The external capability of a Statistics Office is much influenced by the status of the head of
the statistical service in relation to colleagues in government hierarchy. There can be no
doubt that the building of a robust statistical service is contingent on assigning top people
to it. In view of the great national importance of many decisions which may be affected by
statistics, it would appear to be in the national interest for the statistical service to have an
equal opportunity to compete with other government departments for an outstanding
individual of proven capability to be its leader and manager. He/She should be in a position
to develop rapport with policy advisers of other government departments and to negotiate
various proposals on statistics with authority and insight... He/She should have the same
status as the top civil servant of a ministry (2003).

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