



The Statistical System: The Structure

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Official Statistics!

Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

- Principle 1 –

- "... meet the test of practical utility ..."
- "... are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis ..."

Centralized vs. Decentralized

The centralized approach:

- Concentration of specialized manpower
- Concentration of expensive equipment
- Easier coordination of programmes
- Easy recognition of the institution
- "One stop shop" for all users

Centralized vs. Decentralized (cont.)

The decentralized approach:

- **Decentralization by subject matter**
 - line ministries, central banks (most countries)
- **Regional decentralization**
 - Controlled by central office:
 - data collection (e.g. Ethiopia, Sudan)
 - subject matters (Australia)
 - Coordinated by central office (Germany)
- **Various mixes**

Centralized vs. Decentralized (cont.)

The decentralized approach:

- Policy relevance of the subject matters
- Sufficient breakdown: regional/local data
- Decentralization as safeguard against "poor choice of the head of one agency"
- Coordination issues arise (→ next session)

What determines the system?

- Size of the statistical system/country
- Tradition
- Current social and political environment

- System is not easy to change, but countries have been moving along the spectrum

Where within the Government structure?

To whom/what office within the government does the head of the NSO report?

- the (Deputy/Vice) Prime Minister or the President;
- the Cabinet or Council of Ministers;
- the Ministry in charge of planning and/or development;
- the Ministry in charge of economic affairs, industry and/or trade;
- the Ministry in charge of finance;
- the Ministry of Statistics;
- the Ministry of the Interior;
- the Ministry in charge of information and communication;
- Parliament directly;
- a Planning and/or Development Commission/Council/Authority;
- a Statistics Council
- various Ministries depending on the subject area.

Where within the Government structure?
(cont.)

- Where the action is?
- Where the money is?
- Where independency is best guaranteed?

Where within the Government structure?
(cont.)

- The Minister himself/herself
- A permanent secretary in the ministry
- The director of a department
- An advisor

For Discussion:

There is no "One size fits all" !

- Where in the spectrum is your statistical system?
- Why is it where it is?
- What does work? What does not work?
- In which direction would you want to move?