

**StatsTalk-Africa:
Data Stewardship in Africa – The Role of National Statistical Offices**

Thursday, 25 May 2023, 16:00 – 17:30 (EAT)

Concept Note

Background

The United Nations' Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (FPOs) provide National Statistical Offices (NSOs) the basic guidelines and standards for generation of official statistics. These form the basis for data collection, and compilation of national and sub-national indicators adhering to the agreed principles and standardized methodologies apart from ensuring fairness, transparency, and privacy protection in its dissemination.

The digitized world is generating an amount of data which now competes with the NSOs statistics in terms of its almost real time availability and speed of dissemination. Data availability from a wide variety of sources is seen as an opportunity as well as challenge in terms of its ethical use and maintaining representativeness, public trust, privacy, and equity. The burden is now on the NSOs to be agile and ensure the quality of its products besides overseeing that the data generated across the other systems meets the test of internationally agreed principles of quality statistics. How best the NSOs can provide this service to citizens is the key question.

Many countries have taken steps and issued National Data Strategies to address these challenges of access and sharing while maintaining the FPOs. NSOs, based on their national governance and legal statistics framework already have the authority for collection, processing, and dissemination of data. Many of their existing tasks and responsibilities are as data stewards. As key stakeholders in the new and emerging data ecosystem NSOs need to leverage their strength in data governance, data management, data privacy, data analytics, data visualizations and thus assume the role of chief data steward for strengthening the overall statistical system. Hence, they need to work towards frameworks of data stewardship by enhancing its data and technological skills in handling various aspects of data collaboratives.

Many NSOs have constraints of capacity and resources in terms of fast changing technological environment and its alignment within its own processes. In such cases data stewardship can be assumed by technological and e-governance units in terms of setting the standards for automatic data capture and the e-governance infrastructure. Thus, the overall challenge needs to be reflected by each NSOs to fulfill its core responsibilities and ensure its continued relevance and sustainability. The NSOs need to oversee and leverage the data generated by the larger data eco-system and play its role of developing qualitative and timely statistics.

UN working group on data stewardship:

While in 2014, the United Nations Statistics Commission (UNSC) setup the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics, in 2021 the UN working group on data stewardship was established. The work plan of the working group covers the development of a conceptual framework for data stewardship and its various dimensions. The draft report of the working group is under circulation for comments by the NSOs. The African Statistical System needs to be aware of these initiatives so that it can be built up NSDS and national governments are aware of it.

The objectives of the working group on data stewardship include governance and legal frameworks, equity, and inclusion, sharing and collaboration, data stewardship and overall conceptual framework. It has circulated its draft report for comments. Chapter 2 of the report deals with NSOs and data stewardship.

The data steward has responsibility throughout the data life cycle, from collection to dissemination and preservation of the data. Thus, data governance models become fundamental and depend on the role that NSOs envision and the complexity of the national statistical system (NSS) and other data producers.

Some of the stewardship roles of NSO's relate to the Management of integrated databases, the quality framework for administrative registers, standardization of meta-data, development of common data handling protocols, access to open data, common data dissemination platforms, integrating datasets by creating common identifiers and classification for the use of data for governance purposes.

Basis and Objectives:

ECA has prepared a road map for the transformation and modernization of official statistics in Africa where it is envisaged that 'national statistical office should play a key role in data stewardship. As there are large number of data producers, collaborators, data services and users, the strategies to be chosen for transformation and modernization need to develop the roles of all the stakeholders in the overall national statistical system. Separately, NSOs are undertaking statistical data modernization projects supported by the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) like population Census, CRVS, CAPI/CATI, GIS wherein overall aspects of frameworks of data stewardship can be aligned. Thus, given all the existing frameworks at various levels, what are the practical ways of ensuring country-led data drivers are engaged in all aspects for consistent production of data within the available resources and sustainable efforts, leaving no country behind?

The purpose is therefore to engage both the constituencies (i) the ACS and its implementation stakeholders and (ii) the member countries' NSS, initially for a conceptual understanding and exposure to the concepts of data stewardship. Accordingly, this proposed webinar is for item (iii) addressing the role of member countries' NSS on a wider platform.

The webinar aims at two objectives:

- (i) Understanding the developments in building framework including definitions and concepts for data stewardship and the role of NSOs within the wider data ecosystem as data steward.
- (ii) Understanding the scope of data stewardship and extent to which these can be embedded in the National data strategy and way forward for NSOs.

Expected outcome

Participants to understand the framework of data stewardship, the role of NSO and other departments within the NSS; and to get an understanding of their collaboration and synergies in relation to data stewardship.

Participants

Participants are expected from ECA, NSS of member countries (NSOs and departments including IT, digital governance), RC Statistical Officers, and Young Statisticians.

Date and Time

Thursday, 25 May 2023, 16:00 – 17:30 (EAT). Online event of 90 minutes.

Language

Interpretation in English and French will be available.

Registration link

Register in advance for this meeting [HERE](#).

For more information please contact:

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Agenda

Time	Item
16:00 – 16:05	About the webinar and introduction of speakers Moderator: Anjana Dube, Senior Regional Advisor ECA-ACS (5 min)
16:05 – 16:10	Welcome Remarks <i>Mr. Oliver Chinganya, Director</i> ECA- African Centre for Statistics (ACS) (5 min)
16:10 – 16:20	Presentation: Data Stewardship – Role of NSO, Poland <i>Mr. Dominik Rozkrut, President,</i> Statistics Poland (10 min)
16:20 – 16:30	Presentation: Data Stewardship – Role of NSO, Colombia Presenter: <i>Ms. Piedad Contreras, Director General,</i> DANE-Colombia (10 min)
16:30 – 16:40	Presentation: Data Stewardship – Role of NSO, UK Presenter: <i>Simon Whitworth, Head of Data Ethics and Research Accreditation Data Governance, Legislation and Policy</i> UK Statistics Authority (10 min)
16:40 – 16:50	Presentation: Data Stewardship – Role of NSO, Rwanda Presenter: <i>Mr. Yusuf Murangwa Director General,</i> National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (10 min)
16:50– 17:20	Q & A Session (30 min)
17:20– 17:30	Wrap up/summary of discussion/announcements <i>Moderator</i>

Contact Person

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