



National Statistical System

Strategic Plan 2008-2012

A Summary

"Statistics at the finger tips of users"

August 2009

Summary

Due to the diversity of statistics needed for development plans and decision making processes, there are a number of ministries and departments that produce official statistics for internal and external use. As such there is need for proper coordination, harmonisation, standardisation of concepts and definitions on data collection, analysis and dissemination among producers to meet data quality demanded by users for evidence based decision making.

The National Statistical Office (NSO) together with these sector ministries and departments, data suppliers and users form the National Statistical System (NSS).

The NSS Strategic Plan (SP) is a detailed guideline of costed activities of all agencies that are involved in collecting, analysing, disseminating official statistics on the one hand and those that use statistics on the other.

Currently, it encompasses SPs from the National Statistical Office and six line ministries namely; Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Benefits of the National Statistical System

- Increased availability of quality data
- Efficient use of resources
- Coordination, harmonisation, standardisation of concepts and definitions on data collection, analysis and dissemination among producers
- Raise the public profile of statistics
- Reduce response burden on data providers

Cost for the NSS 2008 – 2012

In order to provide on demand quality statistics, there is need for heavy investment in statistics to carter for operational costs; capacity building,

coordination in collecting, compiling and disseminating statistics. A number of strategic activities have been planned and costed to ensure proper coordination and harmonisation of activities in the system as follows:

- Promote, coordinate and manage the National Statistical System
- Produce better quality statistics
- Enhance the service provided to users
- Realise staff potential
- Improve the profile of statistics in Malawi

It is anticipated that a total of MK8 billion will be spent over the period 2008 – 2012 to finance the activities of the NSS.

Mission of the NSS

“To provide coordinated, standardized and harmonized official statistics and promote their use”

Strategies for the NSS

The NSS has eight strategies as follows:

- Improve awareness and utilisation of statistics.
- Improve management of the statistical common service.
- Enhance human resource capacity for the production, compilation and use of statistics.
- Improve the coordination and harmonisation of data collection, analysis and dissemination.
- Improve compatibility of supporting technologies.
- Improve storage, accessibility and dissemination of statistics.
- Minimise risks associated with data collection and associated activities.
- Develop NSS work plan financing strategy.

Statistical goals and cross-cutting themes

Across the sectors, there are statistical goals and cross-cutting themes. These include:

- Promote, coordinate and manage the National Statistical System.
- Produce better quality statistics.
- Enhance the service provided to users.
- Realise staff potential.
- Improve financial planning and control.
- Improve organisation and management.
- Improve institutional infrastructure.
- Improve the profile of statistics in Malawi.

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Challenges and constraints to NSS

- Inadequate funding
- Staff shortage
- Old and outdated legal act
- Weak coordination mechanisms
- Invisibility of statistical units due to placement under planning departments
- Inadequate capacity to collect, compile, analyse, store, disseminate and use statistics
- Frustrated and de-motivated officers
- Limited values of statistics
- Low profile of statistics within sector ministries
- Low investment infrastructure and equipment

Opportunities for the National Statistical System

- » Institutional structure is already in place to facilitate coordination
- » Monitoring and evaluating the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy and other international development initiatives will place statistics high on the development agenda
- » Continued support from the government
- » Existing capacity to collect, compile, analyze, and publish statistical information

Statistical work programme

The following are proposed major surveys and administrative sources over the period 2008-2012 within the NSS

Survey	Period	Implementing Unit(s)
• Population and Housing Census	2008	NSO
• Integrated Household Survey	2010	NSO
• Demographic and Health Survey	2009	NSO
• Labour Force Survey	2008	NSO
• School Census	Annually	Ministry of Education
• Annual Economic Surveys	Annually	NSO
• Welfare Monitoring Survey	Annually	NSO
• Agriculture Production Estimates Survey (APES)	Annually	Ministry of Agriculture
• Health Management Information System (HMIS)	Annually	Ministry of Health
• Education Management Information System (EMIS)	Annually	Ministry of Education
• Market Information Surveys (MIS)	Monthly	Ministry of Agriculture
• Criminal, Homicide, Civil Case, Deceased Estates Records	Monthly	Ministry of Justice

Capacity building programme for NSS

Realization of a vibrant NSS will require investment in capacity needs and fill gaps by focusing on the following;

1. Organisational Development

Functional review to consider the proposed new structure to enhance coordination of the NSO /NSS.

- » Incorporate coordinating unit of the NSS in NSO.
- » Upgrade statistical and management posts in the NSS.

2. Human resources Development

- » Conduct training needs assessment and analysis.
- » Investment in training
- » Enhance on-the job training.
- » Performance based promotions.
- » Improved job satisfaction, enrichment and delegation.

3. Infrastructure Development

- » Improve Information Communication and Technology (ICT)
- » Standardize and harmonise statistics production systems in the NSS.

6. NSS Implementation building blocks

The Success of the NSS is dependent on existing environment and past successes such as:

- » Statistics Act – Relevance and appropriateness of legislation backed by political will.
- » Good practice examples – Quick results from the most recent Population and Housing Census, re-basing and publishing of new series of National Accounts developed using Supply-Use Table, quality and timeliness of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- » Goodwill from the general public.
- » Coordination across NSS and donor group.

7. Costs and resources

The NSS, through the statistical Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) initiative will enhance coordination among producers and providers of statistics

as well as users who create demand for statistics. It is envisaged that the overall cost for the NSS program spanning 2008-2012 will cost as detailed below:

Ministry / Department	Division / Section	Cost (MK'000)		
		GOM	Donors/ Partners	Total
NSO	Agriculture and Environment	30,000	530,000	560,000
	Demography and Social	194,400	3,016,400	3,210,800
	Economic	137,500	681,800	819,300
	Publications and Data Dissemination	49,300	115,100	164,400
	NSS Secretariat	22,500	189,600	212,100
	Administrative Program	556,683	920,280	1,476,963
	Sub total	990,383	5,453,180	6,443,563
Ministry	Agriculture and Food Security			120,810
	Education Science and Technology			372,152
	Health			395,200
	Industry Trade and Private Sector Development			71,130
	Justice			104,200
	Labour			552,000
	Sub total			1,615,492
	Grand Total (NSO/NSS Sectoral Plans)			8,059,055

The SWAp is an approach to supporting statistical development across the NSS through a single, comprehensive programme and budget framework, centred on the Strategic Plans for the NSO and NSS, incorporating both government and donor resources.

This booklet has been prepared by the National Statistical System Secretariat of the National Statistical Office through an advocacy team comprising of Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Information and Civic Education and the National Statistical Office.



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