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**REPORT
ON STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES**

UGANDA

**SECOND MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION (CODI), SUB COMMITTEE ON STATISTICS**

Addis Ababa 4 – 7 September, 2001

UGANDA COUNTRY REPORT

Introduction

1.0 Economy, Population and Administration

Uganda has a total surface area of 241,038km² and an estimated total population of about 22 million (2000) growing at about 2.9% per annum. Life expectancy was estimated at 48 years in 1991. About 85% of the population live in rural areas. Agriculture is the mainstay of the national economy. It accounts for 43% of GDP and about 90% of export earnings. Agriculture provides 80% of employment and most industries and services in the country are based on this sector.

2.0 Organisation of the National Statistical System

1.2 In 1994, there was a data needs assessment that focused* on the organization of the national statistical system and development of a work programme. At the same time, there was a review of the structure and organization of the national statistical office (the former Statistics Department) as part of the civil service reform. This review undertaken by a team of local consultants took note of the recommendations made in the data needs assessment. It recommended, inter alia, that the Department of Statistics be transformed into a semi-autonomous statistical agency. This recommendation was accepted by Government and was the basis for the creation of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics in 1998. The transition from the Department of Statistics to the Bureau was smooth and led to no interruption of any on going activities.

2.2 Uganda's National Statistical System is enshrined in the Uganda Bureau of Statistics Act, 1998. The Act provides for the development and maintenance of a National Statistical System to ensure collection, analysis and publication of integrated, relevant, reliable and timely statistical information; to establish a Bureau as a coordinating, monitoring and supervisory body for the National Statistical System.

2.3 The national statistical system is decentralized with many institutions involved in data production and utilization. The major data producers, however are Uganda Bureau of Statistics, sectoral Ministries, the Central Bank, Local Authorities, NGOs, and the Private Sector.

In the past these producers were not fully coordinated, but now arrangements have been established to foster coordination amongst these institutions including individuals.

2.4 The Structure of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics

The organizational structure of the Bureau offers ample opportunities to achieve the set goals and activities as outlined in the cooperate plan. The hierarchical structure adequately reflects the professional skills required to perform effectively at each level. There is a clear demarcation of duties and responsibilities. The Executive Director, supported by his team of professionals work together to ensure well coordinated efforts and outputs for the attainment of the Bureau's goals and objectives.

While each directorate is allowed to perform with a certain degree of independency, the management team ensures that there is harmony and improved overall performance.

The Bureau's structure is composed of six (6) Directorates and two (2) independent sections namely;

* There are now new efforts to repeat the data needs assessment with a view of incorporating fresh demands arising out of new policies such as the decentralization programmes.

- Directorates of Finance and Administration; Macro-economic Statistics; Business, Industry, Agriculture and Energy Statistics; Population and Social Statistics; District Statistics, and Information Services. Then the two Sections of Internal Audit, and Coordination, Standards, Research and Methods.

2.5 Important changes over the last 10 years

There have been several important changes and innovations in the National Statistical System of Uganda in the last 10 years. These include among others

- The launching of annual household surveys programme in 1992,
- A data needs assessment undertaken in 1994
- Finalization of the Statistics Act and its enactment by Parliament in June 1998.
- Creation, appointment, and assumption of office of a Board of Directors August 1999. This Board of Directors is the policy making organ of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics.
- Recruitments and filling of all positions in the Uganda Bureau of Statistics November 1999 – June 2000.
- Introduction of new Terms and Conditions of Service for Bureau employees since January 2000.
- Establishment of an IT and Dissemination Strategy embracing the entire national statistical system.

3.0 User-Producer relations

Uganda recognizes the fact that it is essential to have coordination between data producers and users for advancing “common understanding of policy issues and related data requirements, setting data priorities, clarifying the objectives for data collection and agreeing on the best methods for collecting data” (UN Statistical Office, 1991). While data users need to specify their data needs, data producers need to indicate data availability, quality and accessibility. Producers also need to articulate the problems experienced in data production.

In the recent past, efforts have been made to bring the data users in Uganda from the periphery to the center as the Bureau promotes a demand-driven approach to data production. There is now good collaboration between the Bureau of Statistics and main data users including Line Ministries, the Central Bank, Private Sector, NGOs, Research Organisations etc... Plans are underway to establish standing Data User-Producer Committees for different sectors of the economy.

4.0 Statistical Activities

Statistical activities of key data producers are outlined in the business/annual plans of the different organizations and agencies. For the Bureau of Statistics, current activities include those undertaken on a regular basis and national surveys. Regular activities cover areas such as collection and compilation of National Accounts series, compilation of Consumer Price Indices, compilation of IIP, collection of data on various economic and social activities, coordination of data users and producers etc.

Current survey activities include PES for the 2000 UNHS and planning for 2001 National Household survey, conducting of Census of Business Establishments, finalization of an Education Data Survey which was linked to the Demographic and Health Survey that was completed March 2001.

Future plans include the holding of the national population and housing census with an agriculture module.

This is due to be undertaken in August/September 2002. Completion of the ongoing COBE and the undertaking of a National Household Survey for 2001 which will incorporate a labour force module, and an informal sector module in addition to the socio-economic and community modules.

5.0 Uganda National Household Surveys Programme

5.1 The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), formerly the Statistics Department first conducted the National Household Budget Survey (HBS) during 1989/90 and in 1992/93 the Uganda National Integrated Household Survey (HIS). Annual monitoring surveys between 1993 and 1997 were conducted thereafter. More recently, the Bureau conducted the Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS 1999/2000).

These surveys have had, to the extent possible, a nationwide coverage with varying core modules and objectives. The selected sample sizes and the associated sampling method have allowed the surveys to provide national estimates and be disaggregated down to regional estimates.

5.2 Broad objectives of the surveys

While each survey had a different core module, broadly the aims have been:

- To provide estimates on the level and distribution of household expenses at the national and regional levels, separately for rural and urban areas;
- To provide data to improve estimates of household final consumption expenditure component of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), through expenditure approach; and
- To provide indicative data on some socio-economic aspects of the households and activities of household members. The surveys have been very useful in monitoring the poverty trends in Uganda in the last decade.

The output included analytical reports and detailed tables;

- The detailed tables are available for the year 1992/93, 1993/94 and 1994/95 while the analytical reports are available for 1995/96, 1997 and 1999/2000.
- District tables have been produced for the 16 districts that were over- sampled in 1999/2000. However, these tables are not published.

5.3 Challenges

- i) The surveys have been largely funded by donor agencies like UNDP, World Bank etc. UBOS has sometimes had delays in accessing the funds resulting in the mis-timing of seasons. For example, the last crop component of the UNHS suffered greatly from the delayed funding in the fieldwork started late leading to increased recall error and poor estimates of crop output.
- ii) Results of the surveys used to delay to be published due to logistical problems. By the time the data were published they were out dated. This has however changed since the 1999/2000 UNHS, which was published less than 6 months after the end of fieldwork. It is hoped that this timely publication of the survey results will continue.
- iii) Coverage between periods differs from survey to survey mainly due to security problems. Districts like Gulu and Kitgum in the northern region and more recently Bundibugyo and Kasese in the western region have not been covered recently. This makes comparison difficult and a series of adjustments have to be made on the data sets before comparisons may be done.

- iv) Lack of district and lower level estimates in most cases because of the sample size. Yet there is a lot of demand for district level estimates. It is only possible with districts with fairly large population (many households) whereby they tend to have fairly large samples. This is aggravated by the fact that some of these districts were split recently (within a period of two years).
- v) Surveys that have a panel component provide a particular challenge especially in the sampling procedures and in the tracing of the panel households. It is thus proposed that this issue be revisited putting in mind these and other difficulties.
- vi) Questionnaires to be administered in the households are at times very long, or there is more than one set. This results in the respondents' fatigue, which may reduce the accuracy of the responses from the respondent, Splitting the questionnaires for repeated visits greatly increases the costs.
- vii) The accumulated data needs to be well documented and archived for dissemination. UBOS should endeavor to see the achievements of this task. The details of the questionnaire used, the methodology, workplan, analytical reports, administrative reports and all the necessary details of these surveys need to be well documented and archived.

5.4 Prospects

- i) The UNHS data has been important in monitoring poverty trends in the country, and it should continue to do so in the foreseeable future.
- ii) UBOS has accumulated a series of data since 1992 that could be used by researchers to undertake wider and deeper analysis of the data to meet their requirements. In addition UBOS has established a Unit for Coordination, Standards, Research and Methods. This Unit should among other things, do in-depth analysis of the survey data in collaboration with other relevant institutions and prepare and present official documents on various subjects of interest having policy implications.
- iii) UBOS has the prospect to develop a permanent national household survey capability by consolidating the skills and experiences of existing staff and properly documenting these experiences for institutional memory.

6.0 Dissemination Strategy of UBOS

The Information and Dissemination policies of UBOS were approved in 1999. They aim at supporting the overall goals and objectives of UBOS, that is the production of timely, reliable and consistent statistics in a standardized and efficient manner that needs user needs. The Bureau has adopted the "Production Model" which identifies three major steps in the production cycle namely (a) Data collection and data editing (b) Data analysis (report writing) (c) Dissemination.

While in the past dissemination of statistical data and information was via paper publications, currently these hard copies are supplemented by dissemination in electronic form from a macro database. Therefore current dissemination media includes the traditional paper publications, press releases, diskettes and Iomega ZIP disks, CD-ROM and Internet access through the UBOS website www.ubos.org.

7.0 Data Users

At the local level, the main data users are government line ministries and departments and local authorities who use the data for policy formulation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes.

The private sector and NGOs are also important users of data at the local level whose demands have been increasing both in size and complexity.

The international community is a major user of data produced by the Bureau other main producers. International agencies need this data to design, implement and monitor programmes they support and for measuring social and economic development of communities and nations.

Data needs by international agencies are normally according to internationally agreed, definitions, concepts and standards, since that is the only way they can be aggregatable across communities. Most data producers require support to implement the internationally agreed methods and procedures for data collection and processing and to achieve and maintain the data quality standards needed for acceptability of the data sets for international use.

8.0 PRSP Process and Statistical Development

In Uganda, the equivalent of the PRSP is the Poverty Eradication Action Plan or (PEAP) and it is Uganda's Comprehensive Development Framework. PEAP is structured around four overarching goals namely;

- Rapid and sustainable economic growth
- Good governance and security
- Increased ability of the poor to raise their incomes
- Enhanced quality of life of the poor.

The very rigorous planning process involved in the development of the PEAP had as a spin-off investment in statistical development. This was in the form of development of indicators for measuring and monitoring poverty and setting of targets. Having developed the plan; to measure progress towards the achievement of the set goals again calls for the compilation of indicators based on good, reliable and timely statistics which can only be a product of a good national statistical system.

9.0 National Priority Areas and Needs

With poverty eradication as the overarching goal of Government and achievement of sustainable development high on the agenda, the priority for the National Statistical System is to produce timely reliable data and information for poverty monitoring, and planning. Putting in place mechanisms and systems for collection, processing and dissemination of comprehensive information on poverty reduction activities undertaken by individuals, communities and organizations is important and urgent. Meeting the needs for information which have been created by the decentralization policy is also a priority as is the capacity building in data gathering, and use especially at sub-national levels of administration.

In a nutshell, statistics on the four pillars of PEAP form the priority data needs of Uganda. While some of these statistics have been collected regularly in the past, some are new and cannot be collected through the conventional methods.