



Strategy for Official Statistics 2020 - 2025

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Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the Strategy for Official Statistics, 2020 - 2025. The strategy outlines the high-level direction that Statistics Mauritius will take over the next five years as we work together with other producers of official statistics towards meeting our goal for an informed society based on high quality, relevant and easy to use official statistics.

Data lie at the heart of all decision-making. Good use of data leads to better policies and better development progress. Free access to data enables the public to understand the socio-economic and environmental changes taking place in our society, to participate in national debate and consolidate democracy. As society evolves, so does the demand for new statistics.



We now live in a fast changing society. With the advent of digital technologies, the volume of data is growing exponentially. Businesses are changing their business models. Users are becoming more demanding in terms of new and timelier data. We therefore need to be able to adapt quickly and respond promptly to new demands and expectations, the more so since the last pandemic has prompted the urgency to rethink our business operations.

This Strategy reflects our aim to achieve greater use of statistical information in Mauritius. We have identified four strategic objectives along with a set of actions on how we can improve our operations and services. The objectives identified require us to change to remain relevant in the rapidly changing environment in which we operate, to become more influential by increasing the use and impact of official statistics, and be sustainable. They address the changes that we need to bring to our organizational structure and business processes, and capacity to create an innovative and agile organization.

I look forward to seeing the benefits and outcomes that the implementation of this Strategy will bring about in the years ahead.

I would like to thank my staff, staff of selected sectors and members of the Statistics Board for their insightful and wide-ranging inputs in the preparation of this Strategy. Special thanks to Professor Kiregyera (AfDB Consultant) who initiated the process and to Mrs Y. Cassimally (former Deputy Director) who led the design team.

Li Fa CHEUNG KAI SUET (Ms)
Director of Statistics
March 2021

Who we are

OUR MANDATE

Statistics Mauritius (SM) operates under the Statistics Act 2000. It has the mandate to:

- collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics relating to the commercial, industrial, financial, agricultural, social, demographic and economic activities, and general conditions, of the people of Mauritius; and
- coordinate and monitor statistical activities of all producers of official statistics including public sector agencies.

OUR GOAL

An informed society using high quality, relevant, and easy to use official statistics

OUR MISSION

To provide coherent, timely, relevant and reliable statistics, consistent with international principles and standards, for effective policy and decision-making and for monitoring national development processes

OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- Our core values are consistent with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the African Charter on Statistics.
- We are professionally independent.
- We commit to produce statistics in an objective and transparent manner.
- We commit to produce high – quality, relevant, and timely statistics.
- We guarantee the confidentiality of information collected, and comply with statistics and data protection legislations.
- We aim at reducing response burden on our data providers by ensuring that other available data sources are used before surveying them.
- We work towards providing excellent service to our users.
- We value our staff and strive to provide an environment in which staff meet their full potential and flourish at work.

WHAT WE DO

We are the authority and the largest producer of official statistics of the country. Together with the Bank of Mauritius and the Ministry of Health and Wellness, we form the official statistical system.

Our role is to provide timely, relevant and reliable statistics, consistent with international principles and standards, for informed policymaking and for monitoring national development processes.

The Statistics Act provides strong safeguards for the professional independence of official statistics and the protection of confidential and personal data. The Chief Executive Officer (the Director) has the sole responsibility for deciding the procedures and methods to be employed in the provision of any statistics. Under the Act, we are mandated to produce official statistics across a wide range of topics.

Our portfolio includes:

- National Accounts and Productivity
- Prices and Inflation
- Labour Market (labour force, employment, unemployment and wages)
- External Trade
- Environment, Water and Energy
- Tourism
- Population and Demography
- Income and Poverty
- Education
- Gender
- SDGs

Why we need to change

We operate in a fast changing environment. We need to adapt and respond to high expectation of users for more and rapid information in the face of a dynamic and global environment.

- **The rapidly changing socio economic environment**

The rapid changes in the social, economic, and environmental conditions are increasingly challenging the relevance of our statistics. We will have to keep pace with fundamental changes in the economy and society over the next ten years: globalization, climate change, well-being, measures of social, natural and human capital, digital benefits, ageing, etc. We need to be agile to be able to respond to the changes in demand that they bring. We need to maintain high level of quality in preparing our statistics and keep pace with international standards and any emerging quality concerns.

- **The data revolution**

As the quantity and scope of digital information grow together with increasing computing technologies, there is an expectation that meeting users' needs is now easier than before. We must therefore adapt our processes to take advantage of the opportunities that new data sources and technologies present. We need to develop capabilities, supported by appropriate methods and standards. At the same time, we need to provide researchers and policy analysts with access to anonymized micro data from social and business surveys in 'open' formats to support use and re-use, while protecting the confidentiality of personal information.

- **The digital era**

People are nowadays becoming more technically capable, using the Internet for both business and social networking. They expect us to collect and disseminate information via digital media. We therefore need to adapt and optimize on digital technology to engage with our data suppliers and data users. We will make use of social media and other online fora to increase awareness of official statistics and to find out what people think of our products. We need to revamp our website and use innovative ways such as data visualization and GIS tool to make our statistics and analyses more engaging, easier to understand and more accessible. This implies heavy investment in the relevant digital infrastructure and in our people.

- **The emergence of new data producers**

With the emergence of new data producers, SM as the national statistics office and leader of the statistical system, cannot remain complacent. Many organizations, both public and private, are increasingly using and publishing their own data as statistical information, though not at the same quality standards. This creates debates because of the proliferation of statistics that are inconsistent with one another. Our 'unique selling point' is that we enjoy high level of trust and operate according to a professional code of practice, combining technical skills with international methods and standards. Statistics Mauritius, together with other producers of official statistics, need to maintain and reinforce public trust by ensuring high quality, relevance and timeliness of our products.

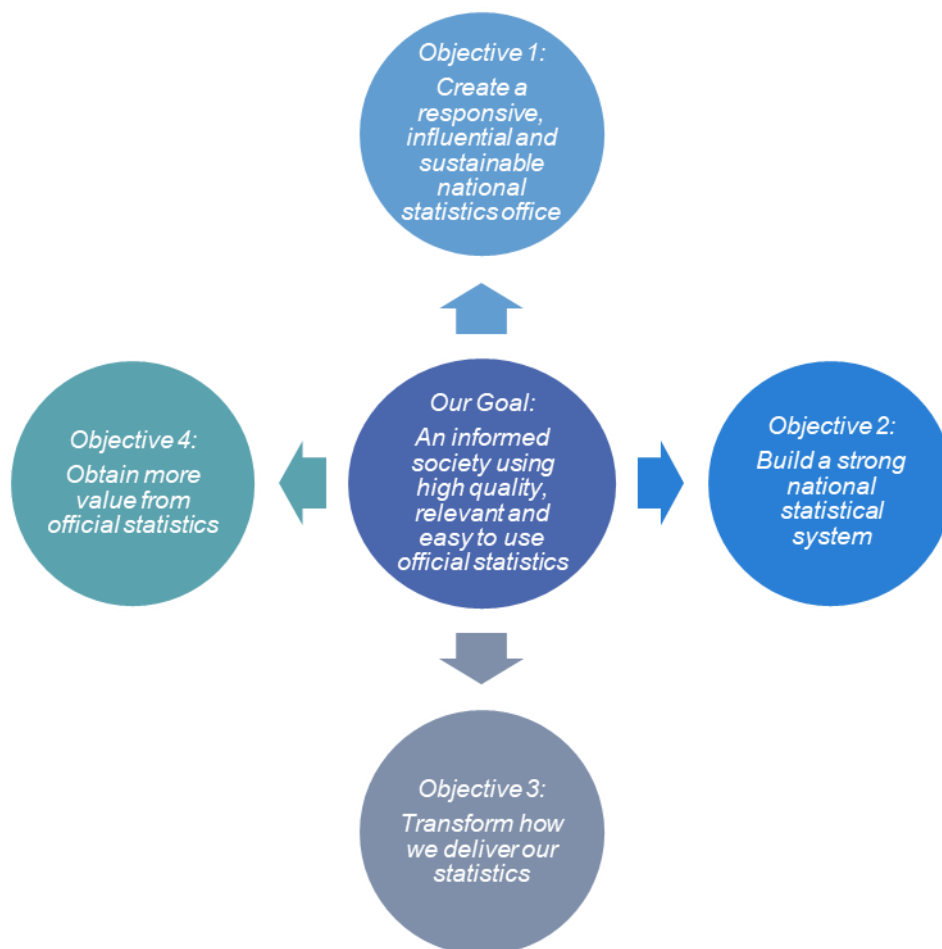
- **Measuring complexity**

As the pace of change in society quickens, the methods and systems used at SM will need to be more complex. New business models, digital economy, innovation, research and development, fintech, and globalization make our measurements more challenging. We will need to build on our relationships with key industries and customers, keep pace with changes and regularly update our plans to ensure that our data, methods, and systems are flexible enough to meet new demands while maintaining continuity and trust. We will conduct regular quality reviews to challenge the underlying measurement concepts and the relevance of our data sources and methods, drawing on best international practices.

Challenges

- Inadequate organizational structure and lack of new skills
- Inadequate digital infrastructure and related rules framework
- Department – centric and reticence to break silos
- Lack of harmonization in key processes (collect, process, analyze and disseminate)

Our goal and strategic objectives



KEY ENABLERS



PEOPLE

Enhance and consolidate capacity of staff to ensure that SM can rely on a professional and versatile workforce to keep pace with changing needs of users



DATA

Acquire data in the most cost-effective way and ensure that they are the right data sources to meet intended uses



PROCESSES

Streamline our processes by implementing a standardized, effective, and efficient business statistical model to deliver high quality statistics



TECHNOLOGY

Invest in infrastructure and build an adaptive data and services platform that enhances the data collection, processing and dissemination activities



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Develop an agile organizational structure to support innovation and modernization



QUALITY

Meet the highest standards for quality, data protection and security, and exploit all available data sources

Our strategic objectives

1

Create a responsive, influential and sustainable national statistical office

Ensure that our statistics are used for policy decision and monitoring

- Build strong relationships with government ministries and departments, and key stakeholders
- Lead technical and statistical support in government initiatives and working groups
- Deliver statistics solutions to maximise the value of data for research, policy planning and evaluation
- Raise public awareness and trust on the use of our data through increased engagement with stakeholders
- Facilitate access to our datasets for statistical and research purposes across government and the research community

Ensure that our products and services are relevant

- Keep abreast of changes in the socio-economic environment to anticipate new data needs
- Set up appropriate mechanism to identify the needs of users, and to proactively and efficiently respond thereto
- Regularly assess and review of our statistical work programme

Achieve an innovative, motivated and professional workforce

- Align the structure and staff profile of SM to support a rationalized and responsive work program, articulating new and emerging skills needed
- Develop and implement a plan to up-skill existing staff and acquire staff with new skills
- Improve talent management and succession planning across all grades
- Improve our senior leadership through a targeted leadership programme

Engage actively with national and international statistical communities

- Increase participation in the work of national and international statistical communities
- Build strong relationships with more advanced national statistics offices

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Build a strong national statistical system

Lead sector statistics development and planning

- Lead and monitor sector statistics development and planning
- Extend the programme of seconding statisticians to other ministries and departments to build an effective and coordinated statistical service across government

Coordinate and support statistical activities across the national statistical system

- Develop the role of SM as coordinator of statistical activities across all producers of official statistics in line with the Statistics Act
- Streamline and rationalize statistical activities across producers of official statistics, and government ministries and departments to reduce overlap

Promote quality standards across the national statistical system

- Ensure that the code of practice for official statistics is being followed by all producers of official statistics
- Develop a quality assurance framework for official statistics and monitor compliance
- Conduct peer review assessment of all official statistics based on a defined work plan

The Statistics Act is fit for purpose

- Review the Statistics Act to cover the whole statistical system, taking on board new and emerging concerns such as sharing of data, acquisition of big data, and data security
- Set up tools to ease implementation (such as appropriate regulations)

3

Transform how we deliver our statistics

Streamline our production processes

- Streamline our production processes by implementing the Generic Statistical Business Process Model
- Set up an adaptive services platform to ease implementation of the Model

Develop and maintain a strong ICT infrastructure

- Develop and implement an e-strategy to modernize our statistical operations and ensure business continuity during crisis, disaster and pandemic situations
- Invest on required infrastructure and hardware
- Identify support services to smooth implementation (such as review regulations and policies, change management, staff capability, data governance)

Unlock and exploit new data sources

- Increasingly use unit level administrative data for statistical production by ensuring that our needs are catered for in all data collection by government
- Participate in international fora on the use of new data (big data) for official statistics and implement the UN recommended methodologies
- Build relationships with owners of big data from the private sector
- Improve the legislative framework for data acquisition

Innovate in the way we engage with our users and data suppliers

- Set up an integrated model for surveys across the official statistical system, where one survey can meet multiple needs
- Set up a digital platform to facilitate interaction with our users and data suppliers
- Improve our data dissemination capabilities, including machine-to-machine access to our data
- Improve accessibility of our products by using visualization tools and social media, among others

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Obtain more value from Official Statistics

Ensure our statistics are relevant and fit-for-purpose

- Improve our understanding of users' needs for informed development of new and improved products and services
- Regularly assess and review our statistical work programme after consultation with users

Ensure our statistics are of high quality and trustworthy

- Regularly review our data sources, methodologies, classifications, and frameworks to reflect the new realities
- Ensure that our statistics and explanatory materials are impartial and objective, and are presented in an open and transparent manner that promote public trust
- Improve our data management and sharing arrangements as well as data security practices consistent with ethics standards and relevant legislations
- Ensure that regular independent quality assessment is conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of our processes

Improve accessibility and usability of our statistics by different customer groups

- Educate users to increase statistical literacy, and raise awareness to encourage them to unlock the value of data
- Ensure that information on our data is clearly written and available to inform users of their strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations, and security requirements
- Revamp our website and use innovative ways such as data visualization to make our statistics more engaging, easier to understand, and more accessible.
- Release high-quality timely data in open formats (such as CSV) to maximize use and reuse of our statistics
- Promote free access to anonymized micro-data to encourage their widespread use

2020 - 2022 priorities

- Develop and implement an e-strategy to enhance and modernize our operations, and to ensure business continuity during crisis, disaster and pandemic situations
- Use new technologies in the conduct of our censuses and surveys (such as CAPI for the decennial Housing and Population Census, CATI for household surveys and on-line business surveys)
- Conduct the decennial Housing and Population Census in 2022
- Rebase our National Accounts estimates and work out the suite of accounts
- Investigate the possibilities of using scanner data in the compilation of Consumer Price Indices

For information on SM products and services visit our website
statsmauritius.govmu.org