
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 14-18 October 2019

Session 8: Certification of statistical outputs and providers

Matthias Reister, Chief
Development Data Section
Statistics Division, Development Data and Outreach Branch
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Certification by an external body

- Certification is an activity that assesses whether a product, service, process or system (e.g., a quality management system) complies with requirements defined by an internationally recognized standard or other formal criteria.

- It attaches a kind of “label” because the standard is internationally recognized as a guaranteed level of quality.

- It is conducted by an external independent certification body which can be located at the national or international level. The result of a successful certification is that the certification body, such as ISO, awards a certificate to the organization. The ISO standards are general and apply to any organization.
Certification to ISO standards is an advanced method and tool of process quality management. It requires documentation, quality reports, quality indicators, self-assessments and audits. There are significant benefits, but also costs, associated with certification.

ISO standards supplement but are not alternatives to frameworks such as the UN NQAF, which are specifically developed for statistical agencies.

There are examples of national statistical offices that have been ISO certified: For example, the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan, Statistics Lithuania, Statistics Netherlands and the Statistical Office of Slovakia.
Unrelated but similar to this external certification process is the certification of statistical agencies and statistical outputs by the NSO.

NSOs may be called upon to assess and certify the quality of statistical agencies and statistical outputs of other members of the NSS (possibly to label their statistics as official) or even of statistics produced outside the NSS (e.g., for Sustainable Development Goal indicator data and statistics).

In such cases, the NSO may develop and deploy a checklist for the assessment of statistical outputs in consultation with the concerned stakeholders. A checklist based on the UN NQAF can be used as a self-assessment tool by all producers of statistics.

For example, the Hellenic Statistical Authority has the responsibility to certify as “official” the statistics produced by other agencies of the Hellenic Statistical System. See www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1195539/Principles_ELSS_EN.pdf.
THANK YOU
Session 8: Group discussion on Certification by the NSO?

Organization

• Four groups as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUC (support)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EAC (support)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Each group needs to determine
  – 1 note taker/facilitator
  – 1 presenter

  – Time
  – 30 minutes for discussion and preparation
  – 10 minutes for presentation (oral)
Session 8: Group discussion on Certification by the NSO?

Questions

O. Do you have a similar practice to certification?

1. Do you think your office may consider to certify (i) statistical outputs and (ii) other members of the NSS in the near future (1-3 years)?

2. If yes, what could be the scope and objectives?

3. Where do you see obstacles in your country for the NSO to certify statistical outputs and other members of the NSS?