



**Guide to Drafting a Roadmap for
Designing the National Strategy for the
Development of Statistics (NSDS)**

February 2005

I. INTRODUCTION

The design of a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in general and of a roadmap in particular should be in line with all national and international actions and initiatives to which the country has committed itself. It should take into account the experiences and ongoing work and draw on what already exists, from both an institutional and legal standpoint.

It is essential to recognise from the very beginning that many initiatives are already underway and that very few countries will have to start from scratch. In recent years, many initiatives and efforts to promote good practices in statistics have emerged. They serve as a framework for strategic planning and financing in statistical development.

What is an NSDS?

An NSDS is expected to provide a country with a strategy for strengthening statistical capacity across the entire national statistical system (NSS). The NSDS will provide a vision for where the NSS should be in five to ten years and will set milestones for getting there. It will present a comprehensive and unified framework for continual assessment of evolving user needs and priorities for statistics and for building the capacity needed to meet these priorities in a more coordinated, synergistic and efficient manner. It will also provide a framework for mobilising, harnessing and leveraging resources (both national and international) and a basis for effective and results-oriented strategic management of the NSS.

The NSDS provides a general overview of the NSS and facilitates a process that will:

- Develop an overall organisation that will guide the process throughout the design.
- Define all activities to design the NSDS.
- Ensure the participation of all actors in national statistics and grant a legitimacy to the entire process.

The general principles of the NSDS are:

- It covers the entire national statistical system.
- It embraces a participatory approach, enlisting the contribution of all actors and stakeholders.
- It takes into account what already exists and is adapted to the real situation in the country.
- It is conducted in phases to simplify situations that are generally complex.
- It is endorsed by national authorities after each phase.
- It is conducted by the country and is nationally owned.

What is a Roadmap?

The roadmap is a reference document for all actors involved in the design of an NSDS. It outlines the organisation of the work, the specific activities, and the necessary resources to produce the strategy.

However, it should not be confused with the content of the strategy itself.

“How will the strategy be designed and with what resources?” This is the fundamental question to which the roadmap must respond.

Organising the work means identifying the teams assigned to design the strategy and delineating the roles and responsibilities within these teams. A timetable of activities should also be defined for all teams that will allow for an NSDS to be adopted by national authorities after a certain number of months (12 to 18). The roadmap should also include the human and material resources necessary for both the design and implementation of the strategy. It also serves as an important reference for the preparation of funding requests and the drafting of terms of reference for various interventions and provides valuable information for all stakeholders.

Purpose of this Document

The present document is intended to provide a number of elements that will facilitate the drafting of the roadmap, without presuming to offer a definitive blueprint. The experiences and statistical situations in countries are sufficiently diverse to render impossible the task of establishing a single, universal template for designing an NSDS or a roadmap. However, considering the aspects and global principles of the approach proposed by PARIS21, it seems that a certain number of basic elements are necessary to launch a nationally owned and conducted design process — a process which begets a dynamic favourable to national statistical development through advocacy, a participatory approach, training, national legitimacy, etc.

II. OVERALL ORGANISATION ADOPTED

The organisation of the work depends on the institutional reality within the country. To varying degrees, countries often have a Steering Committee of the Statistical Institute, a National Statistics Council that is more or less active, statistical user committees more or less broad, statistical services more or less coordinated by the NSO, etc.

Sometimes, statistical coordination committees set up by law do not correspond to the reality within the country. This requires that the NSO and new statistical services widen their relationships.

Considering the reality within countries, one can imagine the following organisation of work:

- I. A central technical committee, composed of two to three members, carries out the work. One or two of these members work full-time during the entire design process.
- II. Several committees of experts give advice at key moments and on topics identified by the committee or by the group responsible for guiding the work.
- III. A small committee that includes a representative from the NSO guides the work and gives directives to the central technical committee. This small committee is the offshoot of a larger group composed of all the statistical production services within the country and user representatives.
- IV. The council in which the most democratic, widest consultation of all stakeholders in national statistics takes place is responsible for providing advice. This could be the National Statistics Council or an emerging council widened to include all actors. Consultation contributes to lending a national legitimacy to the strategy.
- V. The Council of Ministers decides and validates. When this is not possible, the minister overseeing national statistics is responsible for validating. However, the principle is to validate at the highest level of government possible.

International organisations should be informed of the process from the very beginning to ensure their participation at every stage of the design.

III. BREAKDOWN OF THE ROLES OF ALL ACTORS, INCLUDING EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Choices and proposals will depend on the national rules and regulations regarding the design and adoption of statistical activity programmes and take into account the pre-existing institutional structure. Ad hoc authorities or structures may need to be created.

National Authorities, Supervisory Body

The supervisory body sponsors this work, reviews reports, and takes decisions as a last resort. In most cases, it is to the Council of Ministers that decisions regarding policy change or allocation of resources must be addressed, and advice on more technical questions must be provided by the appropriate existing or ad hoc

authorities. Advice is communicated to the minister responsible for statistics who presents it to the Council of Ministers with proposed decisions.

Project Management Team

The project management team is the main implementing body that conducts the studies, writes the reports, and develops proposals. The configuration of the design team can change from phase to phase, but it is important to maintain throughout the duration of the exercise a core team that will drive the process forward, write the synthesis reports, organise the consultations, formulate proposals, and present decisions to the authorities.

Since the baseline assessment requires a gathering of information covering many areas and many issues, the permanent team should be assisted by specialised teams that can conduct studies according to the following two axes:

- Current results – governance, data user satisfaction, staff satisfaction
- Current results – data production system and its performance

The permanent team is under the supervision of a co-ordinator whose essential role is that of a facilitator, someone respected by all stakeholders and capable of containing any disagreement. If necessary, he/she must be able to obtain access to the ministers concerned. In order to capitalise on the experience gained in participating in the NSDS design work, it is preferable that the other members of the team be made available, even if on a part-time basis, by their respective institutions. The use of external consultants should be reserved for specialised technical studies. A secretariat providing logistical support should also be made available.

Advisors

Advisors are identified prior to the launching of the exercise and are consulted for technical expertise advice on topics such as legal acts, information technology, and human resources management. If necessary, external technical assistance can also be solicited from development partners—on, for example, short-term missions—to provide advice on carrying out the process as well as supplementary information on official statistics (e.g., general management and organisation, strategic planning, sectoral statistics, local statistics, methods, and concepts).

Beneficiaries and Stakeholders

Experience shows that the strategy must be the result of a broad consensus which can only be reached if there is an extensive and continuous consultation with all the partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders. This consultation takes the form of workshops and a review of draft documents. The existing rules and regulations on statistical activity programming sometimes call for a general consultation to create technical, thematic or cross-sectoral sub-commissions if the need arises. This possibility, which is offered to structure the discussions, should take precedence over all others.

Workshops enable an exchange of viewpoints among all stakeholders, for instance, on draft documents that will be revised to incorporate the observations and recommendations of all participants. These workshops should be held at key moments of the design process, for instance:

- at the beginning of the assessment phase to launch the design activities.
- at the end of the assessment phase to review the draft phase report on the system appraisal, the assessment, the vision, and priority statistics and to formulate advice on foreseeable strategic scenarios.
- at the end of the vision and strategy phase to review the scenarios and formulate advice on the comparative advantages.
- after adoption of the programming report to launch NSDS implementation.

IV. ROADMAP CONTENT

Roadmap Template

1. Statistical and Political Background and Context
2. Overview of the Process, Goals, and Expected Outputs
3. Inclusion of the NSDS in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and General Development Policies
4. Overall Organisation Adopted
5. Breakdown of the Roles of all Actors, including External Partners
6. Activities
7. Budget, Resources Required, and Sources of Contributions
8. Projected Timetable
9. Annexes

1. Statistical and Political Background and Context

This chapter can include:

- Reminder of the dates of the major political events in the country such as elections, PRSP update, budget approval meetings
- Reminder of all official decisions and rationale that have led to the design of an NSDS
- Definition of the scope of the national statistical system (NSS)
- General overview of the current situation in the NSS
- Conclusions from recent studies on statistics
- Agreements on statistical development initiatives (including GDDS participation and technical cooperation agreements) passed with partners
- List of documents relating to the development of the national statistical system

2. Overview of the Process, Goals, and Expected Outputs

Overall Goal and Principles of the Approach

The general goal of the roadmap is to describe how the country will design and adopt an NSDS. This goal may have already been set by prior decisions taken by authorities (statistical follow-up of PRSP and MDG indicators or adoption of GDDS). A summary of the main programmes and international and regional initiatives in which the country is engaged should be included in an annex.

This chapter can reiterate the main principles of the NSDS design approach. The approach:

- covers the whole statistical system but is adapted to the current national situation;
- is inclusive and transparent;
- is integrated into national decision-making processes;
- is conducted with the support of partners from the very beginning; and
- is conducted in stages and foresees for each stage
 - consultation prior to the preparation of studies and reports;
 - review of all progress reports by stakeholders;
 - submission of proposals to authorities for decision; and

- production and distribution of final documents and dissemination of information on all decisions taken.

Expected Outputs

This chapter will outline the expected outputs. These include studies, progress reports, and especially all documents endorsed by the competent authorities such as evaluation reports, strategies, and planning documentation. The form that official endorsement of these documents will take should be clearly defined in the roadmap: advice after review in a workshop or formal committee meeting, advice after review from the Statistical Council, decisions from the Council of Ministers, etc.

All documentation produced and decisions taken during the NSDS design process could be made available through a widely distributed CD-ROM or on a website devoted exclusively to the NSDS process.

3. Inclusion of the NSDS in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and General Development Policies

This chapter will clarify the conclusions from the two previous chapters; that is, how — taking into account the current situation — the country will design an NSDS and integrate it into its national development and poverty reduction policies (e.g., the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper). In particular, this section will show how the NSDS design timetable fits into the country's political and budgetary timetable.

4. Overall Organisation Adopted

This chapter describes the organisation adopted by the country to design its strategy. See section II above.

5. Breakdown of the Roles of all Actors, including External Partners

This chapter outlines the breakdown of roles and responsibilities of the different actors engaged in the strategy design process. See section III above.

6. Activities

Activities should be adapted to the current national context as well as the general approach presented above and detailed in the design guide. In particular, this chapter should outline the activities, the terms and conditions, the drafting of progress reports after each phase, the review of these drafts, their finalisation by the design team, and their formal endorsement by competent authorities. This approach takes into account the country's existing rules and regulations for financial and statistical programming on one side and the status of negotiation with external partners on the other. The role and value added of each actor and its interventions are defined later.

1 – Launching

- *writing and endorsement of the draft roadmap*
- *setting up of the structure for designing the NSDS*
- *mobilisation of external resources*
- ***review and decisions from authorities – end of Launching phase***

2 - Assessment

- *setting up of the mechanisms for evaluation, information sharing, and advocacy to all actors and the international community*
- *establishment of a system appraisal, along two main axes:*
 - *evaluation of current results of the statistical system in relation to data user satisfaction and staff satisfaction and generally in relation to governance.*
 - *current results vis-à-vis the data production system and its performance.*
- *establishment of an assessment synthesis of the current situation (through a SWOT analysis, for example)*
- *information sharing and advocacy activities*
- ***review and decisions from authorities – end of Assessment phase***

3 - Vision and Definition of Strategies

- *definition of the vision for NSS development*
- *establishment of priorities for outputs in the coming years*
- *selection of strategic scenarios, and for each scenario, a study on:*
 - *organisational solution for producing the desired results*
 - *a set of strategies for building the capacity necessary to produce the desired results*
- *comparative study of the advantages and disadvantages of the scenarios chosen*
- *draft report on the strategies*
- *draft proposals to be submitted to authorities*
- ***review and decisions from authorities – end of Vision and Definition of Strategies phase***

4 – Action Plans

- *finalisation of the report on strategies, information sharing, and advocacy*
- *review of emergency measures to be taken*
- *design of monitoring and evaluation mechanism for NSDS implementation*
- *establishment of a projected implementation programme covering the entire period*
- *establishment of the draft activity programme for year 1, taking into account upcoming budgetary discussions*
- *draft programming report*
- *draft proposals to be submitted to authorities*
- ***review and decisions from authorities – end of programming phase***
- ***finalisation of the activity programme for year 1 and of the programming report***
- ***consolidation of all decisions and documentation on the NSDS***
- ***information and advocacy to all actors***

5 – End of NSDS Design

7. Budget, Resources Required, and Sources of Contributions

Resources

The required resources will need to be estimated at this stage along with the actual and potential contributions that will be offered to cover the following activities:

- Secretariat and logistics, organisation of activities and drafting of reports
- Consultations and technical assistance
- Information gathering, technical syntheses
- Review of draft documents
- Workshops
- Statutory meetings
- Printing and distribution of documentation

Projected Budget

A detailed, projected budget will be needed to cover:

- the permanent team's operational expenses
- expenses corresponding to time-specific activities (e.g., workshops, study missions, international consultant missions)

External Contributions

Regarding the sources of funding, the simplest solution is a single source, be it from the national budget or from an external donor. However, involving several donors in the process through their contributions—while more complex to manage—can have advantages. Draft agreements with partners on their support can help manage multiple sources of contributions for both the design and implementation of the NSDS.

If the country has decided to access the World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building, the draft request should be included as an annex to the roadmap. All financial or in-kind contributions—be they national or external—should be presented and associated with the activities they are intended to support.

8. Projected Timetable

The roadmap authors should propose a timetable that takes into account the country's situation and deadlines. The participatory approach requires more time than the drafting of an expert's report does. The endorsement from national authorities — a vital aspect of the design process — can hinder the design team's control over the timetable. The assessment phase will only be effective when indispensable resources are made available. Approval timelines for financing requests should be projected realistically.

9. Annexes

Roadmap annexes should include, wherever possible, the following elements:

1. Prior decisions having led to the roadmap design
2. Timetable of the main national policy processes and meetings (PRSP, budget, MDG)
3. Previous strategies and conclusions from most recent strategy's evaluation
4. Recent studies of the NSS and their strategic conclusions (e.g., opportunity study, peer review)
5. Existing statistical law and list of existing statistical authorities with their main functions
6. Commitments from development partners and collaboration mechanism
7. National budget for statistical operations and investment
8. Statistical improvement programmes in progress or planned, including upcoming surveys and censuses
9. Conditions for the roadmap design and terms for its official approval
10. Outstanding funding requests
11. Bibliography