the Department of Census, Statistics and Planning which was assigned under the Ministry of Home affairs. – September 1947.**
- **This department was renamed as the Department of Census and Statistics and assigned to the Ministry of Finance, in May 1948.**

4. Organization of the DCS

- **At present the DCS is organized with centrally located head quarter (technical) divisions, an island wide network of field offices, with field officers attached to district secretariats and divisional offices, and a host of branch offices in some important ministries and departments.**
- **The activities undertaken by the DCS are grouped and organized under 18 technical and service divisions.**

5. Legal Authority

- **There are two ordinances under which the DCS collects data through censuses and surveys.**
- **They are Census Ordinance and Statistics Ordinance.**
- **These ordinances stipulate that statistics which are highly important for policy planning and decision making of the government should be collected by the DCS.**

6. Development of the Statistical System

- **Prior to 1948: Statistics were mainly compiled as by-products of administrative records by government departments, or were collected by separate census units and statistical branches functioning under the former Ministry of Labour, Industry and Commerce.**
- **Censuses of population was conducted since 1871.**
- **With the creation of a separate Department of Census and Statistics in 1948, the official statistical system began to develop in a coordinated and systematic manner, to meet the growing demand for comprehensive and reliable statistics by planners and policy makers.**

6. Ctd ...

The DCS has carried out nationwide household and establishment surveys since the late sixties.

The surveys and censuses conducted by DCS at present.

Surveys

Name

Frequency

Labour Force Survey

quarterly

Household Income & Expenditure

5 years

Demographic & Health Survey

5 – 6 years

Crop Cutting Survey - paddy

twice a year

Highland crop Statistics

Annually / Twice a year

Cost of production of

Tea

Annually

Rubber

Annually

Coconut

Annually

Annual survey of Industries

Annually

Annual survey of Construction industries

Annually

National Accounts

Annually

Quarterly Gross Domestic Production (GDP)

Quarterly

Consumer Price Index

Monthly

6. Ctd ...

Censuses

<u>Name</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Census of Population & Housing	10 years
Census of Agriculture	10 years
Census of Industries	10 years
Census of Public & Semi government sector employees	4 years

- DCS has started to develop a comprehensive and updated Business Register to carryout its surveys of establishments.
- DCS has started developing a Master Sample Frame of Households.
- DCS has demonstrated ability to undertake well designed surveys of households (the Labor Force Survey, the Household Income Expenditure Survey and the recent Tsunami Census).

6. Ctd ...

Resources and Constraints

- **Inadequacy of resources and therefore under-investment in infrastructure, have been a serious constraint.**
- **Therefore it has become a problem to generate timely and comprehensive data to cope with the pace of demand for data from the policy makers.**
- **The statistical units in the line ministries have dual reporting arrangements – to DCS and to the line management of the Relevant Ministry. DCS has to depend on the administrative records compiled by line Ministry authorities at sub national levels. There is a problem of getting these records in time and completeness and accuracy of those.**

6. Ctd ...

Duplication of work

- **DCS and Central Bank of Sri Lanka; carry out household and establishment surveys collecting similar information; and DCS and the Central Bank both compile national accounts.**
- **Although DCS has vastly improved its capacity to deliver timely data, the duplicative and parallel efforts continue because of historical factors.**
- **The two agencies are now discussing to come up with a solution to stop duplication and to improve the statistical activation by pooling resources.**

6. Ctd ...

Centralized Data Entry System

- **Centralized data entry and processing have contributed to delays in survey processing.**
- **The delays in entry of data suggest that there is much scope to improve data entry methods.**
- **DCS currently experimenting decentralized data entry as a pilot project in 6 districts (25 districts all together.)**

7. STATCAP Project

- **DCS is planning to improve its statistical system to generate an adequate flow of data to support evidence based decision making in all sectors of the economy.**
- **DCS has made arrangements to investment in infrastructure and skill development supported by a World Bank IDA credit under its STATCAP initiative.**
- **In this connection a statistical Master Plan has already been prepared.**