Speaker 1:   **Iyabode Favour Oyenuga**

THE STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND DATA PROCUREMENT IN NIGERIA

[1]**Iyabode Favour Oyenuga;** [2]**Osuolale Peter Popoola;** [3]**Kelechi Chigozie Acha;**
[4]**Nureni Olawale Adeboye and** [5]**Aliyu Usman**

[1]**Department of Mathematics and Statistics, The Polytechnic, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.**

[2]**Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Adeseun Ogundoyin Polytechnic, Eruwa, Oyo State, Nigeria.**

[3]**Department of Statistics, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, Nigeria.**

[4]**Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria.**

[5]**Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Kaduna Poly, Kaduna State, Nigeria.**

ioyenuga2007@polyibadan.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

For many years, the Statistics department was largely unknown and undervalued and many Statistics users viewed the data as unreliable, undependable and of only limited use. With the supports from World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) and Britain's Department for International Development (DFID), National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) came into existence with the merger of Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) and the National Data Bank (NDB) which since inception has conducted many functional surveys and studies on Nigeria's development. The creation of NBS was part of the implementation of the Statistical Master Plan (SMP), a programme document of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN).

The positive transformation of NBS to expand its scope through National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) to cover both Federal and State producers of Statistics. The objective is to make the National Statistical System in Nigeria one of the foremost and modern knowledge-based National Statistical Offices in Africa and the World at large.

NBS is expected to oversees and coordinate Statistical operations of the National Statistics System in the production of Official Statistics in the Federal Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs), State Statistical Agencies (SSAs) and Local Government Councils (LGCs).This is achieved by creating the highly Integrated Nigeria Data Nervous System (NDNS) which would bring all data producers and users agencies together through a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

Keywords: Official Statistics, IDA, DFID, FOS, NDB, NSDS, SMP

1.0 Introduction:

Statistics is an indispensable tool for national development, growth and planning. Government without viable infrastructure for information generation, dissemination and usage are severely handicapped in doing proper planning, monitoring and evaluation of development programme and projects and also in arriving at good decisions with respect to government policy formal.

Reliable, independent and trustworthy information on all aspects of society is therefore needed for policy makers to make evidence-based planning and policy decisions, researchers to analyse, society and citizens to form opinions and hold government accountable for their

actions. The success of development plans is measured by the quantum of data, information and indicators of the society that are available. Statistics lie in the core of the development planning and the absence of such data makes it impossible to ensure future development and welfare of the society.

The importance of Statistics in planning of macro, micro and unit levels cannot be over-emphasized as no meaningful development can take place at any of these levels without accurate and reliable data. Over the years, the demand for statistics continued to increase as, policymakers, administrators, civil society, business, researchers and the general public increasingly need statistics to inform their decisions. The Paris21 and the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics development drew attention to, and proposed a roadmap to overcome one of the greatest development challenges of developing countries, including Nigeria. Therefore, National Statistical Master Plans (NSMP) and Nigeria's National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) were developed to address the Statistics challenges in Nigeria.

2.0 National Statistical System (NSS)

A National Statistical System is a system that has a coherent body of data. The essence of a NSS is to bring together players in the data production industry and ensure continuous co-operation among producers and users of Official Statistics in order to advance standardization, quality, consistency, comparability and avoid unnecessary and costly duplications. Among participants in the system are producers, users, suppliers of Statistics and Research /Training institution. A NSS is a partnership between those responsible for policy formulation and those implementing so that the latter know precisely what the former wish to achieve and thereby facilitate production of relevant information to reinforce planning cycle.

2.1 Vision of NSS

The vision of NSS is to be a proactive, coordinated well-managed and resourceful system, capable of meeting Statistical data and information needs of society through sustainable national development

2.2 Components of NSS

Under the Statistics Act, 2007 of Nigeria, the NSS constituted by the following:

1. **Data Producers**
   In Nigeria, producers of official Statistics include the following
   a. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
   b. State Statistical Agency (SSAs)
   c. National Population Commission (NPC)
   d. Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and
   e. host of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

   The role of data producers is to ensure that there is a continuous flow of high quality and accessible Statistical data and information over an extended range of economic and social subject matter required by the users for a host of purposes.

2. **Data Users**
   It is important that Statistical data and information are user-focused, user-friendly and demand-driven. Data can be used in the following ways:
   a. Policy and Decision makers in government, MDAs and other Public Sector Institutions.
   b. State and Local Government Authorities

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c. Researchers and Academicians
d. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs).
e. Private Sector Organisations (PSOs)
f. Development Partners and International Organisations.
g. The Media
h. The General Public

The role of Data Users is to advancing a common understanding of policy issues and related data requirements, setting data priorities, classifying the objectives for data collection and agreeing on the best methods for collecting data.

3. **Data Suppliers**
These are very important but not adequately acknowledged. They are as follows:
a. Households.
b. Individuals and groups within specified organisation.
c. Establishments and Institutions.

The role of data suppliers is to co-operate with data collecting agencies in providing accurate data and information when requested in the form required and on timely basis.

4. **Research and Training Institution**
Research Institution
To add value to data or engage in definitive and policy-related analysis, researchers, academician and subject-matter specialists are invited to bring their knowledge to bear on the process of data analysis and provision of informed comments on the usability of data products. Some of the Research Institutions in Nigeria are Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER), Centre for Econometrics and Allied Research (CEAR), Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi (FIIRO), Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IART) and so on.

Training Institutions
This uses life data for teaching and illustration purposes. It also play a major role in meeting the training needs of NSS, and in developing and promoting appropriate data collection methodologies and analysis techniques. These institutions contribute significantly to Statistical building and overall development of the NSS. The Training institutions are NBS Schools of Statistics, Departments of Statistics and related subjects in Nigerian Polytechnics and Universities.

3.0 National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
The Statistics Act, 2007 (Act No. 9 of 2007) established for Nigeria a 'National Statistical System' (NSS) with the objectives to raise public awareness about the importance of Statistics; collect, process, analyse and disseminate quality data, promote the use of Statistics; and build capacity for the production and use of data.
The Act has in addition established a National Statistics Office, the 'National Bureau of Statistics' (NBS) which is the merger of the Federal Office Statistics (FOS) and the National Data Bank (NDB). The merger was to give the agency a National outlook as the apex Statistical agency for the tiers of Government.
The NBS plays the role of coordinator of the NSS with the powers to collect, request and be provided with data throughout the country on a wide range of matters.
The NBS serves as an institution responsible for the production of Official Statistics that is required to sharpen the apparatus for economic growth and development. It is to

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adopt a suitable and acceptable methodology, definitions and standards (compendium of Statistical Terms, Definitions, Concepts and Methodologies) across all agents of Statistics in the country at both the State (SSA) and Local Government levels, in an effort to make Statistics usable.

3.1 Organization Structure of National Bureau of Statistics

Nigeria operates Federal System of Government with 36 States and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) with 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs). At the Federal level, each Ministry, Department and Agency has Director of Statistics. Each State has Director of Statistics and Head of Statistics Unit at the Local Government Areas.

The governing board of NBS comprises of 15 members of which 6 are political representatives from each geo-political zone (South West, South East, South South, North West, North Central and North East) of the country appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. The remaining 9 Institutional members are as follows:
1. The Minister of National Planning Commission (NPC).
2. The Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).
3. The Minister of Finance.
4. The Minister of Agriculture.
5. The Minister of Education.
6. The group Managing Director of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).
7. The President Manufacturer Association of Nigeria (MAN).
8. The President of Nigeria Statistical Association (NSA).
9. Statistician General and General Executive of the NSO as the Secretary.

There are eight (8) departments in NBS, namely: Corporate Planning and Technical Coordination, Demographic and Social Statistics, Macro-Economic Statistics, Real Sector and Household Statistics, Field Services and Methodology, Finance and Accounts, Administration, Information and Communication Technology.

There are also seven (7) units, namely: Legal, Procurement and Budget, Internal Audit, Project Implementation Task Team, Public Affairs and International Relation, SERVICOM and Anti-Corruption and Transparency. There are many divisions namely: Household survey, Social Sector Statistics, Price and Trade e.t.c. and several branches; Agric Statistics, Training and Staff welfare, Networking and Maintenance e.t.c

3.2 The Role of NBS

a. It promotes coordination of Statistics among producers of Official Statistics in the country with a view to advance the quality and quantity for optimum use and to serve as an apparatus for standards, classifications and procedures for producing Official data.
b. It collects, compiles, analyses, interprets, publishes and disseminating Statistical information with respect to the nation and part thereof alone or in collaboration with other agencies both governmental and non-governmental agencies.
c. It develops and maintains a comprehensive national data bank by encouraging relevant units in ministries and agencies to develop their sectoral data banks and lucking them up with National Data Centre (NDC) at the Bureau.
d. It promotes and promotes use of Statistical standards and appropriate methodologies on the system.

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    e. It advises the Federal, States and Local Governments on all matters relating to Statistical development.

    f. It provides a focal point of contact with international agencies on Statistical matters.

    g. It carries out all other functions relating to Statistics as the Federal Government may assign to Bureau.

3.3 Ways to improve Data Procurement in Nigeria

a. Sensitization programmes should be undertaken to create greater awareness about the role and importance of Statistics in the society, enlist the cooperation of the data suppliers in providing needed information and create demand for Statistical products and services.

b. A review of accuracy, reliability, spatial and temporal consistency of existing data should be undertaken focusing on soundness of source data and Statistical techniques and whether statistical sufficiently portray reality.

c. NBS should develop and promote use of statistical standards and appropriate methodologies.

d. All data producing agencies should be strengthened, so that they can better meet user needs.

e. Teaching of Official Statistics in our Tertiary institutions should be promoted.

4.0 Conclusion:

Production of good Statistics is only possible if the users carried out analysis of supplied data and the suppliers of the data cooperate in Statistical Surveys in giving out the information which is vital to quality data for socio-economic growth. Government should also budget for data and integrate data priorities into national development.

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