

Workshop on Environment Statistics,

Dakar February 28 to March 04 2005

The Use of the Internet as a tool for  
Statistics Dissemination  
in the Economic Community of West  
African States (ECOWAS) Countries

## **Outline of the Presentation**

- Definition
- Characteristics of Quality Statistics
- The ECOWAS' National Statistics Offices on the Internet
- Conclusion and Recommendations

# Introduction

## UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics:

“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 honor citizens' entitlement to public information

# Definition

Dissemination of statistics is the release to users, of information obtained through statistical processes.

## Media for statistics dissemination

- paper publication;
- microfiche,
- fax response to special requests;
- public speeches,
- or electronic format via the Internet

# Characteristics of quality statistics

Six dimensions of data quality:

1. Relevance
2. Accuracy
3. Timeliness
4. Comparability
5. Accessibility
6. Coherence

# Characteristics of quality statistics

- **Relevance,**

Statistics are relevant when they meet users needs. Statistical offices need to identify who the users and potential users are, what they need in terms of content, formats and delivery modes.

To increase statistics relevance, demand driven approaches to the production of statistics must prevail upon the supply driven approaches.

- **Accuracy,**

The accuracy of statistical information is the degree to which the information correctly describes the phenomena it is designed to measure.

Key factors for the provision of accurate statistics are:

Good concepts and definitions;

Reference period (short);

Adequate training of staff (field, office and supervision);

Respondents awareness;

Clear questions; and

Pre-testing of questionnaires.

- **Timeliness,**

“Timeliness of information reflects the length of time between the information's availability and the event or phenomenon it describes. Timeliness must be considered in the context of the time period that permits the information to be of value and still be acted upon”  
(Statistics Canada).

**Some factors affecting data timeliness include:**

Delays in the implementation of statistical operations;

Data processing delays; and

Poor logistics at the various stages of statistical operations

- **Comparability,**

Provision of metadata is essential in building confidence of the user community in official statistics. Provision of metadata is necessary to interpret statistical information appropriately.

**Some factors affecting data comparability are:**

Lack of uniformity with respect to concepts, definitions and methods;

Incomplete coverage; and

Methodology for data collection and analysis.

- **Accessibility**

The accessibility of statistical information reflects how readily the data can be located and accessed.

The accessibility includes the suitability of the form in which the data are available, the media of dissemination, and the availability of metadata and user support services. The cost of the information is also an aspect of its affordability.

- *Coherence*

“ Coherence reflects the degree to which the data and information from a single statistical program are brought together with other data information and are logically connected and completed”

(Statistics Canada)

# The ECOWAS' National Statistics Offices on the Internet

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Countries	Websites
Benin	<a href="http://www.insae.bj">www.insae.bj</a>
Burkina-Faso	<a href="http://www.insd.bf">www.insd.bf</a>
Cape-Verde	<a href="http://www.ine.cv">www.ine.cv</a>
Cote-d'Ivoire	<a href="http://www.ins.ci">www.ins.ci</a>
Gambia	<a href="http://www.csd.gm">www.csd.gm</a>
Ghana	X
Guinea	<a href="http://www.stat-guinee.org">www.stat-guinee.org</a>
Guinea-Bissau	<a href="http://www.stat-guineebissau.com">www.stat-guineebissau.com</a>
Liberia	X
Mali	<a href="http://www.dnsi.gov.ml">www.dnsi.gov.ml</a>
Mauritania	<a href="http://www.ons.mr">www.ons.mr</a>
Niger	<a href="http://www.stat-niger.org">www.stat-niger.org</a>
Nigeria	X
Senegal	<a href="http://www.ansd.org">www.ansd.org</a>
Sierra-leone	<a href="http://www.statistics-sierra-leone.org">www.statistics-sierra-leone.org</a>
Togo	X

[www.uneca.org/statistics/nsos.htm](http://www.uneca.org/statistics/nsos.htm)

## **Contents of the Websites**

The websites contents are broadly organized into the following items:

- Countries profiles;
- NSOs work programmes;
- Publications;
- and Data and indicators

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# Environment statistics disseminated on the NSOs' websites

Environment data are not easily accessible through the NSOs websites.  
Across countries, there is no clear agreement of what indicators should be considered as environmental.

Two main classifications can be identified as related to environments:

- Climate: gives rainfall and temperature recorded at meteorological stations
- Tourism / Environment: gives some data on water resources and consumption, and land utilization



Assessing the quality of statistical information disseminated through their:

- Comparability (provision of metadata)
- and timeliness (calendar of publications release, date of latest data provided)

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Metadata</b>	<b>Calendar of release of publications</b>	<b>Latest data on environment statistics</b>
Benin	Yes	No	2002 (waste)
Burkina Faso	No	No	-
Cape Verde			
Cote d'Ivoire	No	No	1999
Gambia	No	No	-
Ghana	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guinea	No	No	2003 (rain fall)
Guinea-Bissau			1999
Liberia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mali		No	2001 (temp. rain)
Niger			1999
Nigeria	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal	Yes	No	
Sierra-leone	Yes (GDDS, IMF)	No	
Togo	Yes	Yes	Yes

\* GDDS: General Data Dissemination System (IMF)

# Conclusion and recommendations

- Encourage efforts made by NSOs to disseminate data through the Internet;
- To build confidence of the user community in official statistics, work must be done on the six dimensions of data quality (relevance, accuracy, timeliness, comparability, accessibility and coherence)
- Access users needs (local, regional and international)
- Consider the importance of Metadata

- Add a calendar of publications
- At the regional level, there is a need to encourage common Internet dissemination solution for ECOWAS countries.

**THANKS FOR LISTENING**