

# STATISTICAL LEGISLATION AND POSITIONING OF NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE IN GOVERNMENT: The case of Mozambique

by

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## ***Introduction***

According to international recommendations (UNSD, 2001) there are nowadays three different types of national statistical system organizations, ones being of a centralized structure, others decentralized and the third a kind of combination of those two systems.

In response to the significant changes that have occurred in the Mozambican society, the importance of official statistical system has grown. Reliable statistics are important in relation to the formulation of national policies and strategies, the private sector needs reliable information for their decision making, and measurements of performance and achievement of goals for public services, can only be made on the basis of objective and independent statistics.

This paper tries, in the following sections, to present briefly the Statistical Legal Framework and the position of the National Statistical Institute (INE) in the Mozambican Statistical System and Government.

## ***Mozambique's National Statistical System – definition an mission***

In response to the changes occurred in the Mozambican society in the 90s a National Statistical System (NSS-M) was created by an Act passed by the Parliament in 1996<sup>2</sup>, which established a kind of centralized statistical system in Mozambique. The ten UN principles for National Statistical System<sup>3</sup> were adopted by the new Statistical Act.

*“In other African countries, the Statistics Acts relate to their National Statistical Institute and it is only lately that they are being extended to cover the National System.”*<sup>4</sup> The National Statistical System of Mozambique was defined as the set of competent institutions to perform the official statistics activities, which means to say

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<sup>2</sup> Law nr 7/96, of June

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Statistical Commission, Report on the Special Session (11-15 April 1994), Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 1994, Supplement 9

<sup>4</sup> “Scandinavian assistance to strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Statistical Institute”, Mozambique (2003-7) – Report from external review, April 2005. Isaksen, J; Kiregyera, B; Williams, T., June, 2006

concept and methodological harmonization, compilation and dissemination of official statistics. This approach covers not only its executive body, but all system too.

The mission of NSS-M is to deliver and disseminate reliable and timely official statistics information to suit needs of planning, social and macroeconomic management and the users in general.

INE was created by a Presidential Decree<sup>5</sup> in the same year (1996), as the executing agency of the NSS-M and an independent body, reporting to the Council of Ministers. The INE is in charge of data collection and dissemination of the country's official statistics. The Central Bank, under methodological supervision of INE, is responsible for financial and monetary statistics and Balance of Payments.

The law allows INE to decentralize some of its duties to other ministries, particularly to those which statistics rely very much on administrative records. Therefore in 1998, INE, via a Statistical High Council (CSE) Resolution has decentralised the authority of production and dissemination data on education to the Ministry of Education, data on health to the Ministry of Health, data on labour force to the Ministry of Labour, and data of fishery industry to the Ministry of Fishery. The production and dissemination of infra-annual and annual data on agricultural was delegated to the Ministry of Agriculture in 1999. All these line ministries have to comply with the fundamental principles of official statistics<sup>6</sup>, to follow classifications, definitions and other methodological instructions issued either by INE or by the CSE. The Units of Statistics of these line ministers report and submit their business also to INE for approval. Their staff members take part on the short term courses organized by INE.

### ***Mozambique's National Statistical System - organs***

The NSS organs defined by the Mozambican Statistical Act are the High Council on Statistics (CSE), Population and Housing Census Council, National Institute of Statistics and the Bank of Mozambique (Central Bank).

The CSE is chaired by the Prime Minister and comprises by representatives from the line ministries, the President of INE, a representative of the Central Bank, three representatives from the private sector (agriculture, industry and services), and two representatives from the academia, all of them approved by the Prime Minister. This body supervises, guides and coordinates the entire NSS-M. Its meetings take place ordinarily twice a year to evaluate the NSS Annual Report and appreciate the SEN Plans which later is sent for approval to the Government. The NSS-M Annual Report also goes to the Administrative Court for approval, particularly in the chapter of budget and finance execution.

The Population and Housing Census Council also chaired by the Prime Minister and comprises of 10 other members of Council of Minister and the President and Vice President (Demographic Area) of INE. Its mandate is to guide and supervise the entire Population and Housing Census process. Two years before the census day this NSS organ resumes its work holding regular meetings. Apart of supervision/ oversee of all

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<sup>5</sup> Presidential Decree nr 9/96, of August

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Statistical Commission, Report on the Special Sessions (11-15 April 1994), Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 1994, Supplement 9.

Census process, the major tasks of this organ is to approve the Census Work Plan, Census Budget, and the objectives of the Census.

The INE is the NSS executive body. By law, INE can delegated its duties to the department of Statistics within a line ministry which is found to meet a couple of conditions defined by the CSE in terms of staff, costs of statistical production, synergies, and when the major source of data is administrative records.

The Bank of Mozambique is responsible for the monetary and financial statistics. By INE agreement the Central Bank is also responsible for the production of the Balance of Payments. A working group comprising professionals from INE, Bank of Mozambique, Customs and Ministry of Finance take care of the quality of Balance of Payment compilation and meet regularly.

### ***The role of INE within the Mozambique's National Statistical System***

As mentioned earlier, in a centralised statistical system, there is a single authority with a mandate for data collection and production of official statistics, which interacts with others institutions in this endeavour. According to the UN Statistical Division, such organization organises and operates a scheme of co-ordinate social and economic statistics, which a country requires and collaborates with other governmental departments in the compilation of administrative and specialised statistics.

From the Mozambique's Statistics Act it is clear the high profile given to statistics in general and to the National Statistical Office (INE) in Mozambique, in particular.

INE reports to the Council of Ministers and its Presidency is composed of 3 members, namely the President and the two Vice Presidents, all appointed and swore before the President of Republic. They have no fixed term. Administratively, the Vice Presidents of INE have a protocol and administrative rank as Permanent Secretary and the President the rank of Deputy Minister.

The President of INE is invited to Cabinet meetings on State Budget and National Development Plans and he is allowed to take the floor. These are excellent opportunities for the Head of INE to defend INE and NSS-M budgets, plans and monitor the use of official data by the Government. S/He is empowered by law to negotiate and sign finance and technical assistance agreement with co-operating partners. In the other hand the level and positioning of INE in Government makes much easier the relations between INE and line ministers and the Central Bank. This is conducted directly by the top management of INE and those institutions.

Although the Mozambican's NSS is a mixture of a centralised and decentralised system, the Statistical Act gives to the INE authority to supervise and co-ordinate all statistics process, whether it takes place at INE or in the line ministries. The National Statistical System in Mozambique sets a very clear framework for coordination of all national stakeholders indeed. This means that no line Ministry or local Government is allowed to conduct any statistical operation without INE's permission. The rational

behind this is to explore better the resources<sup>7</sup> available to Statistical Activities in the country, in one hand and in the other hand to avoid or at least reduce redundancies and duplications within the Statistical System and also explore better the synergies generated among the NSS stakeholders.

All NSS-M´ statistical production is client oriented. INE started a couple years ago to conduct an annually User Satisfaction Surveys<sup>8</sup> to gauge users satisfaction with its products and to identify their needs, deadlines and media of dissemination. As the response rate of this survey still not be satisfactory, ad hoc and specific meetings have been held by INE with the main users to take their views to complement the impressions got from the mentioned survey above.

The information compiled above crossed with what the Strategic Plan defines is crucial in the development of INE´s business Plans. The idea behind this is to continue to provide relevant statistical information to the users.

This exercise involves all delegated organs of INE and the Central Bank. Regular bilateral meetings are held with them to evaluate the situation, guide them according to what was set by the Strategic Plan and users needs. A formal planning meeting is taking place every year to draft the business plan for the NSS-M and to evaluate the annual reports which are submitted to the Statistical High Council and Government later.

By law, INE has a say in the definition of the content of syllabus of statistics degree or courses given by public institutions. This legal command empowers INE in managing and coordinating the NSS-M particularly the human resources required for its development.

### ***The organization of INE***

A Presidential Decree establishes the structure and organization of INE and defines the powers of the head of INE.

To fulfill its role, the head of INE decided to organize the institution into 3 areas, namely, horizontal functions, economic and finance statistics area, and socio-demographic statistics area. The two last areas are supervised each one by one Vice President of INE and the horizontal functions are supervised by the President. Each area is comprised by 2 directorates and these units have divide into 2 departments, 90% of them directed by professionals holding a master´s degree. The directors and all heads of units at INE are appointed and discharged by the President of INE.

INE has 404 employees, 30% of them professionals and 34% females. The former National Directorate of Statistics<sup>9</sup> had 60 employees, from which less then 10% were professionals.

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<sup>7</sup> both human and finance resources

<sup>8</sup> the line ministers and provincial Governments are also interviewed

<sup>9</sup> a Directorate within the Ministry of Planning and Finance

Forty six percent of the INE'S total employees – 404 are deployed at Headquarters (HQ), and around 52% of them are professionals and 35% women. The main tasks at central level are to co-ordinate the SEN, international relations, training, development of methodologies, sampling, data processing, statistical analysis and national dissemination. In the field of Statistical Analysis very little is been done so far, particularly in the economic area.

At provincial level INE has a provincial branch with different sizes of staff compliment pending the size of the provincial economy and development. The small ones have a staff of 12 and the big ones 30, which includes a least 2 professionals on each. The survey data collection is done by recruited staff for a fixed term<sup>10</sup>. INE keeps a Roaster of experienced people in the data collection and we call them when required. They undergo a specific training of 2 to 4 weeks and the best ones are selected to work under supervision of our provincial branch. This arrangement was the way to reduce costs of statistical production without compromising statistical quality.

These provincial branches were a heritage from the former National Directorate of Statistics. They were established in 1983. The main task of these provincial branches is to supervise or collect data from the statistical units (companies and households), check and send them via Internet to the HQ. Also they conducted training session to the other statistical units and conduct dissemination activities. Under HQ supervision, they started in 2001 to produce quarterly statistical bulletins covering economic and socio-demographic data.

This 11 provincial branches are organized into 3 departments, namely Economic Statistics; Social and Demographic Statistics and, Administration and Finance Department. Five out of eleven provincial branches, are headed by a woman and all INE's provincial heads hold a degree or a masters` degree.

All fieldwork operations are planned, organized and supervised from the HQ, which also provides the logistics for them. Teams from HQ conduct field supervision missions and statistical audits to assure a smooth running of the surveys and data quality.

INE's budget comes from two main sources namely, Government (around 40%) and Co-operating Partners. Less than 1% of budget comes from commissioned work from NGOs or International Institutions located in the country. In principle no Ad Hoc work or request is admitted. All requests have to be analysed by INE in the previous year during the annual planning process. The NSS-M business plans are drawn taking into account the need, urgency/ relevance and resources available.

The INE structure includes three very important governing bodies, namely the Presidency, the Consultative Council and Technical Council for Methodological Coordination, all chaired by the President of INE. The second and third board complies of the Presidency, directors and the head of INE Presidency of Office and meets once a month and when required. Annually the Consultative Council meeting includes the heads of INE's provincial branches, the heads of Statistics Units at

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<sup>10</sup> temporary contracts

Central Bank and INE delegated organs. The cooperating partners are also invited to this annual meeting. The INE Presidency meets weekly to assist the President in the management of the NSS-M and INE, both in current and strategic business.

At Directorate and Provincial Branches level, the law establishes a technical advisory board to discuss technical and methodological issues, including training programmes and meet once a month. The reports of these meetings are sent to the top management of INE.

A specialized training unit and other on external relations (cooperation) are set up at HQ to deal with these two very important functions for the development of a National Statistical System. The heads of these units report to the President of INE.

## **Challenges**

One of the major challenges the Statistical System in Mozambique faces in the coming years is to keep and improve the delivering of data and its quality. In particular, the NSS-M has to provide data at lowest administrative level (District) taken as the main planning and development unit by the national authorities. At legal point of view the challenge the NSS-M is facing now does not matter in fact. The Mozambique´ Statistical Act allows INE to set representations at provincial and district level. The challenge therefore is to adopt a methodology which takes into consideration the users´ needs at district level, the resources available to Statistical Activities and the sustainability of it.

A National Statistical System has to be strong enough, dynamic and relevant to deal with enhanced data demand from both the national users (Government, Academia, NGOs, private sector, etc) and from international institutions (Millennium Development Goals for instance). The dialog between users and producers has to be constant and the National Statistical Offices´ production has to be demand driven. By doing so, the National Statistical System will be in position to deliver in a sustainable way the growing demand for statistical information.

The National Statistical Systems have also had to adopt a legal framework and organization arrangement, which suits the country and complies with the UN recommendations. By doing so, the conditions created will help users to acknowledge the official statistics as a public good which help the society to develop democracy, good governance and promote development.

Although the current Mozambique´ Statistical Act complies with the UN recommendations and expresses a strong political will and support to official statistics in the country, empowers official statistics and INE, minor adjustments it is required. One of them is the composition of the Statistical High Council (CSE) by including members of trade unions and cooperating partners, by doing so the Council will echoes the needs of all society. Also the process of appointment and tenure of the head of INE has to be determined in the Act. After ten years of the law existence it is recommendable to launch a revision process of the Mozambican Statistical Act in order to take on board these and other issues. With this improvement in the Statistical Act the Mozambique´s NSS will serve much better the users and society at large.

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