# Why Statistics Matters?

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| Published Online: 07 May 2020 | Statistics provides appropriate information, necessary for business and individual decision-making process. High quality statistical data provide mirror to all data users. It is the main instrument to measure differences between countries and territories, and also plays crucial role for monitoring and analyzing progress on implementation.<br><br>Conduct surveys and collect administrative data are the main sources for statistical data, produced by the National Statistics Offices. However above-mentioned traditional data sources may not be sufficient to address the increased demand on statistical data, from different users. Therefore, there is a need for looking for new, alternative data sources and develop modern technologies for production of official statistics. |
| Corresponding Author: **Mr. Gogita Todradze** Mob.:+995 595115066 | Also, there is a need to disseminate statistical data in more understandable and visually attractive manner, to avoid wrong interpretation of data, as a result of which, National Statistics Offices may be "the instrument" for political manipulation. |
| **KEYWORDS:** Statistics, GEOSTAT, Todradze, National Statistical System, official statistics. | |

## I. INTRODUCTION

Statistics play an important role for analyzing and characterizing tendencies, existing in different sectors. It is the main instrument for evidence-based decision making.

Detailed, complete, timely and reliable statistics is an important tool for stabilizing economic growth, reducing the poverty, improving health and reach of certain level of education.

Requirements on statistical data are increasing regular basis. Traditional data collection methods, such as surveys and even administrative sources may not be sufficient to address the increased demand on statistical data, from different users. Therefore, this is one of the main reasons, why there is a need to develop and test the use of new data sources and modern technologies for production of official statistics.

Also, there is a need to pay particular attention to the data dissemination process. Disseminated data by producers of official statistics, should be visually attractive and easy understandable.

Also, establishing better relations with data users should be a common goal for the National Statistical Offices, to ensure a better interpretation of statistical data. Efficient communication with data users is an important issue for the future of official statistics.

## II. BODY TEXT

Statistics play an important role in society, as it provides information on social, economic and environmental conditions in country, which can be used to make evidence-based decision. Statistics are relevant for businesses, to make market analysis and compare how they fare in relation to other companies in the same branch. Statistics are also crucial for individuals, as it provides different kind of information, relevant and interesting to citizens about their own life.

High quality statistical data are very important for sustainable development and socio-economic well-being. It plays also crucial role for monitoring and analyzing tendencies, existing in different sectors.

Without access to reliable data, it is not possible to characterize existing situation, to provide clear picture of economy, select an appropriate option and in final stage, to make right decision.

Why do we need reliable data? - to make right decision! Without access to reliable data, we are not able to reduce the poverty, improving health and reach of certain level of education. Moreover, high quality statistics are indeed the basis for any sound policy decision.

All above mentioned clearly highlights the role and importance of statistical data, which plays crucial role for monitoring and analyzing tendencies, existing in our life and society.

Moreover, detailed, complete, timely and reliable statistics are very essential to monitor existing situation at a country level as well as at an international level and is directly linked to many issues of global policy.

Requirements from different users are increasing every day. Unfortunately, we, statisticians are not in a position to satisfy all requirements on statistical data and why? The answer is very simple: because resources are limited.

That's why, first of all there is a need to draft priorities and develop list of indicators, which will be acceptable not only for the government, also for wide range of different users.

Conduct survey is simple solution to collect data, of course, in case when you have enough resources. However, at the same time, we need to think about respondent burden.

That means, we need to pay particular attention to other, alternative sources of statistical data, such as administrative sources. The use of data from administrative sources is obvious alternative to collect data from the respondents. Using this way, we are able to save resources and at the same time decrease respondent burden.

But this is not always solution, as in some cases, quality of administrative data is also challenging.

Internationally recognized practice shows that high quality of statistical data could be derived by combining survey results with administrative data. That's why we need to pay particular attention also to the quality of data and use more and more administrative sources for production of official statistics.

Nowadays, global interest to the numbers is increasing. To the numbers that are measuring our lives and well-being. To the numbers and data, which is the key to measuring progress on implementation.

This numbers comes from various statistical surveys and different administrative sources, which is managed by the National Statistical Offices.

Besides that, users need more and more sufficient statistical data, including detailed metadata, which is on one hand extremely important for users to understand the statistics and on the other hand for producers of statistical data, to make sure users that provided data are relevant and high quality.

Since over the last few years Georgia has achieved significant progress in the development of national statistical systems and implementation of internationally recognized standards. However, despite the greater demand on statistical data, there is still a critical shortfall in the national efforts to develop appropriate and sustainable statistical capacity.

Official statistics are at the core of indicators monitoring the progress of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and demands on national statistical systems, which should be intensified by urgent calls of reforms and capacity development to meet growing demands of UN priorities.

Well-developed national statistical system is the cornerstone for monitoring and evaluation of SDGs. For implementation of agenda 2030 for sustainable development, at first stage there is a need to fill data gaps, based on different administrative sources and statistical surveys, which is necessary for baseline indicators.

National Statistical offices (NSOs) are professionally independent bodies, but in most cases, they are not able to solve existing problems independently. In this regard, there is a need for coordinated capacity building. Cooperation and coordination between statisticians and policymakers need to be strengthened and statistical system need to be developed.

From past experience we have learned that communication between producers and users should take place at different levels, regular basis. There is a need also to continue active cooperation and communication with policymakers and with owners of administrative data sources to ensure establishment of reliable and transparent system.

Statistics provide mirror to the government and society. It is main instrument to measure inequalities between countries and territories, between regions and municipalities. Disaggregated statistical data allows users to measure gender inequalities, social inequalities, race inequalities and so on and so forth.

Based on above mentioned, we already received answer to the question: what is needed to measure inequalities? – The answer is: high quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated statistics by gender and age.

But, where do these numbers come from? Statisticians are not painting this numbers!

We need to remember that, this concrete numbers comes from different statistical surveys and administrative sources, which is managed by the National Statistical Offices. Behind every number, there are hard work of number of hundreds statistician.

Requirements from different users are increasing. From past experience we also learned that, traditional data collection methods, such as surveys, may not be sufficient to address the increased demand. What we need to do? How we can solve these problems?

This is one of the main reasons, why we need to develop and test the use of new data sources and modern technologies as well, such as big data, scanner data, web scrapping etc.

During production process of official statistics many issues are challenging; however, quality of data, methodology and not sufficient recourses are on the top of the list. Also, wrong

interpretation of statistical data is challenging, as a result of which, statistical offices are very often "the instrument" for political manipulation.

Establishing better relations with the users and especially with journalists should be a common goal for statistical offices, not only to ensure a better interpretation of the data produced and disseminated but also to establish solid networks.

Each professional, the statisticians on the one hand and the users on another hand, must stay within their role but must contribute to building a profitable mutual understanding on statistics on key issues such as how they are produced and how they can be used in the public debate or in decision making.

And what are the tools, what is the solution? First of all, we need to produce reliable and disaggregated data and then disseminate it in more understandable and visually attractive manner. Also, there is a need to conduct dialogue with policy makers, define the role and responsibilities of relevant institutions, involved in the system, and improve cooperation and communication at different Levels.

Cooperation is key for improving the relations with data users. Moreover, Efficient communication is an important issue for the future of official statistics.

Fostering a good image and reputation, increase credibility and developing trust in Statistics should be the main part of priorities for NSOs. There is a need to improve education of users of statistical information and explain them, what is statistics and how to dealing with data.

In general, statisticians don't know properly, how to talk about their numbers. Usually they are trained to produce quality statistics but rarely to disseminate them and to communicate on them. On the other side, users, and journalists in particular, are not always at ease with using numbers.

Sometimes it seems that statisticians and journalists do not understand each other and why? I think there are several reasons behind this. First of all, journalism and media are a field of human science that navigates somehow away from the numbers. Also, very few universities and media institutions pay particular attention to the science of statistics.

However, we can always find solution. In this regard, I think on one hand, the journalists need to deepen their understanding of statistics, as they are bridge between producers of official statistics and users of statistical data and at the same time users need to understand in order to improve their business and facilitate their lives. On another hand, statisticians need to better understand the role of the media and try to improve the way for delivering their messages in a more understandable and simple manner and making statistical data more attractive to the users have to be on the agenda of all statistical offices.

## III. CONCLUSION

The value of statistical data for implementation our tasks and monitoring progress is an important issue, which requires from us, not only to promote the use of statistical data, as reporting and monitoring tools for achieving our goals, but also to support capacity building to develop appropriate and transparent statistical infrastructure.

It is up to each and every one of us how we address current challenges, deal with needs and opportunities. It depends on us how we do it individually and as a part of international community. We should not only evoke the past, but also commit all our efforts to the practical ways for development of our joint activities.

Our actions should express our will to cooperate and to take care of our shared methods in the most reasonable, appropriate and sustainable way.

Continuous efforts are needed in order to foster effective implementation of advancing official statistics for the agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. In this regard, continuation of active cooperation with international organizations and with international partners will also beneficial for NSOs.

Considering the above mentioned, I believe that, with close collaboration and active engagement of international community and all stakeholders, we will be able to achieve our goals for collective vision at national, regional and global levels.

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