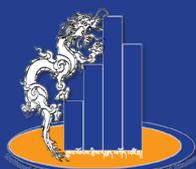




NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS (NSDS 2019-23)

National Statistics Bureau
Royal Government of Bhutan



PARIS
21
Partnership in statistics
for development
in the 21st century



**NATIONAL STRATEGY
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF STATISTICS
NSDS 2019-23**

**National Statistics Bureau
Royal Government of Bhutan**

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADAPT	Advanced Data Planning Tool
AKRA	Agency Key Result Area
APA	Annual Performance Agreement
BSS	Bhutan Statistical System
CSO	Central Statistical Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FYP	Five Year Plan
GDDS	General Data Dissemination System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPMS	Government Performance Management System
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission
KIP	Key Performance Indicator
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LGKRA	Local Government Key Result Area
MoAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
MoIC	Ministry of Information and Communication
MoEA	Ministry of Economic Affairs
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children
NEC	National Environment Commission
NKRA	National Key Result Area
NSB	National Statistics Bureau
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
PARIS21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21 st Century
RCSC	Royal Civil Service Commission
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SKRA	Sectoral Key Result Area
TCB	Tourism Council of Bhutan
UN NQAF	United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

FOREWORD



I have always sought evidence before acting on a case. In medical field, we are required to do so as we proceed to treat a patient. But that applies everywhere and more so in governance.

Our decisions have to be based on evidence and credible researches. For planning and prioritizing our developmental activities, we do not see any other way. Therefore, it is a great pleasure to learn about the third edition of National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS).

Prepared by National Statistical Bureau (NSB), in collaboration with other Bhutan Statistical System partners, the document is expected to enhance production of timely, reliable, relevant and accurate official statistics.

Beyond formulation of policies and plans, statistics are critical in monitoring of our progress. This would support Government in critical areas such as prudent economic management, poverty reduction, improved living conditions and ultimately narrowing the gap between rich and poor.

However, while we emphasize the need for reliable data, we must also question the will and awareness among our public servants, particularly the planners, to use them. Our officials must make the best of the data, so that they analyze, and direct the agencies in a bigger context.

How much of existing data are we applying in our daily works? As we choose to seek more, are we even aware of availability of existing statistics?

The national custodian of statistics, NSB, plays a critical lead in coordinating and harmonizing the statistics in our country. But at the same time, we see NSB sensitizing our agencies on availability of data and encouraging its application.

Having said that, there is increasing need for statistics for various purposes and this strategy is an important step that we are taking. I urge all members of the BSS to ensure that the NSDS is successfully implemented. In that, I assure my sincere support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Dr. Lotay Tshering
Prime Minister

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



The current National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) was prepared to streamline and strengthen the Bhutan Statistical System (BSS). The NSDS was formulated by carrying out multi-sectoral consultations specifically in the data needs assessment and SWOT analysis.

The key issues and challenges identified through these assessment exercises point to the need for a statistical legislation in the country; improvement in statistics coordination; addressing data duplication, data gaps, data inconsistencies; and the need to put in place a comprehensive IT system for data collection, management, storage and dissemination across the BSS. These were the major considerations addressed in the current NSDS.

This Strategy will serve as a framework for the development of statistics at various levels. The document outlines strategic and specific outcomes, outputs and

strategies. It also includes implementation plan with indicative budget, considering the capacity building needs and human resource requirements in the BSS, as well as the needs of the data users.

The preparation of this document has been a collective effort involving extensive consultations with various data producers and users. We would like to thank and acknowledge the technical and financial support provided by PARIS21. Further, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the BSS stakeholders for their support in the formulation of this document and their commitment in its implementation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Chhime Tshering'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chhime Tshering
Director

National Statistics Bureau

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bhutan recognizes the importance of statistics for development planning and monitoring with the start of five-year development plans in early 1960s. With rapid socio-economic development, the need for Official Statistics became more important. A wide range of timely, reliable, relevant and accurate statistics is required to help in formulating good policies, managing resources and monitoring and evaluating the impact of the policies and investments.

The Bhutan Statistical System (BSS) consists of National Statistics Bureau (NSB), statistical divisions/units in line Ministries/Agencies, and statistical units in the Dzongkhags. The BSS is a decentralized system with the NSB collecting data on cross sectoral issues of national importance while other BSS partners collect sector specific data and conduct thematic research for planning and monitoring purposes.

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) is a framework used to develop and strengthen the BSS. NSB has initiated preparing the NSDS since 2008. It sets the medium and long-term statistical priorities of the BSS to meet the increasing demand for information of the government and other data users. Although the BSS has made considerable improvement over the years, some of the data issues and challenges still persist. In the absence of a legal framework for the statistical activities and due to lack of resources, the BSS is not able to meet the emerging data needs.

For the current NSDS, a multi-agency task force was formed and several rounds of consultations were convened in the formulation of the Strategy. A multi-dimensional assessment of the institutional, human resources and capacity of the statistical system that analyzes the data users, their needs, quality of data and other statistical outputs was carried out. In addition, to draw up an effective NSDS implementation plan, a comprehensive data assessment was conducted. The assessment found that there is data inadequacy, unreliability and inconsistencies in the existing data supply in the BSS. Further, the NSB conducted the SWOT analysis. The findings of the above exercises were the major inputs into the preparation of the current NSDS.

The NSDS is consistent with national programs and strategies of the 12th FYP. It outlines the vision, mission and strategic framework for the successful achievement of the set outcomes.

Vision

To provide quality and timely statistics for evidence based policy and decision making.

Mission

1. The BSS provides Official Statistics on the economic, demographic, social, cultural and environmental situations and trends in line with international standards and best practices.
2. The BSS provides Official Statistics that meet both the national and international requirements.
3. The BSS offers the users an easy access to the Official Statistics through a streamlined and robust dissemination system.

Strategic Framework

The framework includes the strategic and specific outcomes, outputs and strategies. The strategic outcomes and outputs are as follows:

Strategic Outcome 1: *Established authority for statistics*. The identified outputs are Statistics Act and its rules and regulations prepared/ executive order on statistics revised and updated; statistical committees established; and code of ethics for statisticians established.

Strategic Outcome 2: *A Better-Informed Society*. The identified outputs are statistical publications improved and updated; dissemination policy and standards for data, micro-data, and metadata defined and standardized; coordinated data portal established; data literacy and user capacity development program developed; data user satisfaction report published and ICT applications for data dissemination and communication developed.

Strategic Outcome 3: *Improved Data Quality*. The identified outputs are data assessment report developed; survey program integrated and rationalized; National Quality Assurance Framework adopted

and standards developed and ICT applications for improved data production implemented.

Strategic Outcome 4: *Strong Statistical Institutions*. The identified outputs are statistical human resource management and development strategy implemented; coordinated system of statistics enhanced and NSDS for 2023-28 developed.

Implementation Arrangements

The implementation plan considers the legal and policy framework for Official Statistics and management of the BSS. It also considers strengthening capacity of the BSS and its statistical production and dissemination.

The NSB will be taking the lead in the overall implementation of the action plans. However, all other BSS partners will be responsible in parallel for the successful implementation of activities in the areas for which they have responsibilities. The implementation plans and activities will be incorporated in the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) of the respective BSS partners. The monitoring and evaluation will be carried out as per established protocols of the Government Performance Management System (GPMS).

The total budget for implementing the strategy is Nu. 137.900 Million. This amount excludes the regular planned surveys/censuses of the BSS. The total estimated budget for planned surveys/censuses over the five-year period is Nu. 748.200 Million.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Importance of Statistics in Bhutan

Bhutan recognizes the importance of statistics for development planning and monitoring with the start of five year development plans in early 1960s. With rapid socio-economic development, the need for Official Statistics became more important. The data produced by the Bhutan Statistical System (BSS) thus far has been the main source of input and evidence for planning and decision making.

The effectiveness of development planning and policy depend not only on the availability of data but also the quality of basic data collected. Good data is essential for proper monitoring and evaluation of socio-economic policies and development programs of the government to manage effective delivery of basic services. It also enhances transparency and accountability of policy making, both of which are essential for good governance. A wide range of reliable data is required to help in formulating good policies, managing resources and monitoring and evaluating the impact of the policies and investments, besides meeting international data sharing obligations.

1.2. Rationale for National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) is a framework used to develop and strengthen the statistical system. It sets the medium and long-term statistical priorities to meet the increasing demand for information of the government and other data users. It also aims to ensure that the statistical system provides quality, comprehensive and coherent statistical data for effective and efficient use of national resources.

Based on international guidelines, the NSB in collaboration with other BSS partners has started developing NSDS since 2008. The first NSDS was prepared in 2008 and the second in December 2014. The past NSDS focused on improving statistical products and services. However, due to lack of statistical legislation and resources in particular, many of the statistical plans and programs envisioned in the past documents remained unimplemented.

1.3. Milestones and outputs of NSDS (2014-18)

The NSDS 2014-18 provided a framework and action plan for building Bhutan's statistical capacity to meet both current and future data needs. The NSDS envisioned the BSS as a well-coordinated system that professionally produced timely, reliable, accurate, consistent Official Statistics for supporting evidence-based planning and decision making to achieve overarching development vision of the GNH. The NSDS laid out five strategic objectives that were aimed to contribute to the achievement of the vision supported by specific objectives and action plans.

Several interventions and milestones relating to the attainment of the strategic objectives are presented and analyzed below:

a. Strategic Objective 1: Develop and implement a legal and policy framework for the development of Official Statistics

The legal and policy framework for Official Statistics in Bhutan has remained inadequate as the statistical bill, initiated since the first NSDS, has not been officially endorsed. Statistical operations continue to be governed primarily by the executive order issued in 2006.

The NSB, on the directives of the then Prime Minister and with support from PARIS21 reviewed the BSS in 2016 with the objective of streamlining and strengthening the statistical system. This was carried out to gauge the functioning of the statistical system without the need for a statistical act. In 2017, data ecosystem mapping was carried out with the support of UN Agencies to assess the statistical system. This was followed by an Organizational Development exercise (OD) by the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC). All these assessments have strongly recommended the need of a statistical legislation among others.

b. Strategic Objective 2: Develop the BSS staff efficiency and career satisfaction

The RCSC has approved the 'parenting of statistical services' by the NSB. The parenting approach has been recommended by the review of the BSS and has since been included in the 2018 Bhutan Civil Service Rules and Regulations (BCSR). The 'statistical parenting' arrangement

has authorized the NSB to develop competency framework, succession planning, career path, HRD planning, staffing standards, service delivery standards and transfer of statistical officers in the Ministries/Agencies/Dzongkhags.

NSB has carried out capacity assessment study as recommended by the OD exercise of 2017. However, concrete initiatives to develop the human resource management and development strategy and guidelines as well as a comprehensive training programme for the BSS was not undertaken due to financial constraints.

c. Strategic Objective 3: Make efficient use of the technical and financial resources across the BSS

Aside from the approval of the parenting arrangement, the efforts undertaken to provide independent budget for the Dzongkhag statistical units and other initiatives to improve efficiency in the use of technical and financial resources in the BSS has not been achieved. The identified strategic actions that were not achieved include the establishment of statistical divisions/units in the Ministries and Agencies; pooling of financial and technical resources and investments; and cost-sharing of technical resources.

d. Strategic Objective 4: Increase the Official Statistics availability to fulfil user needs

The conduct of the Population and Housing Census of Bhutan (PHCB) and Bhutan Living Standards Survey (BLSS) in 2017 has significantly increased availability of new and up-to-date data for many users in the country. The first economic census was conducted in 2018. These surveys and censuses will address long-standing data-gaps and provide many important statistical indicators. In addition, the BSS has conducted several censuses and surveys, some of these include the following:

Census / Survey	Agency
Population and Housing Census of Bhutan 2017	NSB
Bhutan Living Standards Survey 2017	NSB
Economic Census of Bhutan 2018	NSB
Targeted Household Poverty Program Survey	GNHC
Enterprise Survey	MoEA
Gross National Happiness Survey	CBS & GNH Studies
Rural Economy Advancement Program Survey	GNHC
Labour Market Study	MoLHR
Labour Force Survey	MoLHR
Agriculture Survey	MoAF
Livestock Census	MoAF
Visitor Exit Survey	TCB
National Tourism Survey	TCB
Violence Against Children Study	NCWC
Violence Against Women/Girls Study	NCWC

The Ministries, Agencies and Dzongkhags continue to collect, compile and publish administrative data. Its use has been enhanced by inclusion of mandatory statistical indicators in the Annual Performance Agreements (APA) under the Government Performance Monitoring System (GPMS). While efforts were being made to improve the quality of administrative data, there are persistent data quality concerns.

To streamline the data flow within the BSS and to promote harmonization of concepts and classifications, NSB has drafted a data reporting guideline based on a concept proposed in the data ecosystem mapping report.

e. Strategic Objective 5: Offer the users an easier access to the data

NSB has initiated the formulation of a micro data dissemination policy as an offshoot of the Accelerated Data Program (ADP). While the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) has approved the concept note, the draft policy is yet to be submitted. However, the NSB provides Public User File (PUF) to Agencies and individuals after they sign an agreement form for the usage of data.

In 2017, Bhutan has implemented the enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS) to provide policy makers and other stakeholders with easy and simultaneous access to timely, essential macroeconomic data critical for monitoring economic conditions and policies. The National Summary Data Page (NSDP) for the e-GDDS is managed by the NSB beginning 2016 and utilizes the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) making Bhutan among the first countries in the Asia and Pacific region to implement the e-GDDS recommendations.

1.4. Process of National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)

The current NSDS (2019-23) was developed with assistance from PARIS21 to improve coordination and strengthen capacity of the BSS. This NSDS focuses on systemic improvement of the BSS which is fundamental for the sustainability of the BSS. The NSDS is consistent with the overall development vision of Gross National Happiness (GNH) as statistics plays an important role in the formulation of national policies, plans and monitoring of the programs.

An important step in the NSDS process is a multi-dimensional assessment of the institutional, human resources and statistical capacity of the statistical system that analyzes the data users, their needs, quality of data and other statistical outputs. The current NSDS reviewed the past documents and incorporated the needs in response to the growing demands of statistics for planning and decision making in the government.

The multi-sectoral task force comprising of representatives from various stakeholders including data users led by NSB with technical support of PARIS21 convened several rounds of consultations in the formulation of the document. It also incorporated lessons learnt and experiences from the implementation of the earlier NSDS and further made revisions based on the best practices of other countries. It complements the assessment of the BSS conducted in 2016 and the data ecosystem mapping exercise of 2017, which assessed the statistical system as a whole.

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.1. The Bhutan Statistical System (BSS)

The BSS in Bhutan consists of statistical organizations and units that jointly collect, process and disseminate Official Statistics on behalf of the government.

The BSS is a decentralized system with the NSB collecting data on cross sectoral issues of national importance while other BSS partners collect sector specific data for planning and monitoring purposes. As a result of OD exercise carried out in 2017, the NSB was designated as the 'parent agency' for all statistical personnel within the government.

a. National Statistics Bureau

The scope of data collection grew with the beginning of developmental plans in early 1960s. With the rapid development activities, the need of Official Statistics was felt necessary for evidence-based planning and policy making. A statistical cell was established within the Ministry of Development in 1971. It was later expanded and upgraded as a Central Statistical Organization (CSO) in 1979 in the erstwhile Planning Commission. In its efforts to strengthen the statistical system, the government centralized the statistical system in 1990. However, centralized statistical system could not achieve its desired objectives as the financial and human resources were not transferred along with the mandates. Subsequently, the statistical system was decentralized in 1998.

With the major change in the governance structure in 2003, the CSO was granted autonomy and it was re-named as the National Statistics Bureau (NSB). NSB functions as the central authority for the collection and release of any official data, and their custodian as per the government executive order issued in 2006.

The NSB has the following mandates¹:

- Act as the central authority and custodian of the national statistics;
- Streamline and strengthen the statistical system in the country;

¹ NSB Organizational Development Exercise conducted by the Royal Civil Service Commission in 2017.

- Plan, coordinate and conduct national surveys and censuses;
- Publish regular statistical reports;
- Validate, authenticate and disseminate national statistics both nationally and internationally;
- Maintain a Data Repository System;
- Ensure uniformity in the concepts, definitions and classifications to enable comparison of data at the national and international level;
- Provide statistical trainings and professional guidance in collecting, processing, analyzing and reporting statistical data;
- Act as a clearing-house for collection and release of any official data;
- Undertake tasks relating to international statistical cooperation; and
- Serve as the parent agency for the statistical services in various government agencies.

The NSB has been conducting major censuses and surveys such as Population & Housing Census, Economic Census, Living Standard Survey, Labour Force Survey, Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey and other ad-hoc surveys. The following are the key publications of the NSB:

Regular Publications	Frequency
1 Consumer Price Index	Monthly
2 Socio-Economic Indicator	Quarterly
3 Producers' Price Index	Quarterly
National Data Summary Page	Quarterly
4 Dzongkhag Statistics	Annually
5 Statistical Year Book of Bhutan	Annually
6 Environmental Account Statistics	Annually
7 Labour Force Survey Report	Annually
8 Gewog Level Data Base	Annually
9 National Accounts Statistics	Annually
Bhutan at a Glance	Annually
Surveys, Censuses and other reports	
10 Bhutan Living Standard Survey Report	Every five years
11 Bhutan Poverty Analysis Report	Every five years
12 Bhutan Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index	Every five years

13	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics	Every five years
14	Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey Report	Every ten years
15	Population and Housing Census of Bhutan Report - National	Every ten years
16	Population and Housing Census of Bhutan Report - Dzongkhag	Every ten years
17	Population Projection Report-National	Every ten years
18	Population Projection Report-Dzongkhag	Every ten years
19	Economic Census of Bhutan Report	Every ten years
20	Socio-Economic Demographic Indicators	Ad-hoc
21	Knowledge Attitude and Practices Report on Religious Personnel	Ad-hoc
22	Standardization of Measurement Unit Survey Report	Ad-hoc
23	Enterprise Survey Report	Ad-hoc
24	Thematic Reports based on Surveys and Censuses	Ad-hoc

In addition, the NSB provides technical backstopping to Ministries/Agencies for conducting surveys. Any agency that conducts survey is required to obtain clearance from the NSB. NSB reviews the appropriateness of the methodology including sampling and questionnaire design and accordingly the clearance is provided.

b. Statistical Divisions/Units in line Ministries/Agencies

Currently, some Ministries and Agencies have statistical divisions/units to carry out the surveys, compile and maintain administrative data and carry out research and thematic studies. The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the statistical officers placed within the Ministries/Agencies is as follows:

- Plan, coordinate and facilitate statistical activities within the Ministry/Agency;
- Identify and address data gaps and data inconsistencies in the Ministry/Agency;
- Ensure quality of data collected and produced (review the content, quality and timeliness of the regular statistical publications);
- Compile, validate and produce statistical reports;
- Initiate/support preparation or generation of statistical reports;
- Conduct surveys/census (methodology, questionnaire design, data capture, tabulation, analysis and report writing);

- Ensure compliance with the existing survey and census procedures and standards;
- Act as a focal point for data dissemination;
- Conduct data literacy program in the Ministry/Agency;
- Disseminate important national statistical publication/report.
- Assist/support NSB in the conduct of national level surveys/ census; and
- Engage in any other tasks assigned by respective Ministry/ Agency and by NSB.

c. Dzongkhag Statistical Unit

The Dzongkhag has a statistical unit to carry out the statistical activities to support the data needs of their respective Dzongkhags and the NSB. The ToR of the statistical officers placed in the Dzongkhags is as follows:

- Collect and submit monthly and quarterly Consumer Price Index (CPI) data;
- Compile, validate, update and publish Annual Dzongkhag Statistics (ADS) and Dzongkhag at a Glance (DAG);
- Coordinate, validate and update annual gewog level database;
- Identify and address data gaps and data inconsistencies in collaboration with relevant sectors in the Dzongkhags;
- Ensure quality of data collected and produced as per the quality assurance framework and standards;
- Provide technical backstopping and coordinate statistical activities at the Dzongkhag level;
- Involve/support data collection during the conduct of surveys/ censuses;
- Initiate/support preparation or generation of statistical reports in consultation with technical experts/sectors concerned;
- Disseminate statistical information in the Dzongkhags;
- Conduct literacy program at the district/gewog level; and
- Perform any official tasks that may be assigned by the Dzongkhag Administration and NSB.

Besides NSB, Ministries/Agencies statistical divisions/units and Dzongkhag statistical units, there are also other data producers (public/private institutions, NGOs, etc.) who contribute in the production of Official Statistics.

2.2. The economic outlook

The NSDS document was developed with focus on the current and emerging economic and social conditions in the country. A reliable, relevant and timely statistics are critical for evidence based decision making. Therefore, the objectives and strategic framework of the document considers the need of the government, policy makers, researchers and academicians for quality statistics.

Bhutan is a small country and a growing economy. The economy on an average grew by 7.0% in the last two decades. The National Accounts Statistics for 2017 recorded GDP of Nu. 164,627.92 million from Nu.97,452.96 million in 2012. The per capita GDP has grown from US\$ 2,532.77 in 2012 to US\$ 3,438.16 in 2017. The economy remains largely driven by electricity and service sector. The share of electricity and service sectors to the overall GDP in 2017 was 13.2% and 42.0% respectively.

Bhutan continues to maintain strong economic performance and it is projected to grow on an average by almost 5.0% in next five years (12th FYP). However, poverty and youth unemployment remain a serious concern for the country. There are 8.2% of the total population that still live below the national poverty line (Bhutan Poverty Analysis Report 2017). The poverty in rural area is relatively higher with almost 12.0% compared to urban area. The high poverty in rural area may be due to lower level of agricultural productivity, limited access to markets and poor road infrastructure. Although Bhutan is experiencing positive economic growth, the country is facing rising inflation and unemployment. In 2018, the inflation recorded was almost 2.7%. The overall unemployment rate was estimated at 3.4% in 2018, mostly concentrated among younger age group of 15-24 years (15.7%).

2.3. Aligning NSDS with 12th Five Year Plan (FYP)

The NSB being the custodian of Official Statistics supports the government through production of statistics in monitoring the 12th FYP (2018-2023) targets. The main objective of the 12th FYP is to achieve a “Just, Harmonious and Sustainable Society through enhanced Decentralization”. The 12th FYP objective is underpinned by principles of leaving no one behind, narrowing the gap between the rich and poor and ensuring equity and justice.

The 12th FYP is guided by the development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). It adopted the ‘nine domain’ approach of the GNH to guide the planning framework for attaining the national development goals including integrated sustainable development goals and other international and regional commitments relevant and valuable to Bhutan. The nine domains include living standards, health, education, ecological diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, cultural diversity and resilience, time use, and psychological wellbeing.

Key deliverables of the plan have been identified as National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) at national level, Agency Key Result Areas (AKRAs) at agency level and Local Government Key Result Areas (LGKRAs) at local government level. To measure progress of these results, each NKRA, AKRA and LGKRA has corresponding Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with baseline and targets for the plan period. The 17 NKRAs are:

- NKRA 1 – Macroeconomic stability ensured;
- NKRA 2 – Economic diversity and productivity enhanced;
- NKRA 3 – Poverty eradicated and inequality reduced;
- NKRA 4 – Culture and traditions preserved and promoted;
- NKRA 5 – Healthy ecosystem services maintained;
- NKRA 6 – Carbon-neutral, climate and disaster resilient development enhanced;
- NKRA 7 – Quality of education and skills improved;
- NKRA 8 – Water, food, and nutrition security ensured;
- NKRA 9 – Infrastructure, communication and public service delivery improved;
- NKRA 10 – Gender equality promoted; women and girls empowered;
- NKRA 11 – Productive and gainful employment created;
- NKRA 12 – Corruption reduced;
- NKRA 13 – Democracy and decentralization strengthened;
- NKRA 14 – Healthy and caring society enhanced;
- NKRA 15 – Livability, safety and sustainability of human settlements improved;
- NKRA 16 – Justice services and institutions strengthened and;
- NKRA 17 – Sustainable water ensured.

The NSDS framework provides enabling environment and strategies to generate essential indicators and statistics for the current FYP.

2.4. Data Assessment

In order to draw up an effective NSDS implementation plan, a comprehensive data assessment in addition to the statistical capacity assessment was deemed imperative. The NSB with support from PARIS21 carried a comprehensive data assessment². The data assessment adopted a 2-stage approach: an initial data assessment using the Advanced Data Planning Tool (ADAPT) and a more comprehensive assessment with reference to the United Nations Generic National Quality Assurance Framework (UN-NQAF). It focused on analysing quality of data based on the concept of 'fitness for use or fitness for purpose' and recognizing the multi-dimensional and sometimes overlapping and often interrelated nature of data quality.

This detailed data assessment covers all the statistics produced by the Ministries and Agencies that comprise the BSS, primarily those statistics and data required in the planning and monitoring of the 12FYP through the National Key Result Areas, Agency Key Result Areas, and Local Government Key Result Areas, and the SDGs. It was aimed to identify more specific issues with the data and inform the priority areas for improvement in the statistical system.

The data assessments were carried out in two key areas of data concern. First the assessment was done on the data demand while the other assessment was on data supply. For data demand, the assessment of KRAs of National/Agency/Local Government was conducted. The results found out that the framework of the draft 12th FYP has more than 749 KPIs that require monitoring and evaluation. Of the total number of KPIs, only 56% have available data for at least one time period. The assessment also found that many of the indicators were not fit-for-purpose and have quality issues. The assessment of users' perception of existing data and unmet data needs revealed that there is a strong trust in statistics and high appreciation of its importance. The findings also indicated that there are respondents who are not satisfied with existing statistical products such as those in social welfare and protection, justice and crime and sub-national/local levels.

² NSB will publish a separate report on data assessment. The lists of publications of the BSS are annexed.

For data supply, the assessment was based on its quality components viz. relevance; accuracy and reliability; timeliness and punctuality; accessibility and clarity; coherence and comparability. The following are the common issues identified during the assessment:

Relevance

- Disaggregation of many indicators/data is not available, especially geographic disaggregation;
- Periodicity of many data is pre-dominantly annual;
- Some data that are available on a monthly/quarterly basis are being released only on an annual basis due to lack of clear policy or weak user orientation;
- Some important indicators/data are not available due to resource constraints and capacity or lack of clear definition and methodology; and
- There is lack of stakeholder consultation across many sectors.

Accuracy and reliability

- No standard concept and definition within the BSS;
- No clear definition of target population in some publications;
- Discrepancy between survey and administrative data;
- Field collection/reporting challenges, e.g. illegal activities;
- Low resolution satellite images (land); and
- Absence of national quality assurance mechanisms.

Timeliness and punctuality

- Data needed more frequently than annual are not available, e.g. quarterly GDP;
- Relatively long time lags in the release of results of censuses and surveys; and
- Delayed submission of data from field or from other Ministries/ Agencies.

Accessibility and clarity

- Lack of metadata for many indicators;
- Lack of proactive dissemination of available data; and
- Lack of access to micro-data.

Coherence and comparability

- Lack of standard guidelines; and
- Multiple sources of data.

These specific data issues which were identified through the assessment exercise were major inputs into the preparation of the current NSDS 2019-23.

2.5. SWOT Analysis

Although BSS has made considerable improvement over the years, some issues and challenges still persist. This is confirmed through In-depth Country Assessment of Renewable Natural Resources Statistics (MoAF and FAO, 2014), Data Ecosystem Mapping (NSB, GNHC, and UNDP, 2017), Review of the BSS (NSB and PARIS21, 2016), Organizational Development exercise (RCSC, 2017), and NSDS Stakeholder Consultations (NSB and PARIS21, 2018). As such, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified.

Strengths:

- The BSS has experienced statistical personnel in organizing and managing national level surveys/censuses.
- There exist a comprehensive sampling frame derived from the recent 2017 PHCB and 2018 Economic Census of Bhutan (ECoB) for the conduct of household and establishment surveys.
- The statistical officers have been placed in the Dzongkhags and key line Ministries/Agencies.
- The BSS has limited but competent and dedicated staff.

Weakness:

- There is no statistical legal framework which is essential for effective coordination of the BSS; development of professionalism and expertise; production of relevant, reliable and timely data; protection of confidentiality of the respondent information; effective use of limited resources; and easy access to available data.
- There is poor coordination within and among relevant Ministries/Agencies for statistical activities leading to a lot of data gaps, data inconsistencies, duplication of efforts, waste of limited resources, and respondent burden, that often lead to conflicting estimates

- and confusions thereof. Unclear statistical responsibilities and poor coordination among data producers.
- There is lack of harmonized concepts, standards and methods to ensure data quality among data producers.
 - While the government has made reasonable investment in the HR Development, there is still shortage of human resources and subject matter specialists in the BSS.
 - The BSS has not been able to provide adequate advocacy on the importance and usefulness of statistics in the country.
 - Although the BSS disseminates statistical products through hard copies and website, there is no single data portal that facilitates easy access to all statistical publications to users. Further, the BSS has not been able to disseminate through social media and other innovative platforms.

Opportunities:

- The Government and the general public recognize the importance of statistics for evidence-based decision making, formulation of policies and plans and monitoring of programs.
- With the implementation of 12th FYP and SDGs, there is increasing demand of high quality and reliable disaggregated data for monitoring and evaluation of plans and programs at the national and local levels.
- There is a scope to strengthen, harmonize and enhance the use of administrative and other data sources for official statistics. This may reduce the need for conducting resource intensive survey/census and improve the availability and quality of official statistics.
- There are opportunities to improve the reliability and quality of the data by adopting available international quality assurance frameworks and best practices.
- There is goodwill and solidarity from the development partners to support statistical activities through financial and technical support.
- There are opportunities to adopt emerging technologies for data capture and innovative data sources like big data.

Threats:

- The statistical activities do not receive priority as compared to other activities of the government due to resource constraints.
- Most of the surveys and censuses are funded by development partners and are ad-hoc in nature often leading to difficulty in planning of statistical activities.

- There is lack of appreciation of the value of statistics and limited knowledge on the data technicalities, which limits the use of data.
- There is limited support, cooperation and commitment to share data for Official Statistics by the data providers (household or establishment level) due to a lack of statistical awareness.
- There are issues of data duplications, inconsistencies in estimates and confusion among data users due to proliferation of data producers and non-compliance of existing procedure for the conduct of surveys.
- There is high attrition rate of statistical personnel due to limited career advancement prospects within the BSS and better opportunities in and outside the country.

3. NSDS (2019-23) STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The strategic framework presents the proposed basic structure for the medium and long-term plan for the development of statistics in Bhutan. It articulates the shared understanding of the vision and mission of the BSS, and more importantly, the strategic and specific outcomes and key outputs toward the attainment of the vision for the fiscal years 2019-23.

Vision

To provide quality and timely statistics for evidence based policy and decision making.

Mission

1. The BSS provides Official Statistics on the economic, demographic, social, cultural and environmental situations and trends in line with international standards and best practices.
2. The BSS provides Official Statistics that meet both the national and international requirements.
3. The BSS offers the users an easy access to the Official Statistics through a streamlined and robust dissemination system.

Strategic Framework

The strategic framework shall provide for the production and use of key indicators for the measurement of development outcomes and outputs in support of results-based management, including monitoring and evaluation of the national development goals which integrate the sustainable development goals. The framework presents the strategic and specific outcomes toward the attainment of the vision as well as the key contributing outputs. The Strategic framework is supported by statistical development plans based on the recommendation of an in-depth data assessment.

3.1. Strategic Outcome 1: Established authority for statistics

A statistical legislation provides authority for the collection, compilation, production and dissemination of statistics in the country. The lack of statistical legislation is a hurdle to development of Official Statistics. The enactment of Statistics Act will enable the strengthening of coordination between BSS partners.

Specific Outcomes

- i. Statistical functions governed by legislation and executive policies

A Statistics Act for Bhutan will provide concrete and lasting authority for the collection, dissemination, sharing, and use of statistics in the country. If the Statistics Act do not come through, a new executive order shall be formulated building upon existing policies, including the Executive Order of 2006, some key provisions in the proposed legislation, emerging data needs, and priority statistical development areas.

- ii. Statistical issues addressed/resolved

Statistical policies that address data quality problems, statistical infrastructure issues, and capacity development needs shall be developed, coordinated, and monitored.

- iii. Established code of ethics for statisticians

With the statistical parenting in place, a code of ethics for statisticians in the BSS is deemed necessary to promote professional integrity and competence toward increased trust in statistics among stakeholders. The code shall be formulated in the context of Bhutan and consistent with internationally recommended values, principles and ethical standards.

Specific outputs and strategies

i. Statistical Bill and its rules and regulations prepared

Review and improve scope and clarity of relevant provisions of the pending statistical bill (including resource allocation, partnerships, innovation, and local level statistics); and advocate support for the proposed legislation among key stakeholders of statistics.

ii. Executive order on statistics revised and updated

Amend/update existing executive order of 2006 to adopt key provisions in the statistical bill and provide policy and guidelines for priority statistical concerns including standards development, coordination, resource allocation, and capacity development, among others (contingent on non-enactment of Statistical Bill).

iii. Statistical committees established

Organize statistical committees for institutional coordination and task forces to study and provide guidance on specific statistical issues (contingent on non-enactment of Statistical Bill).

iv. Code of ethics for statisticians formulated

Formulate and adopt the code of ethics for statisticians to promote professional integrity and competence among statistical personnel.

3.2. Strategic Outcome 2: A Better-Informed Society

Stakeholders increasingly use statistics in critical areas of governance with increased trust and confidence, contributing to building a culture of using data and knowledge to inform the decisions and actions of society.

Specific Outcomes

- i. Institutionalized use of statistics in results-based management of national development and other productive functions of government

The Royal Government of Bhutan essentially adopts a results-based management approach in development planning and implementation manifested through the 12th FYP and agency work plans and in tracking outcomes and outputs through a system of monitoring and evaluation, including the Government Performance Monitoring System. This approach requires a clear policy supported with guidelines on purposive and proper use of evidence through statistics and data to guide policymakers and planners at all levels of governance. The policy will help establish the guiding principles and institutionalize systems and practices of using data as a standard process in monitoring and evaluation to measure and analyze results of development policies, plans and programs.

- ii. Increased use of Official Statistics by the business community, civil society, academics, and the public

Official Statistics provides unique information about a country — its people, economy, and environment that are essential in the workings of businesses, civil societies, and academic and research institutions, and for basic information of the citizenry. While making available quality data is important, more effective delivery of data that is relevant and catered to the specific needs of business people, civic workers, academics, researchers, and the general public will contribute to increasing the use of statistics among other stakeholders of development.

- iii. Improved data literacy and trust in statistics among key users

In Bhutan, the use of statistics has been constrained by reluctance and uncertainty among some stakeholders which may be rooted in scarcity of information about what relevant data and sources are available, the level of quality of existing data, and how data can be accessed and used. This is further compounded by the lack of coordinated standards and practices in data dissemination and gaps in understanding, knowledge, and skills in metrics and analytics. Interventions that deliver knowledge and skills to key user groups on measurement, statistics, and data

analytics, in particular, and monitoring and evaluation, in general, as well as those that provide quality standards and better guidance in data analysis and application will significantly improve confidence and capacities in using indicators and statistics in management processes toward improved data literacy and user trust in statistics.

- iv. Conducive environment for enhanced data user-producer communication and engagement

An effective statistical program is one that is well-informed of the priority data needs of users and is enabled by parallel capacities in the statistical system. This would entail an environment where both data users and producers are proactive in initiating communication and discussion about data needs and issues. Mechanisms that promote open communication aided with technology as well as advocacy programs designed for community-wide and specific user groups will facilitate improved communication for more informed statistical priorities and better products and services.

Specific outputs and strategies

- i. Statistical publications improved and updated

Develop new and update/improve existing publications and disseminate on a regular and more predictable manner for general and specific purposes.

- ii. Dissemination policy and standards for data, micro-data, and metadata defined and standardized

Define the policy, standards, format, and approaches for the management and dissemination of data, micro-data, and metadata to users (including terms of use, single dissemination gateway, etc.).

- iii. Coordinated data portal established

Establish a coordinated information system and improved data access points to facilitate users, supported by references and guides on available data resources in the country (data, database, and other statistical products and services).

iv. Data literacy and user capacity development program developed

Develop tools to assist stakeholders improve understanding, expand knowledge, and learn skills on basic and advanced data analysis and applications for more effective use of statistics.

v. Data user satisfaction report published

Conduct user satisfaction survey to gather feedback/comments from stakeholders on the statistical products and services to inform strategies and plans for improvement.

vi. ICT applications for data dissemination and communication developed

Develop online social media and applications that facilitate easy access to data by users.

3.3. Strategic Outcome 3: Improved Data Quality

There is an increase in the usage of data by the Government as well as other stakeholders for developmental planning. The BSS must ensure that data collected, compiled and disseminated are within the established quality assurance framework and in line with international standards and practices.

Specific Outcomes

i. Rationalized survey program

Rationalization of censuses and surveys is crucial to ensuring relevance, timeliness, comparability and consistency of data across related activities and optimizing the modest resources available to the system. A coordinated rather than centralized system will clarify roles and responsibilities, identify collaborative partnership areas, and contribute to a strategic scheduling of large scale statistical activities for a more efficient and effective survey program.

ii. Improved administrative data systems

Administrative based data systems (e.g., licensing, regulatory reporting, and monitoring and evaluation, etc.) provide a significant supply of Official Statistics and can potentially fill critical data gaps that are borne of challenges in large scale censuses and surveys. Solutions include: (a) an in-depth assessment of selected, priority administrative data systems such as but not limited to education, health, vital registration, agriculture and forestry, trade and tourism; (b) development of standards and improvement of tools and business processes for data collection, validation, and reporting; and (c) relevant capacity development of sectoral statistical personnel.

iii. Established data quality assurance framework

A quality assurance framework provides a mechanism for the management of the multi-dimensional nature and characteristic of data quality. Some of the typical dimensions of quality are relevance; credibility, reliability, and accuracy; timeliness and punctuality; accessibility, clarity and interpretability; coherence, consistency, and comparability. Some dimensions of quality are overlapping and interrelated and need adequate and effective management. The data quality framework shall consist of policies, standards, and data protocols with specific purposes, processes and process flows, supported by detailed documentation at each level of the statistical business process to ensure the production of high quality statistics from censuses, surveys, and administrative based statistical activities.

iv. Institutionalized coordination mechanisms

Coordination is a critical concern in many statistical systems but especially in a decentralized one like the BSS. Strong institutional and technical coordinative mechanisms such as review of survey design and data systems, inter-agency review of data quality, and statistical framework and indicator development will facilitate resolution of many issues on policies, processes, methodology, and quality toward the production of high quality data across interrelated development sectors and application areas.

Specific outputs and strategies

- i. Data assessment report developed

Undertake a data assessment to analyze data gaps and identify specific data and/or quality dimensions of data for improvement.

- ii. Survey program integrated and rationalized

Coordinate the design, management and implementation of censuses and surveys in the country to avoid data duplication, respondent burden and rationalize the use of resources for statistics.

- iii. National Quality Assurance Framework adopted and standards developed

Review and align the UN National Quality Assurance Framework based on the needs of the BSS. Develop and enforce National Standards and classifications for statistics.

- iv. ICT applications for improved data production implemented

Promote the use of ICT for collection, compilation, processing, validation and production of statistics.

3.4. Strategic Outcome 4: Strong Statistical Institutions

The BSS is strengthened with assured financial resources complimented by adequate and competent manpower in key areas of statistics.

Specific Outcomes

- i. Strengthened statistical management systems and practices

The NSDS preparation and updating process by design facilitates a system-wide strategic planning for statistical systems. Strengthening results-based management will not only ensure effective implementation of the NSDS but more importantly help the Bhutan statistical system undertake effectively its mission and toward the achievement of its medium-term vision. It is important to address immediate human resource management challenges such as the need to strengthen

the current statistical parenting scheme as well as study the long-term concerns of succession planning and increasing human capital for statistics. It is likewise essential to institute measures for the sustainable provision of resources within the government's financing policy and framework to implement statistical development plans and support routine statistical operations.

Monitoring and evaluation of plans and programs, resources, capacities, and technology for statistics, and ultimately, the quality of outputs, shall be institutionalized to periodically track statistics development in the country. Statistical outputs may need to be considered in the monitoring of agency performance agreements to strengthen ownership of statistical responsibilities and commitment to produce and deliver quality statistics among key data producing agencies.

ii. Instituted results-based and sustainable resource allocation for statistics

Resources are a vital factor in sustaining statistical operations and facilitating improvements in the statistical system. The NSDS provides the guiding principle and framework for adopting a results-based approach to allocating resources for statistics as it integrates both policy use and statistical development in a single document. Dedicated resources for statistics shall be allocated based on the costs required to produce statistics and data to measure and monitor the contribution of government institutions in the achievement of national and sectoral development goals, including the SDGs. Consistent with the SDGs, statistics development shall be integrated as a means of implementation of the national development plan.

iii. Optimized use of innovation and technology

Innovation and technology shall be encouraged, managed and optimized to help improve methods and approaches, systems, tools, and processes, and products and services for statistical data production and dissemination. Immediate focus shall be given to information and communication technology applications that facilitate quality data production and speed up dissemination and communication of data to users.

iv. Strengthened competencies in statistical work

Statistical competencies shall be improved in various key areas such as framework and indicator development, sectoral data development, data quality assurance, data application in management, innovation and technology, and results-based management of statistics based on a comprehensive, system-wide statistical capacity development plan.

Specific outputs and strategies

i. Statistical human resource management and development strategy implemented

Design and implement coordinated development programs to strengthen capacities of statistical personnel (including officers under the statistical parenting arrangement) on technical and management areas of statistical work, and improve human resource management for statistics.

ii. Coordinated system of statistics enhanced

Establish a coordinated system for the production and dissemination of statistics at the national and local levels (including Dzongkhags and Thromdes) based on the core framework of priority indicators.

iii. NSDS for 2023 – 2028 developed

Prepare an updated NSDS for the 13th FYP period.

4. NSDS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

To realize and achieve the strategic outcomes, the selected strategies will be implemented in an integrated and holistic manner over the next five years. It fits in the NSB's program of 12th FYP "Enhance the quality and timely statistics".

The implementation plans are organized in matrix and each strategic outcome with specific outputs, activities; indicative cost, timeline and the agency responsible for implementation are identified as follows.

4.1. Implementation plans to achieve Strategic Outcome 1

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY FOR STATISTICS	Statistical Bill and its rules and regulations prepared	Review and improve scope and clarity of relevant provisions of the pending statistical bill (including resource allocation, partnerships, innovation, and local level statistics); and advocate support for the proposed legislation among key stakeholders of statistics	Submit the draft statistical bill of Bhutan to the Cabinet for endorsement (in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General - OAG, if the Cabinet Secretariat approves/instructs)	Develop and submit the legislative proposal to the Cabinet Secretariat	1,500	2020-21	PPS, NSB	ITF, MSTF, SOS, OAG, RAs, & Cabinet Secretariat
				Review and submit the Regulatory Impact Assessment Report to the Cabinet in consultation with the OAG		2020-21		
				Develop the drafting work plan including drafting instructions, policy background, explanatory notes for legislation in consultation with the OAG		2020-21		
					Review and consult the draft bill with relevant stakeholders including translation (TA/OAG)	2020-21		
					Consult, review and develop the delegated legislations including translation into Dzongkha (rules and regulations in consultation with the OAG)	2020-21		
					Conduct advocacy programs of the statistical legislation	2021-23		
	Executive order on statistics revised and updated	Amend/update existing Executive Order of 2006 to adopt key provisions in the statistical bill and provide policy and guidelines for priority statistical concerns including standards development, coordination, resource allocation, and capacity development, among others (contingent on non-enactment of statistical bill).	Revise and update the 2006 Executive Order	Review 2006 Executive Order and submit to the Prime Minister's Office (contingent on non-enactment of statistical bill).	NA	2021-23	PPS, NSB	NSB, Divisions & Cabinet Secretariat

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY FOR STATISTICS	Statistical committees established	Organize statistical committees for institutional coordination and task forces to study and provide guidance on specific statistical issues (contingent on non enactment of statistical bill).	Institute statistical committees	Form statistical committee and Internal Task Force to develop ToR/ SOP of the committee members	0.200	2021-23	CIARD, NSB	NSB/BSS partners
	Code of ethics for statisticians formulated	Formulate and adopt the code of ethics for statisticians to promote professional integrity and competence among statistical personnel	Review and adopt a general framework on code of ethics for statisticians	Organize statistical committee meetings Develop a code of ethics for statisticians Advocate the ethics to BSS stakeholders	0.500	2021-23	CIARD, NSB	NSB/BSS partners
					0.200	2021-22	SDPD, NSB	BSS stake-holders
					0.400	2021-22	SDPD, NSB	BSS stake-holders
Total					2.800			

4.2. Implementation plans to achieve Strategic Outcome 2

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
BETTER INFORMED SOCIETY	Statistical publications improved and updated	Develop new and update/improve existing publications and disseminate on a regular and more predictable manner for general and specific purposes.	Update/Improve existing publications	Rebasing of Consumer Price Index	1.700	2019-20	EESD, NSB	NSB & RAs
				Rebasing of National Accounts	0.500	2019-21	EESD, NSB	NSB & RAs
			Initiate new publications	Review regular publications (SYB, ADS, GLD, DAG, NAS, EAS, PPI, etc)	0.200	2019-23	Respective Divisions	NSB Divisions & RAs
				Publish Export and Import Index	NA	2019-20	EESD, NSB	DRC, MoF & RAs
			Develop General Data Dissemination Guidelines	Publish Construction Material Index	0.500	2020-23	EESD, NSB	MoEA, MoWHS & RAs
				Publish Waste Statistics	4.000	2019-20	EESD, NSB	NEC, WWF & RAs
	Dissemination policy and standards for data, micro-data , and metadata defined and standardized	Define the policy, standards, format, and approaches for the management and dissemination of data, micro-data , and metadata to users (including terms of use, single dissemination gateway, etc.)	Develop General Data Dissemination Guidelines	Draft, consult and finalize General Data Dissemination guidelines/standards (TA support)	1.500	2020-21	CIARD/NSB	NSB Divisions & RAs
				Review the Micro-data Dissemination Policy and submit to the Cabinet	0.500	2021-22	SDPD, NSB	PPS, GNHC & Cabinet Secretariat
	Coordinated data portal established	Establish a coordinated information system and improved data access points to facilitate users, supported by references and guides on available data resources in the country (data, database, and other statistical products and services)	Establish a coordinated data webpage on NSB's website	Assess the existing webpage with DITT, MoIC	0.500	2019-20	ICT, NSB	DITT, MoIC
				Build capacity to manage the webpage				
			Create an improved NSB webpage					

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
BETTER INFORMED SOCIETY	Data literacy and user capacity development program developed	Develop tools to assist stakeholders improve understanding, expand knowledge, and learn skills on basic and advanced data analysis and applications for more effective use of statistics	Conduct training on statistics for priority user groups	Coordinate and conduct the trainings on statistics/statistical analysis/statistical tools/economic data Develop user manuals for data management, analysis and applications Conduct data literacy programs (workshop, media, quiz, etc.)	3,500	2019 - 23	CIARD, NSB	Respective NSB Divisions to design training courses
	Data user satisfaction report published	Conduct user satisfaction survey to gather feedback/comments from stakeholders on the statistical products and services to inform strategies and plans for improvement	Conduct data user satisfaction survey	Plan and design questionnaire including CAPI Collect data from the field Clean data Publish report	5,000	2022-23 2022-23 2022-23	SDPD, NSB	SOs, LGs
	ICT applications for data dissemination and communication developed	Develop online social media and applications that facilitate easy access to data by users	Develop ICT applications for data dissemination and communication	Disseminate statistical information highlights through social media (including capacity development) Maintain NSB social media page Disseminate Official Statistics through both hard (publications) and soft (excel format).	2,500	2019-23	ICT, NSB	DITT, MoIC, SOs, All divisions of NSB
	Total				25,900			

4.3. Implementation plans to achieve Strategic Outcome 3

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
IMPROVED QUALITY OF DATA	Data assessment report developed	Undertake a data assessment to analyze data gaps and identify specific data and/or quality dimensions of data for improvement	Carry out data assessment to analyze data gaps for the 13 th FYP	Institute an Internal Task Force Members, Multi-Sectoral Task Force Members and liaise with development partners for the support	3,000	2022	PPS, NSB	NSB, ITF, MSTF
				Develop Terms of Reference for the Internal Task Force Members (ITF), Multi-Sectoral Task Force Members (MSTF) and the Consultant		2022	PPS, NSB	NSB, ITF, MSTF
				Conduct data gap assessment, validate and finalize in consultation with the ITF and MSTF		2022	PPS, NSB	NSB, ITF, MSTF
	Survey program Integrated and rationalized	Coordinate the design, management and implementation of censuses and surveys in the country to avoid data duplication, respondent burden and rationalize the use of resources for statistics.	Develop an integrated and rationalized survey program (see Annex B – List and status of censuses and surveys in Bhutan)	Develop annual statistical calendar including advance release calendar (coordination workshop/meetings)	NA	2019-23	SDPD, NSB	NSB & RAs
			Review and implement survey clearance/monitor compliance (Review of SOP)		1,000	2019-23	SDPD, NSB	NSB & RAs

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
IMPROVED QUALITY OF DATA	National Quality Assurance Framework adopted and standards developed	Review and align the UN National Quality Assurance Framework based on the needs of the BSS to establish policies, standards, methodologies, processes, protocols and guidelines for quality of data from censuses, surveys and administrative based data. Develop and enforce national standards and classifications for statistics	Review the UN National Quality Assurance Framework (UN-NQAF)	Review the United Nations (UN) National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) and adopt framework based on needs of BSS	1.500	2021-22	SDPD, NSB	SDPD & CAIRD, NSB & DITT, MoIC
		Review the guideline for the conduct of surveys and censuses	Review the guideline for conduct of surveys and censuses and conduct workshops to disseminate the survey standards (the guidelines for conduct of surveys)	Update frame (listing/mapping)		2019-23	SDPD, NSB	NSB & RAs
		Update/new standard classifications for statistical purposes, including geographic code, school type, etc. (e.g. Bhutan Standard Industrial Classification - BSIC etc.)	Develop Bhutan Statistical Codes of Practice (concepts/definitions/ codes) Geographic Codes – (country, Dzongkhag, area, Gewog/Town, Chiwoj/EAs), Demographic Codes - (gender, age, relationship, marital status, disability, language and religion).	Education-(attendance and qualification, training level), Employment – (type and nature, enterprise type), Housing- (type, material of roof, wall, and floor, room, water and sanitation, income source, distance of the households from service facilities, sources of lightning and cooking, land category, ect.)	32.500	2022	SDPD, NSB	NSB
					1.000	2019 -23	SDPD, NSB	NSB & RAs

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Co-laborating Agencies/ Stakeholders	
IMPROVED QUALITY OF DATA				Develop Bhutan Standard Industrial Classification (BSIC)	1,000	2020-21	EESD, NSB	NSB & RAs	
				Develop Bhutan Standard Classification of Occupations (BSCO)	1,000	2019-21	SSD, NSB	NSB & RAs	
			Develop Standard Data Reporting Guideline and procedures consistent with the data quality assurance framework for the collection, validation, and reporting of data at the local level for the compilation of selected indicators such as CPI, ADS, DAG, QHES, GLD, etc.	Review guidelines and implement the QAF for collection of gewog-level database	10,500	2020-21	SSD, NSB	NSB, SOs & RAs	
				Review and initiate the collection of data at the semi-urban areas		2020-21	SSD, NSB	CIARD, NSB & SOs	
					Review the guidelines and initiate the implementation of the QAF in the collection of priority indicators at the Dzongkhag level in support of ADS, DAG, CPI, etc.	3,600	2020-21	CIARD, NSB	DSOs/Dzongkhags/Thromdes
				Develop common/harmonized format and data sharing mechanism	Draft, consult and finalize the common/harmonized format and data sharing mechanism for national accounts, statistical year book, environment accounts, etc.	0,700	2020-21	CIARD, NSB	ITF, MSTF and SOs
			Organize and establish technical committee to review data quality for administrative based data in priority sectors. (Refer Annexure A-List and status of existing administrative based data)	Form technical committee to review data quality for administrative based data in priority sectors.	0,500	2019-23	SDPD, NSB	NSB & the BSS partners.	

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (Nu. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Co-laborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
IMPROVED QUALITY OF DATA	ICT applications for improved data production implemented	Promote the use of ICT for collection, compilation, processing, validation and production of statistics.	Develop ICT applications and tools to improve statistical business processes for data production – collection, compilation, processing, validation, and management	Conduct scoping mission to study the feasibility of setting up of the ICT systems (TA)	40,000	2019-20	ICTS, NSB	NSB & RAS
				Set up server to support survey and census data collection (physical and software info to be included)		2019-21	ICTS, NSB	SDPD & CAIRD, NSB & DITT, MoIC
				Adopt and host online data collection system		2019-22	ICTS, NSB	SDPD & CAIRD, NSB & DITT, MoIC
				Develop capacity to set-up and manage the system (through TA)		2019-21	ICTS, NSB	SDPD & CAIRD, NSB & DITT, MoIC
				Develop capacity for effective data visualization		2019-22	ICTS, NSB	SDPD & CAIRD, NSB & DITT, MoIC
				Assess, define and develop one micro-data archiving and dissemination system		2019-22	ICTS, NSB	SDPD & CAIRD, NSB & DITT, MoIC
				Disseminate micro-data using the system		2019-22	ICTS, NSB	NSB Divisions, & DITT, MoIC
				Total				

4.4. Implementation plans to achieve Strategic Outcome 4

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (N.L. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
STRONG STATISTICAL INSTITUTION	Statistical human resource management and development strategy implemented	Design and implement coordinated development programs to strengthen capacities of statistical personnel (including officers under the statistical parenting arrangement) on technical and management areas of statistical work, and improve human resource management for statistics	Implement the statistical parenting framework	Review, consult and implement the parenting framework (transfer guideline and coordination mechanism).	0.700	2022	HRS, NSB	NSB Divisions, RCSC, RAs
			Develop and implement HR management and development strategy	Develop HR master plan (HR requirement, succession planning; competency framework; education and training needs in statistics, technology, management and communication.	0.700	2020	HRS, NSB	NSB Divisions, RCSC & RAs
	Coordinated System of statistics enhanced	Establish a coordinated system for the production and dissemination of statistics at the national and local levels (including Dzongkhags and Thromdes) based on the core framework of priority indicators.	Organize Coordination workshops	Conduct coordination workshops (Annual Dzongkhag Statistics for harmonization with Gewog Database, Consumer Price Index, National Accounts, Environmental Accounts, Statistical Yearbook, Social Statistics, Annual Statistics Calendar/Advanced Release Calendar, etc.)	10.000	2019-23	CIARD, NSB	NSB Divisions, SOS & RAs

Outcome	Output	Description	Activities	Sub-Activities	Indicative Cost (N.J. in mill.)	Timeline	Lead Division Responsible	Key Collaborating Agencies/ Stakeholders
STRONG STATISTICAL INSTITUTION	NSDS for 2023 – 2028 developed	Prepare an updated NSDS for the 13 th Five Year Plan period	Prepare and update NSDS for the next plan period	Institute an internal task force, multi-sectoral task force and liaise with the development partners for the support	1,500	2022	PPS, NSB	ITF, MSTF, SOs & RAS
				Mid-term and terminal review of NSDS		2022		
				Draft, validate and finalize the NSDS in consultation with the ITF and MSTF		2022		
				Endorse and advocate for implementation of the NSDS		2023		
Total					12,900			

5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

5.1. Implementation mechanism

Upon the endorsement of the NSDS, it will be implemented in an integrated and holistic manner over the next five years. Implementation of the NSDS will involve coordination between different agencies, the BSS and the development partners. While NSB will be taking the lead in the overall implementation of the NSDS action plans, all other BSS partners will be responsible in parallel for the successful implementation of activities in the areas for which they have responsibilities.

5.2. Monitoring and evaluation

The NSB will strictly follow professional guidelines and ethics in line with the UN's Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics to maintain and enhance public trust and confidence in the integrity of Official Statistics. The NSDS and its implementation plans and activities will be reflected in the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) of the respective BSS partners and duly signed with the Government. The monitoring of the activities will be carried out as per established protocols of the Government Performance Management System (GPMS).

5.3. Risks

The adoption of Statistics Act at the earliest possible will be an enabling factor towards development and strengthening of the BSS. However, any delay and deferment would be an obstacle for development and strengthening of Official Statistics and the coordination amongst the BSS partners. The successful implementation of NSDS action plan will depend on the resources (both human and financial) committed by the government and the development partners on a regular basis.

5.4. Indicative budget

The total budget for implementing the strategy is Nu. 137.900 Million. This amount excludes the regular planned surveys/censuses of the BSS as provided in Annexure-B. The total estimated budget for planned surveys/censuses is Nu. 748.200 Million.

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Annexure- A. List of publications based on administrative data

Sl. no	Publications	Responsible Agency	Periodicity
1	Annual Dzongkhag Statistics	NSB	Annual
2	Annual Report	RMA	Annual
3	Annual Bulletin	MoWHS	Annual
4	Education Statistics	MoE	Annual
5	Employment Statistics	MoLHR	Annual
6	Power Data	MoEA	Annual
7	State of Environment Report	NEC	Annual
8	Environmental Account Statistics	NSB	Annual
9	Annual Financial Statement	MoF	Annual
10	Annual Health Bulletin	MoH	Annual
11	Monthly Bulletin	RMA	Monthly
12	Selected Economic Indicators	RMA	Quarterly
13	National Accounts Statistics	NSB	Annual
14	Producer Price Index	NSB	Quarterly
15	Annual Report	TCB	Annual
16	Trade Statistics	DRC	Annual
17	Annual Report	MoIC	Annual
18	Civil Service Statistics	RCSC	Annual

Annexure- B. List of censuses and surveys with indicative budget

Sl. no	Activity	Responsible Agency	Amount (Nu. in Million)	Funding Source	Periodicity	Year last conducted
A. CENSUSES						
1	Population and Housing Census	NSB	254.000	RGoB	10 years	2017
2	RNR Census	MoAF	183.300	RGoB/ FAO/ Development partners	10 years	2008
3	Livestock Census	MoAF	1.100	RGoB	Annual	2017
4	Economic Census	NSB	21.000	World Bank	10 years	2019
B. SURVEYS						
1	Bhutan Living Standard Survey	NSB	31.000	World Bank	5 years	2017
2	Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey	NSB	98.000	UNICEF	10 years	2010
3	National Health Survey	MoH	25.000	WHO, UNFPA, (DHS 2012)	5 Years	2012
4	STEPS Survey	MoH	6.100	WHO (2014)	5 Years	2014
5	Nutrition Survey	MoH	20.000	WHO/UNICEF	5 Years	2012
6	Global Youth Tobacco Survey	MoH			5 Years	
7	EPI Survey	MoH			5 Years	2008
8	KAP Survey	MoH				
9	Annual Household Survey	MoH		RGoB	Annual	2018
10	Gross National Happiness Survey	CBS	22.500	JICA	5 years	2015
11	Job Prospecting Survey	MoLHR	1.500	RGoB	Annual	2017
12	Multi-cohort online TVET tracer Study	MoLHR	0.700	RGoB	3 years	2016
13	Agriculture Survey	MoAF	7.300	RGoB	Annual	2018
14	Labour Force Survey	NSB	5.600	RGoB	Annual	2018
15	Visitor Exit Survey	TCB	1.500	RGoB	Annual	2017
16	National Tourism Survey	TCB	7.500	RGoB	Annual	NA
17	Bhutan Media Impact Study	DoIM, MoIC	2.000	RGoB	5 years	2017
18	Violence Against Children Study	NCWC	14.000	UNICEF	5 years	2016
19	Violence Against Women/Girls Study	NCWC	14.000	UNDP/UNFPA	5 years	2018
20	Market Price Information	OCP, MoEA	0.200	RGoB	Quarterly	2018
21	Consumer Price Index	NSB	0.300	RGoB	Monthly	2018
22	National Integrity Assessment Survey	ACC	7.500	RGoB	3 years	2016
Total			748.200			

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