



International Development Cooperation at Statistics Norway

A Newsletter from Statistics Norway's Division for Development Cooperation

Long term commitment gives results

A key feature of the development work in Statistics Norway is to give support to sister organisations through long term institutional cooperation projects. One of the central lessons that we have drawn from more than 20 years of offering support to statistics development is that capacity building relies on a number of preconditions that often goes far beyond the technical aspects.

In order to be successful we have to understand the institution itself and the broader national system in which it operates. This process takes time and it demands resources. In times where short term gains and demand for rapid results are dominant it can be challenging to advocate this view.

In this number of our newsletter we give a concrete example of how a sustained and long term presence has led to direct improvements in a national statistical system. Back in 2006 Statistics Norway started cooperation with the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (NSC). Now, after 10 years of cooperation with NSC, we see how a long term perspective has given tangible results.

During the project period SN has given support to the office on a number of areas ranging from IT, social and economic subject matter statistics to general support to modernising the NSC organisation. With support from Norway, NSC has also modernized its production system and is now one of the most advanced countries in the region when it comes to use of modern production routines.

A common denominator throughout the project has been to share Norwegian experiences in using administrative registers for production of statistics, especially within economic statistics. NSC has now started to develop a statistical business register that eventually will be an important source for structural business statistics and national accounts.

An independent evaluation carried out earlier this year showed that the Norwegian support had clearly contributed to improving Kirgiz statistics and put the office in a better position to manage the overall national statistical system.

In this issue we also write about our plans for a cooperation project with the statistical office in Ghana. Here we are at the very start on a project assisting Ghana in developing petroleum related statistics and get a better overview of the impact of the oil economy. It is our goal that through a long term commitment we can support Ghana in these efforts.



Irene Tuveng,
Head of International
Development
Cooperation

10 years of statistical cooperation with Kyrgyzstan



The Norwegian business register team in front of a statue in Bishkek. Lars Eliassen (BRC), Bjørn Pedersen (SN), Edvard Pedersen (BRC) and Coen Hendriks (SN).

The National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (NSC) and Statistics Norway (SN) have worked together for 10 years. This was celebrated in Oslo with a lunch during a high level study visit from the NSC (see separate article). SN employees who have been actively involved in the cooperation were invited and many participated. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who is funding the cooperation, was also represented with the current Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Ole Johan Bjørnøy, and country coordinator, Mr. Hans Jensrud.

The first years

In 2005 the first contact between the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (NSC) and Statistics Norway (SN) was established. A first project phase started in 2006 and the main areas of cooperation in the first years were on IT support and competence building on specific subject matter statistics and register based statistics.

Use of administrative registers

The use of administrative registers for production of statistics has become a common thread throughout the cooperation. In 2008, a major project was started together with The Brønnøysund Register Centre (BRC). The aim was to assess and possibly, restructure the business registration system in Kyrgyzstan. Many Kyrgyz agencies were involved and a plan was developed. Two main changes were proposed: the registration of a business would be centralized with one organization and companies would have one single identifier instead of one number for each organization they needed to report to. Unfortunately, the project was stopped just before actual implementation. Instead, a generic statistical business register is now under development which will give the NSC a better base for business statistics.

Another major register project was the establishment of electronic household books. The household books contain detailed information on the rural population of Kyrgyzstan, including household structure, education and employment of the population and agricultural information. Local administrations are responsible for data collection. As there is limited information on the rural population from other sources, the NSC asked SN to support the development of an electronic version of the books so that the NSC easier could get access to the data. As there are over 500 local administrations and the need for computers and training were substantial, it took many years and much effort to complete the transfer. Although Norwegian support to

Workshop in progress in Bishkek.



the project ended in 2014, NSC has continued the work to improve the quality of records and has now partially started using the data for statistical production.

Modernization of processes

In the current phase of cooperation, focus has been on modernization of the statistical production. A system for electronic reporting from companies has been developed and new systems for data reception and processing are in planning. Along with the renewal of IT tools, the NSC and SN have worked together to document and assess current processes. The NSC is now one of the most advanced countries in the region when it comes to use of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM). Another aspect of this work is the coordination of metadata from different subject matter units and inclusion of a unified set of metadata. Much of the work provides direct or indirect input to improved quality of statistics.

SN has also supported activities related to human resource development. Workshops have been provided for management and employees. To make both organizational and professional information more available to all employees, an intranet is now under development. Both partners see it as important to work on HR in parallel with the ongoing modernization work.

Important gains of long term cooperation

One of SNs strategic goals is to work over a longer period of time with partner statistical institutions. The statistical cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Norway has been a good example of why such long term commitments are important and which results can be achieved. Many of the concrete goals set in the projects have been achieved, but we also see that the more overarching goals of increased status and transparency of statistics have moved in a positive direction.

Even though statistical independence has not been an explicit part of the cooperation, the NSC took an active role in securing increased professional independence when asking to be placed directly under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic instead of under one of the Ministries.

The NSC has also worked towards more openness towards other users than the public administration. A key part of this is that they

Head of international relations
Ms. Lola Baimatova,
IT expert Anne Abelsæth
and Head of HR
Mr. Elmira Alymkulova
enjoying picnic on a
NSC-SN bike trip.



Festivities in a yurt in Kyrgyzstan. Top management of NSC and the long term adviser Vibeke O Nielsen

now hold regular press conferences. This came on with NSC's initiative and SN supported this by funding refurbishment of a room and training staff in how to work with the media.

We also see that the NSC has gained higher status over the years. Some of this is related to the work on the register projects where NSC has shown that they take responsibility and have substantial subject matter knowledge.

Mutual understanding and trust

Many of the areas we have touched upon in the cooperation would have been difficult to carry out without a common understanding and trust. On both sides, many of the same persons have been involved over time. Relations have been built and there is an openness in conversations which allows for better quality of project implementation.

National ownership

SN has provided much input and resources to the cooperation, but results would not have been achieved without the strong ownership we see among key staff at the NSC. The long and intense discussions, continued implementation after end of funding and clear feedback on what is useful and not are great assets and the staff at NSC should have praise for doing all of this!

High level study visit from Kyrgyzstan



Ms. Christine Meyer og Mr. Akylbek Sultanov signing the prolongation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

In December 2016, the newly appointed Chairman of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (NSC) visited Statistics Norway. The aim of the visit was to get a better understanding of our statistical processes and work related to data quality. SN employees from different parts of the organizations were involved from data collection to dissemination. The business process model and the Lean approach were a red thread throughout the presentations. An additional special topic which had been specifically requested was how SN uses administrative sources for statistical production.

A prolongation of the Memorandum of Understanding until end 2017 was also signed by Chairman Mr. Sultanov and Director General of SN, Ms. Christine Meyer.



Delegation from the Kyrgyz Republic: From left Mr. Omurbek Ibraev, Ms. Nargiza Kuneva, Mr. Omorbek Kurmankulov, Mr. Akylbek Sultanov, Ms. Elena Klimova, Ms. Ayfer Storrud and Mr. Beken Kenzhebaev.

Ghana – building blocks to sound macroeconomic management

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), has been working through its Oil for Development programme with the Ghanaian authorities on petroleum resources, safety and environmental issues since 2008. Following the discovery of oil, the Ghana Ministry of Finance requested the cooperation to be extended to petroleum revenue management. Now, six years after the initial request was submitted in November 2010 the revenue management component will be included in the cooperation.

A delegation from the Ministry of Finance and other Ghanaian government institutions came to Norway on a study tour in May 2015. They met with various Norwegian ministries and agencies who presented the Norwegian experience on petroleum revenue management. Statistics Norway is one of the partners.

The rationale for the involvement of Statistics Norway is to improve macroeconomic management. The Ghanaian Ministry of Finance will develop a macroeconomic model together

with experts from Statistics Norway to contribute to this. The initial visit was followed up with a return visit to Accra in early 2016 and a second visit from Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) to Oslo in May/June 2016 where the areas of cooperation were narrowed down. A first technical workshop in Accra was organised this fall focusing solely on Business Statistics.

A macroeconomic model is only as good as the available input data allows it to be. If one pictures the model as a building, economic statistics are its building blocks. Thus, the Ministry of Finance, Ghana Statistical Service



The advantages of a model: Robin Choudhury from SN explaining why. (Photo Ellen Cathrine Kjøsterud)



Ghana Statistical Services visiting Norway in May 2016. Here on trip on the Oslofjord after long days of presentations and discussions. From left: Mr. Anthony Kofi Krakah (head of division for Industry statistics), Mr. Francis Bright Mensah (Head of division for National accounts), Mr. David Maxwell Bessah (Division for public finance), Mr. Edward Asuo Afram (Director for Economic statistic), Mr. Dominic Odoom (Division for National accounts) (Photo Ellen Cathrine Kjøsterud)

and Statistics Norway have agreed to cooperate on improving some of these building blocks to strengthen the overall economic analyses.

The first area of cooperation is on Business Statistics. GSS conducted a Business Census in early 2015, followed by a Business Survey (IBES II) later in the year, finishing the data collection in early 2016. The results from this survey will be a boost to several areas of statistics in Ghana. In addition to update existing information on economic activities, the survey covers new sectors and collecting entirely new information. The requested assistance from Statistics Norway is mostly about being a discussion partner, specifically on how to handle new elements. Other statistics included in the cooperation depends on the output from this survey, so the technical cooperation related to the IBES II was a good place to start.

To further develop the business statistics in GSS there are plans to develop a regular economic survey and a statistical business register.

Another area of cooperation on the agenda is to develop a survey on Oil and Gas investment statistics for Ghana. These statistics provide an overview of the development in the petroleum sector. In Norway it is a highly anticipated statistic with many users. It is also an important input to the National accounts.

Ghana and Statistics Norway will draw on experiences from Uganda, where the creation of a survey on investment statistics, developed under the Oil for Development programme, started two years ago.

Designing and building the model will begin in 2017. The first version will take into account already known elements from their “GDP forecasting Model” and the “Fiscal model”.

The Oil for Development programme is a comprehensive approach to sound resource management – dealing from safe extraction to environmental protection and all the way to seeing the revenues benefitting the people. Good data to monitor activities and guide policy decisions in all these fields are crucial for Ghanaian authorities in order to get the most out of their petroleum resources. Just as it is for Norway.

Improving quality on health data

The last few years Statistics Norway has worked on projects aimed at improving the quality of health data. An important source for health data is a country's Health Management Information System (HMIS). This is an essential tool for a country's capacity to

monitor health, and data from HMIS can for instance be used to evaluate and improve the delivery of health-care services and programs.

Many developing countries are struggling with poor data quality in their HMIS. As a result, data is often incomplete, inaccurate and untimely, which is not useful for knowledge-based decision-making on health. Statistics Norway has particularly been involved in improving the quality of HMIS data in Malawi. Even though Malawi is used as a case the experiences from the projects provides valuable lesson and experiences valid beyond Malawi.

In Malawi a large amount of health data is collected from all health facilities in the country. The data collection process is partly on paper before it is entered into the District Health Information System (DHIS) and digitalized. The DHIS can handle everything from data collection, through data processing to publishing. The Department for Informatics at the University of Oslo (Dfi at UiO) has a



Visiting Balaka District Hospital in Malawi to learn about data registering routines (Photo: Geir Hjemaas)

central role in developing DHIS. It is an open source system used in almost 50 countries around the world.

In 2014 Statistics Norway, WHO and DfI at UiO and Ministry of Health in Malawi entered in to a cooperation focusing on improving data quality in the DHIS. Over the last three years the project has covered many areas and activities. First a data quality assessment of the Malawian HMIS data was conducted, highlighting further activities to improve data quality. A first pilot edition of the DHIS quality tool was produced including training in the use of the tool. This capacity building included both how to use the quality tool and the methodology these tools are based on. Guidelines for improving data quality of HMIS data has been published. These guidelines not only work as a guideline for Malawi but gives general advice to countries who want to increase the quality in their HMIS data. This year, WHO launched the first edition of the DHIS quality tool including a test data set. Statistics Norway is responsible for the first edition of the manual for the quality tool, and it is ready for publishing. In addition, a self-assessment of the HMIS in Malawi was performed under guidance from Statistics Norway. Early next year Statistics Norway plan to hold a presentation at a DHIS academy on the use of the quality tool and general approaches to improve data quality.

Improving data is a slow process which needs resources over time. Usually there is no quick fix, but it is important to acknowledge that there are techniques and methods used to improve data that can be more efficient than others. DHIS is a modern IT solution and with the newly developed “quality tool” it provides users with the possibility to analyze data quality. One element, not to be underestimated, is the importance of institutional factors as a presumption to collect high quality data. This includes description of roles and responsibilities in the whole data collection process, and data processing until the end result are published.

Statistics Norway has a long tradition working with data collection, data analysis and improving data quality. Providing guidance and contributing to improve HMIS data is therefore an area which is at the core of the institution’s daily activity. Even though this is challenging work, it is also highly motivating and rewarding.



Workshop in Malawi on improving data quality (Photo: Geir Hjemaas)

Relevant reports published in January/February 2017 by Statistics Norway:

- Improving quality on health data, recommendations and guidelines: Based on the case of the Health Management Information System in Malawi and DHIS2
- Manual for the DHIS2 Quality tool: Understanding the basics of improving data quality
- The Health Management Information System in Malawi: Assessment of data quality and methods for improvement.

Overview missions/study visits

Mission by country and purpose, weeks, July-December 2016

Study visits by country and theme, days, July-December 2016

	Social Statistics	Economic Statistics	IT/Quality/Project Management/Other	Fact Finding	Total
Ghana		4			2
Kenya				1	1
Kirgizstan		1	1		2
Palestine			2		2
South Sudan					7
Sudan	6	2	7		15
Uganda			1		1
Ukraine				2	2
Zambia			2		2
Total					

Country/ project	Economic statistics	Cross cutting issues	Total
Kenya		5	5
Kirgizstan		3	3
Sudan	1		
Ukraine		3	3
Uganda	5		5
Total			

Visit from the Gyeonggi Provincial Government of Korea



A delegation from the Gyeonggi Provincial Government of Korea visited Statistics Norway in October 2016. The delegation wanted to learn more about Norwegian experiences with producing population statistics based on registers,

regional population statistics as well as regional population projections.

The delegation was also presented to the general Norwegian national statistical system.

Kenyan institutions visited Statistics Norway under the Oil for Development programme.

The purpose of the study visit from the Kenyan institutions was to assess possible Norwegian support to develop statistics and macroeconomic models related to the petroleum sector in Kenya, and to inform Kenyan partners on how the system on petroleum related statistics is built up and organised in Norway. The study visit was a follow-up of a Statistics Norway (SN) mission to Kenya in May 2016. The study visit had a broad representation – a total of 10 participants – drawn from the following government institutions: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), National Treasury (NT), Ministry of Devolution and Planning (MoDP), Kenya Institute of Public Policy and Research Analysis (KIP-PRA), Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MoEP) and Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MoENR).

During the visit, the group was introduced to the National Statistical System in Norway, how Statistics Norway cooperates with

different government institutions on production of petroleum related statistics and how these are incorporated into the national accounts and further used in macroeconomic models. The study visit included presentations from several institutions outside of Statistics Norway. These were NORAD, the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, the Petroleum Safety Authority, the Norwegian Environment Agency and the Ministry of Finance.

In parallel to the Norwegian institutions, the Kenyan institutions presented the current system of data management and statistics on the petroleum sector and how these are used in the Kenyan context. There were presentations on the Kenyan National Statistical System, the national accounts in Kenya, status of oil explorations in Kenya, financial and economics of the Extractives Industry Policy, existing structures for oil and gas statistics, energy infrastructure statistics and use of macroeconomic models in Kenya.



From right; Anthony Mugane (MoE), Hannah Wang'ombe (KIPPR), Benson Kiriga (KIPPR), Felix Nyongesa Mutunguti (MOEP), Isaac Ndegwa (KNBS), Jamshed Ali (MoDP), Benjamin Muchiri (KNBS), Jackson Kiprono (MoDP), Adano Wario (National Treasury), James Gatungu (KNBS) and Hans Viggo Sæbø (SN)

Statistics Norway missions to Sudan for technical support on further development of economic- and livelihood statistics

As a part of the institutional cooperation between the Sudan Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and Statistics Norway (SN) a total of 8 missions of experts from SN working in Khartoum were conducted during the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2016. The Norwegian experts worked together with their colleagues in CBS on a range of topics such as continued technical support to develop the system of consumer price indices, introducing tablets/electronic tools for weekly and monthly market price collection including programming of the tools, modelling new statistics for a national poverty-line, assisting on tabulating

and writing up a of final report for the Sudan National Household Budget Survey and finally also conducting a one week management training workshop for young professionals. The latter in cooperation with the CBS training centre in Khartoum.

The 3 year institutional cooperation project, funded by the Norwegian Embassy to Sudan, will come to an end in 2016, and thereafter all activities will be documented and closed. Both institutions hope for a new project onwards from 2017 to continue and expand the cooperation.



Participants in a training course for young managers in CBS. The course was held in November 2016 and covered management training, project management and gave an introduction to how Lean could be implemented in a statistical office.

Workshop on consumer price index for Sudan Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) at Statistics Norway

The purpose of the workshop was to follow up on the cooperation concerning updating of the Sudan consumer price index system, based on new household consumption data available from the National Baseline and Poverty Survey conducted in Sudan 2014/15. The current system for price collection and the monthly calculation of consumer price index (CPI) in Sudan is based on household consumption data from as far back year 2007, and thus urgently needs an update.

A delegation of five subject matter officers and two IT officers from CBS participated in the workshop. Three days of intensive work in August were spent on:

- Matching all item codes and labels to their respective COICOP labels
- Presentation and discussion about the marked-price data currently collected in Sudan and how this would look like on tablet based/electronic questionnaires introduced to CBS through the cooperation project
- Sharing experience on methodology used to calculate the CPI in the two institutions



Photo: From the SN-CBS workshop on CPI development

It was agreed to continue to follow up the huge task of updating the Sudanese system, both in terms of the methodology and IT through continued technical support to Sudan. The aim is to conclude this part of the cooperation within the end of 2016.

Exchange of visits between State Statistical Service of Ukraine (SSSU) and Statistics Norway (SN)

The purpose of the visits was to develop a plan for a three-year institutional cooperation. Statistics Norway visited SSSU in October/November to identify possible areas of cooperation. The areas of cooperation were further discussed and detailed in SSSU visit to SN in December. The discussions were extensive and fruitful, resulting in a good basis to build an institutional cooperation. Mr. Petter Bauck, the Councillor for Development Cooperation at the Norwegian Embassy in Kiev, was present during the two first days of the visit to Statistics Norway.

The overall goal for the planned cooperation is to contribute to improved evidence based planning in Ukraine, better resource allocation and improved welfare across the society. The cooperation will contribute to this goal by ensuring that good quality statistics is available to the users. The project will include cross-cutting issues such as dissemination, user relations and modernization, and elements in several statistical domains such as price statistics, crime statistics and business statistics.

The National Statistical System of Ukraine underwent a global assessment in 2016, and



From left: Vadym Pishcheiko (SSSU), Olena Puzanova (SSSU), Iryna Zhuk (SSSU), Irene Tuveng (SN) and Tetiana Shcherban (SSSU).

several of the recommendations from this evaluation have been taken into account in the project plans. SSSU finalized the second of two consecutive EU-twinning projects a year ago, and some of the elements in the planned project build directly on the work done there.

The visits were financed by EFTA's Statistical Office in Luxembourg, and the results of the discussions will be incorporated into an application to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Study visit from Uganda on Oil Investment Statistics and National accounts

In September a delegation from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) visited Statistics Norway in Oslo. This study visit is a part of the three year cooperation between the two institutions under the Oil for Development Programme in Uganda. The focal area was reviewing collected data for the oil and gas investment statistics and further update of the question-

naire. The review of the questionnaire was especially focused on the needs of National Accounts. Oil and Gas investments statistics is an important input to the National accounts, therefore a first plan and strategy for implanting the figures was discussed. The delegation from UBOS went back to Uganda with a new draft questionnaire, ready for updating and finally approval by UBOS management.



The workshop group discussing the questionnaire and National accounts needs. The workshop group from left: Mr Paul Okudi, Mr.Samuel Echoko, Ms. Kari-Anne Lund, Ms. Judith Nanserko and Mr. Nils Amdal (Not in the picture Mr. Peter Opio and Mr. John Aage Haugen)

Countries where Statistics Norway has Institutional Cooperation



Statistics Norway at a glance

Statistics Norway has overall responsibility for official statistics in Norway, and carries out extensive research and analysis activities. New statistics and analyses are published on a daily basis on ssb.no. Statistics Norway reports to the Ministry of Finance but is a professionally autonomous organisation with a mandate to determine what it publishes, as well as when and how the publishing takes place. Statistics Norway produces statistics on:

- The population and its living conditionsResources and the environment
- The economy and national accounts
- Municipal, county authority and central government activities

A total of 930 employees in Oslo and Kongsvinger play a role in ensuring that public debate and the governing of society are based

on the most accurate and up to date information. SN also has around 230 interviewers spread throughout Norway.

Statistics Norway was founded in 1876 with 15 employees.



More information about the
division for Development
Cooperation can be found at:
[www.ssb.no/en/omssb/samarbeid/
internasjonalt-utviklingsamarbeid](http://www.ssb.no/en/omssb/samarbeid/internasjonalt-utviklingsamarbeid)

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The Division for International Development Cooperation
at Statistics Norway wishes everyone Happy Holidays!

