StatsNews

June 2004

CHANGING METHODOLOGIES IN THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI)

RECORD-KEEPING MANAGEMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM)

REBASING AND BENCHMARKING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL ACCOUNTS STATISTICS

FIGHTING AIDS: A NEW STATS SA RESOLVE

UNDERSTANDING AND ACCESSING *GEOGRAPHIES* THROUGH INTUITIVE SPATIAL PRODUCTS

STATS SA IN THE PAST

Statistics South Africa

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Editor's note

Roll up your sleeves, work has just begun! This is the statement that has echoed around the country, starting with the President at his inauguration, on winning the 2010 World Cup, and in his State of the Nation address. It was repeated by Premiers during their inauguration speeches in the provinces.

Stats SA, like other government departments, must roll up its sleeves and be ready to deliver supportive statistics for the enormous work ahead. This work will include government's priorities such as unemployment and poverty, fighting crime, and so on. Preparations for the 2010 World Cup will necessitate revamped and perhaps new soccer stadiums, improvement on the transport and hospitality infrastructures, and world class cutting edge communication technology just to mention a few requirements. All this means higher demand for accurate and readily accessible statistical information than ever before.

In his message, the Statistician-General outlines the work done during the last six months, capturing what is included in the articles that follow. In line with Stats SA's primary focus on meeting user needs, our current priorities include projects such as CPI, Causes of Death, and the Census Replacement Survey, which is in the planning phase. We wish all those involved in these projects, some of whom have been seconded from their usual tasks, the wisdom, energy and enthusiasm that is needed to carry them through successfully.

I wish to thank the authors of articles in this edition. It is not always easy to deal with organisational cross-cutting issues, such as gathering information for *StatsNews*, as every unit and individual have other pressing duties. I therefore thank those who managed to find time in their busy schedules to contribute.

You heard the call: 'Roll up your sleeves, work has just begun.' It is going to be another decade of hard work. Who said work ever killed anyone?

Editor

Message from the Statistician-General

We have proudly concluded the past ten years of democracy. They had their ups and downs. The two censuses, carried out in 1996 and 2001, remain flagship products that contributed significantly to our performance measurement and to the Toward the Ten-Year Review. The task ahead is, however, immense and was captured by the State of the Nation Address on 21 May 2004. The monitoring and evaluation tasks including improvement in the statistics system will be our major tasks and we have to play our role. This is the challenge posed to the organisation.

In this edition of *StatsNews*, our six monthly flagship newsletter, we reflect on progress made over the past six months and also capture the implications of these achievements for users of statistics.

One of the biggest changes the organisation is yet to witness is the change in methods of collection of the consumer price index (CPI). These impending changes are for the better and have been communicated in one of the SG's weekly column in the *Business Report*. This is part of the continuous improvement commitment that Stats SApledges to its users.

Another major thrust that the organisation has unleashed is the implementation of integrated planning. About a year ago we introduced this integrated planning on a pilot basis and built up systems that would enable its implementation. Going side by side with that was project management training, and assembling a logical management information system and information flow. This has changed forever the way in which Stats SAapproaches its work. Whilst the planning work has been tedious, the participants have begun to reap the benefits and have confirmed that this was indeed beneficial. Upon presenting and discussing how we went about our work in different forums, the Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration in particular suggested that we share this approach broadly so that there could be more input as well as possible adoption by other departments.

Another area that has got a major boost is that of audit in the organisation. Having had bad audits in succession, largely attributed to the management of a census, management has taken keen interest in the role of audit. Amongst other things, over the past six months we mapped the risk profile of the organisation and assigned risk owners to lead in mitigating risks.

As we exist for users, an alignment of the organisation to user requirements remains one of our primary objectives. In this regard we can mention that in the last six months we embarked on the Reported Causes of Death, a project that involves the classification of reported causes of death from 1997 to 2003. This project involves several departments who are on the Steering Committee chaired by the Statistician-General. The Committee comprises DDGs from Stats SA, and representatives from the Presidency and the Departments of Health, Communications and Home Affairs. The result of this should be out by September. The Natural Resource Accounting is another area that is receiving attention and is part of our response to the resolutions of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development South Africa hosted in 2002. In the period under review, we can report that the first account is water accounts for the nineteen water management areas. This shows that agriculture consumed 63% of total water, while households accounted for 14%. A bigger exercise that we will conclude the year with is a rebased and benchmarked national account by November 2004. A lot of work has begun and in part has demonstrated that manufacturing was underestimated by 17% and other sectors are being addressed as well. However it has also been shown that movements have not changed, nonetheless we will know by November how big the economy of South Africa is as well as by what magnitude have changes occurred.

Part of the task that Stats SA was allocated was coordinating the 2000 Round of Censuses in the SADC region. Having concluded the task of common questions and approaches to the 2000 Round of Censuses, the next step has been to produce the results from these censuses and surveys. A lot of serious capacity residual has been achieved through this collaborative work. The first output of this will be a migration monograph for SADC. Watch this space. The new DG for the Department of Transport was very pleased to have the first glimpse of the results on the national travel survey which we conducted in 2003, and she could not hold back suggesting that there are more areas of collaboration including movement of freight. It appears work and good work breed more work. We look forward to working with the Department of Transport.

Alignment of our work through the production system is an attempt to bring about a seamless process between production and user. By implementing a horizontal organisation and using the strengths of the balance score-card we begin this daunting but rewarding journey of making our users more competent and competitive in what they do. Major internal instruments to achieve this goal are the implementation of the national statistics system (NSS) and improving access and here we cover how access through geography has the potential to improve on how users can be competitive. In order to integrate internally and manage huge datasets consisting of data items, statistical units, classifications and standards and work with the uneven world around us, we are implementing the data management and information delivery project (DMID). When all this is done the Statistical Information Service will deliver the goods to users and stakeholders.

To see how far we have moved, we reflect on Stats SA in the past.

Pali J Lehohla
Statistician-General

Changing methodologies in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)

Background

As part of the Economic Statistics Strategy to improve all economic statistical series in Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), Stats SA has taken a decision to implement a new enumerator-based monthly price survey for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This decision is based on last year's CPI debacle, when the rental component in the CPI over the period of January 2002 to April 2003 was miscalculated.

In February 2004, Stats SA embarked on the Gauteng enumerator-based collection and the initial goal was to obtain data similar to the postal survey data in order to test the new survey results against the mail survey results. A series of problems with the Gauteng price collection effort was experienced, mainly because of lack of adequate product specifications. Because of these problems it was decided to suspend direct price collection by enumerators in Gauteng, and the data collectors were reassigned to other projects. It was decided to first review, test and pilot the methodologies to ensure that all problems are resolved before any further price collection continues.

Research and innovation have led to the improvements and developments that entailed:

- the re-design of the CPI price collection form containing only the actual specifications for the specific product selected for pricing
- the adoption of the use of a Structured Product Description (SPD) form that will be for the initiation of products and capturing detailed product specifications
- changes in process flows, project plan and the budget
- having the members of the project team rewriting the capturing system, and as a long term vision rewriting the entire CPI calculation system, and
- having project team members developing training manuals and adapting the training material to the new methodology.

In the current postal survey, it is necessary to collect all prices in the first week of the month to allow adequate time for the processing of questionnaires. The price collection period for the enumerator-based surveys will be extended to a full month of direct collection.

Methodological issues regarding the use of Structured Product Description forms (SPDs)

As indicated in the International Comparison Programme (ICP) Handbook 2004, SPDs can be used in three different ways for CPI purposes. One possibility is to allow the price collector to use a blank SPD, or loose specification, when visiting a particular outlet for the *first* time to select a product that falls within the product cluster covered by the SPD. The product might be selected at random, on the advice of the shop owner or manager, or by some other process. At this point, however, the price collector must complete the SPD by specifying all the characteristics appropriate to the selected product. In this way, the SPD or loose specification is converted into a tight specification – a precise product specification. This tight specification is then used to ensure that exactly the same product can be identified in subsequent visits to the outlet and inter-temporal comparability is secured.

Another way is for the statistical office responsible for the CPI to specify all the characteristics in advance. If all the characteristics are pre-specified, the price collector is provided with a *precise* product specification, from the start. The price

Consumer Price Index, 2004 - Structured Product Description

CPI heading	**(COICOP code)**	**Furniture**	**ICP heading**	**1.05.1.01.1**
CPI cluster	**412**	**Mattresses**	**ICP cluster**	**05**

Date

Outlet information

Unique number:

Respondent name:

Outlet name:

Contact number:

Outlet address:

Pricing and type of pricing

Current Price:

Type: Regular

Sale

Field message:

Quantity

Quantity

Purpose of Structured Product Description (SPD)

Initiation | Specification correction | Substitution | SPD revision

Seasonal availability

All year
Jan | Apr | July | October
Feb | May | August | November
Mar | June | September | December

Product characteristics
(Ideally, information should be read from a label or other documentation. If unlabeled, then value entered by collector based on respondent's assessment, or as a last resort, collector's assessment (in this case mark observation with "C").

A **Dimensions**
- Single (137 cm)
- Double (152 cm)
- Queen (180 cm)
- King (270 cm)

B **Type of cover**
- Tufted
- Quilted
- Smooth cover
- Other (indicate):

C **Construction**
- Simple foam core
- Latex core
- No core - fabric padding (waste material)
- Polyurethane foam
- Straw
- Innersprings, no. of (indicate):
- Other (indicate):

D **Cover material**
- Cotton
- Sisal
- Damask
- Other (indicate):

G **Model number**

E **Special features**
- Removable covering
- Handles
- Ventillation openings
- Corner guards
- Extra length
- Soil or stain resistant
- Other (indicate):

Other information

F **Brand/Product name**

H **Further remarks/Observations**

Origin

Domestic
Import

Country (if import)

collector has to look for the one single specific product. Using the same tight specification repeatedly ensures comparability. The advantage of using tight specifications is that the statistical office has more control over the selection of the products. The disadvantage is that the tighter and more detailed the specification, the greater the risk that the product will not be found in the designated outlet, and therefore no price will be recorded.

Characteristics	Specification
Title:	Ladies' shoes
Code:	03.2.1.2a
Brand(s):	non branded
Type:	low-heel shoes
Styling:	with laces, without decoration
Upper material:	leather
Lining:	synthetic / textile
Insole:	leather
Sole:	synthetic material
Heel:	synthetic material
Further information: **Specify:** observed label (if any)	

Example of the use of SPDs in the CPI

A third possibility, which could be the practical solution to the above two, is for the statistical office to narrow down the choice of product by specifying some characteristics, but not all of them. The resulting specification is intermediate between a loose (less detailed) and a tight (more detailed) specification. This may well be an appropriate strategy in some situations. In this case, the price collector has a limited amount of discretion over the choice of product and must specify all the characteristics which were not pre-selected by the statistical office. A tight specification is still needed for pricing in subsequent periods.

The ultimate objective is to secure tight specifications for all products priced during the initial approach. The aim of the SPD form is to provide a structure for the product specification process. The use of SPDs allows Stats SA to do international comparisons as well as address current problems of weak product specifications.

Specific changes were made to adapt the ICP/SPD forms to South African conditions and terminology on a product-by-product basis. These include the outlet name and unique number, the product code, the bar code, the current price, the quantity, the unit of measurement, and the type of unit of measurement.

The use of SPDs proved to be very effective in the field test in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga. The test in the field also highlighted a number of problems with the use of product specifications from the postal survey as a starting point for the enumeration survey. In some cases it was very difficult to locate the specific item that was to be priced using only the product code and/or bar code and the quantity. It is therefore proposed that Stats SA use an intermediate between a loose and a tight specification, with the objective to lock in tight specifications for future re-pricing.

The project team is planning continuous research and testing of methodologies to ensure that Stats SA relies on current best practice and learns from other statistical organisations' experiences and their institutional memory. All aspects of the new methodology will be tested in a pilot survey in Mpumalanga.

Marlize Pistorius
CPI Project Manager

Integrative planning in Stats SA for the financial year 2004/05

In preparation for the financial year 2004/05, Stats SA undertook a two-month integrative planning process, to ensure that its service to users improves. The integrative planning process is also a tool for managers to liaise with one another and share their plans in order to ensure that linkages with other divisions are clearly established. This will enhance co-operation and co-ordination within Stats SA.

During the planning process, Stats SA used the top-down (broad) as well as the bottom-up (detailed) planning approaches. In implementing the top-down planning approach, a long-term strategic plan for the organisation was compiled to indicate the strategic objectives, key result and priority areas of Stats SA, the responsible divisions, performance indicators and timelines. Based on the organisation's strategic plan, each division compiled its own long-term strategic plan and annual business plans. Each project or service was clearly motivated by indicating how it relates and contributes to the strategic objectives of the organisation. At this stage a top-down budget, which relates to the business plan of each division and feeds into the MTEF process, was compiled.

Once this process had been completed and Treasury had allocated funds to Stats SA, based on the MTEF's submissions, the bottom-up planning approach was done. During the bottom-up approach, answers to questions such as 'what needs to be done and how will it be done to ensure the achievement of the goals, objectives and outputs of the project or service, who will do it, when will it be done, how will we know if it is done and to the required quality, what will it cost' etc., were provided. In implementing the bottom-up approach in Stats SA, each division (Executive Managers, Managers and Project Managers) compiled detailed project and service plans reflecting stakeholder needs from which the overall goal of the project or service, key objectives, outputs, performance indicators and specifications were formulated. Manageable tasks were identified in order to ensure the success of the project or activity. Once the tasks were determined, outputs/deliverables of each task were indicated, responsible employees assigned to each task, timelines estimated, planned start and end dates indicated, and a detailed bottom-up budget compiled. Following this, a network diagram reflecting the process flow was compiled for each project or service. This information was then entered on the Management Information System (MIS) of Stats SA.

All divisions across Stats SA were actively involved in implementing the bottom-up planning process, which was divided into various phases. These phases involved tasks from drawing up of business plans which reflected all projects and services of Stats SA, to the finalisation and capture of these plans for the financial year 2004/05 on the MIS.

Compilation of performance agreements followed the completion of the integrative planning and budgeting process. All Executive Managers and Managers were required to base performance agreements on the expected outputs of the business and operational plans.

From 1 April 2004 the project and service plans were implemented and performance will be monitored against these plans. Managers need to report weekly during the financial year 2004/05 on their progress according to their detailed project and service (operational) plans on the MIS. The Programme Coordination and MIS division will train and assist other divisions in compiling these progress and performance reports. These performance reports will be available on the MIS of Stats SA and will serve as an input into the quarterly performance reports of divisions as required by the PFMA. They will also serve an input into individual performance reviews and appraisals.

Annette Myburgh
Programme Co-ordination and MIS

The team responsible for integrative planning

Left to right: Ashik Moorley, Herman Kruger, Evelyn Maelane and Estelle de Jager with their Executive Manager, Annette Myburgh (extreme right).

Record-keeping management in Human Resource Management (HRM)

Sound record-keeping management is a fundamental tool for good governance, and effective and efficient administration. It forms the basis for formulating policy, managing resources and delivering services to both the South African government and its citizens and/or employees in all government departments including Stats SA. Record-keeping management also provides a basis for accountability and protecting the rights of individuals.

To support an improving and continuous service delivery as well as providing the necessary accountability, government bodies or departments should create and maintain clear, reliable and usable personal records. The department should also ensure that the integrity of the personal records is protected for as long as they are required as evidence of business operations.

Mrs Cathrine Makamu from Registry has been given the task of leading the Registry team, comprising Jane Mabile, Granny Maluleke and Kevin Williams, in transforming the HR Registry. The fact of the matter was that Registry in the organisation was not in a good state, especially on record-keeping of personal files, given the number of audit queries.

A strategy has been developed to change the image of our HR Registry and to transform it into a better, reliable and manageable source of information. A project plan was put into place to run for three months. Two casual staff members were employed to assist the registry team in moving Census 2001 files to the basement and compiling a database of all the files in the basement.

One of the ways to improve the image of Registry was to get more information on how record-keeping is supposed to be done in a government department. The project included a visit to other departments such as the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Archives to see how their filing system is arranged.

The Archives office firstly audited the HR registry in our department and then did a presentation to an invited group of 30 junior and senior Stats SA staff members. Their mission was to inform us of the best record-keeping management principles. This exercise was very informative for Stats SA employees who are involved in record-keeping management, such as those from Provisioning and Finance, as well as Stats SA's main registry.

A new filing system which will be able to accommodate approximately 2 000 files has been arranged through the procurement office. Easy access will be limited and the new lockable filing cabinet will protect all files. A new electronic access door to registry will be installed in the near future to increase the security and protection of employees' information. A new control file has been created to control and monitor the movement of files in and out of registry and reduce the risk of losing files in the future.

HR Management would like to thank the Registry team for their initiative, drive and tenacity to ensure the transformation of the HR registry section, which will be able to meet our customers' needs as well as our performance objectives.

Cathrine Makamu
Human Resources Management

The role of auditing within Stats SA

Risk management is their priority. Internal Audit staff
Left to right (standing): Clement Nteo, Kevin Tope, James Hlanjwa,
Naas du Plessis (Executive Manager), Simon Nkutshweu and William Makgabo
Left to right (seated): Magda Louw, Mary-Anne Mkuna and Mercia Booysen

In the previous issue of StatsNews the roles of Internal Audit, the Audit Committee and Auditor-General within Stats SA were placed in perspective. These roles are detailed in an approved audit policy.

In this issue the focus is on the role of the Internal Audit function within the management process of Stats SA.

In the *Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* issued by the International Institute of Internal Auditors, internal audit is defined as:

> *".... an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity within an organisation designed to add value and improve the organisation's operations. It helps an organisation to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes."*

Risk management, control and governance are an interlinked process and it is the policy of Stats SA to enable audit services, in particular its in-house Internal Audit Division, to add substantive value to the organisation by providing assurance that its risk exposures are understood and managed appropriately, so that the organisation is in control of risk exposures under changing conditions.

Substantive internal audit services serves to:
- promote an organisational understanding of and focus on risk exposures
- encourage effective management of risk
- contribute to the improvement of risk management and control systems as required in terms of section 38 of the *Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1of 1999),* and
- promote the monitoring of the effects of change on the organisation's risk exposures and related controls.

The internal audit function within Stats SA needs to be closely aligned with the organisation's vision, mission, strategies, work processes (programmes) and other changing circumstances in

order to be updated with the needs of the organisation; and to achieve this the internal audit activities focus on:

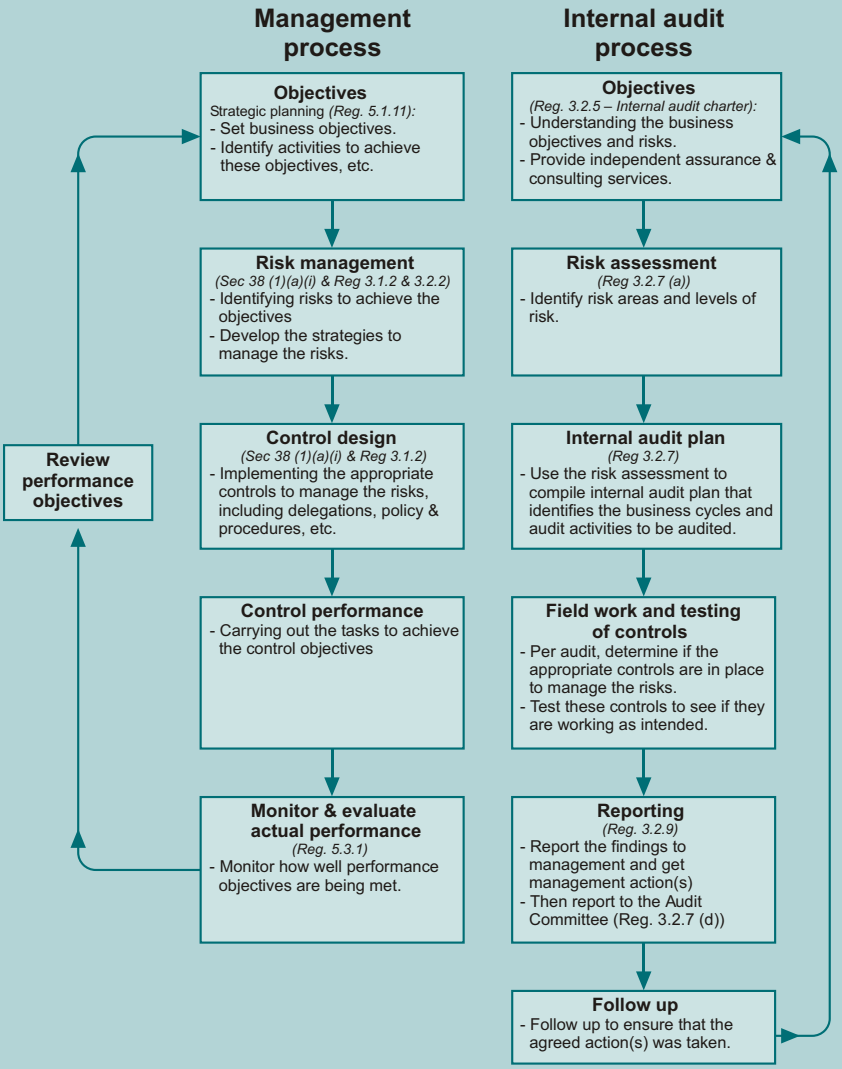
- the assessment of risks that need to be controlled
- whether controls and control systems are effectively applied
- determining how effective, efficient and economically resources are employed, and
- forewarning management of unnecessary risk exposure.

The flow diagram below maps the independent but inseparable relationship between the management process within Stats SA and the Internal Audit function, which are both ongoing processes that require continual feedback and review of existing objectives, risk management, policies and control objectives.

Close co-operation between management and Internal Audit will enhance the overall governance, risk profile and control systems within Stats SA. Sound and adequate management of risks will impact positively on the confidence placed in statistical outputs generated by Stats SA, as well as ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

In the next issue of *StatsNews the risk management process followed by Stats SA will be outlined.*

Naas du Plessis
Internal Audit



Causes of death

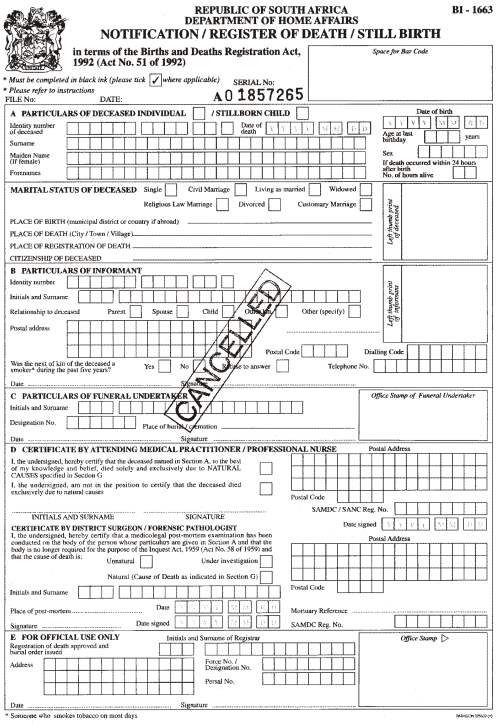
One of the priority areas that the South African government has set out is to improve the health status of the population through effective preventive and curative health programmes. The causes-of-death data is one of the main sources of data that can inform how various diseases including HIV/AIDS impact on the South African society. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) has an official mandate to disseminate the causes-of-death data. The organisation receives death notification forms (DNFs) from the national Department of Home Affairs (DHA). The immediate and underlying causes of death as reported are manually coded and verified according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD 10). The information is then captured into a computer and processed to make it available to users, according to their requests. However, Stats SAcurrently sits with a six-year backlog (from 1997 to 2003).

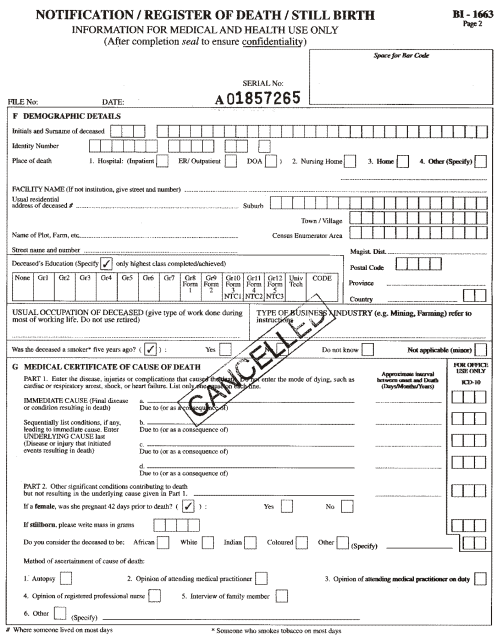
Stats SA has embarked on a project to address this backlog and the plan is to process the data from 1997 to 2003 within the shortest possible time. The estimated number of death notification forms available from the Department of Home Affairs for the period 1997-2003 is approximately 2,7 million.

Phases of the project

The project was approved in February 2004 by the project steering committee, comprising the Statistician-General (SG), who is also the sponsor, and the four Directors-General. After approval, the project business plan (charter) was drawn up outlining the high-level project deliverables.

The Stats SA data processing centre was chosen to house the project, prepared and made ready for different processes e.g. sorting out, coding and capturing of death notification forms (DNFs). The recruitment and training of data sorters and coders followed in a staggered way to allow proper training. The sorters were trained in March and coders in April/May 2004. Forms are sorted out according to year, month, day and surnames in alphabetical order so as to identify and remove duplication. The coding of mortality is done by trained nurses who have good knowledge of medical terminology. The data is then captured (converted into electronic format), edited and analysed.


REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS
NOTIFICATION / REGISTER OF DEATH / STILL BIRTH
BI - 1663
in terms of the Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1992 (Act No. 51 of 1992)
Space for Bar Code
SERIAL No: A 0 1857265
A PARTICULARS OF DECEASED INDIVIDUAL / STILLBORN CHILD
B PARTICULARS OF INFORMANT
C PARTICULARS OF FUNERAL UNDERTAKER
D CERTIFICATE BY ATTENDING MEDICAL PRACTITIONER / PROFESSIONAL NURSE
CERTIFICATE BY DISTRICT SURGEON / FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST
E FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
CANCELLED


NOTIFICATION / REGISTER OF DEATH / STILL BIRTH
BI - 1663
Page 2
INFORMATION FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH USE ONLY
(After completion *seal* to ensure confidentiality)
Space for Bar Code
SERIAL No: A 01857265
F DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS
G MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF CAUSE OF DEATH
CANCELLED

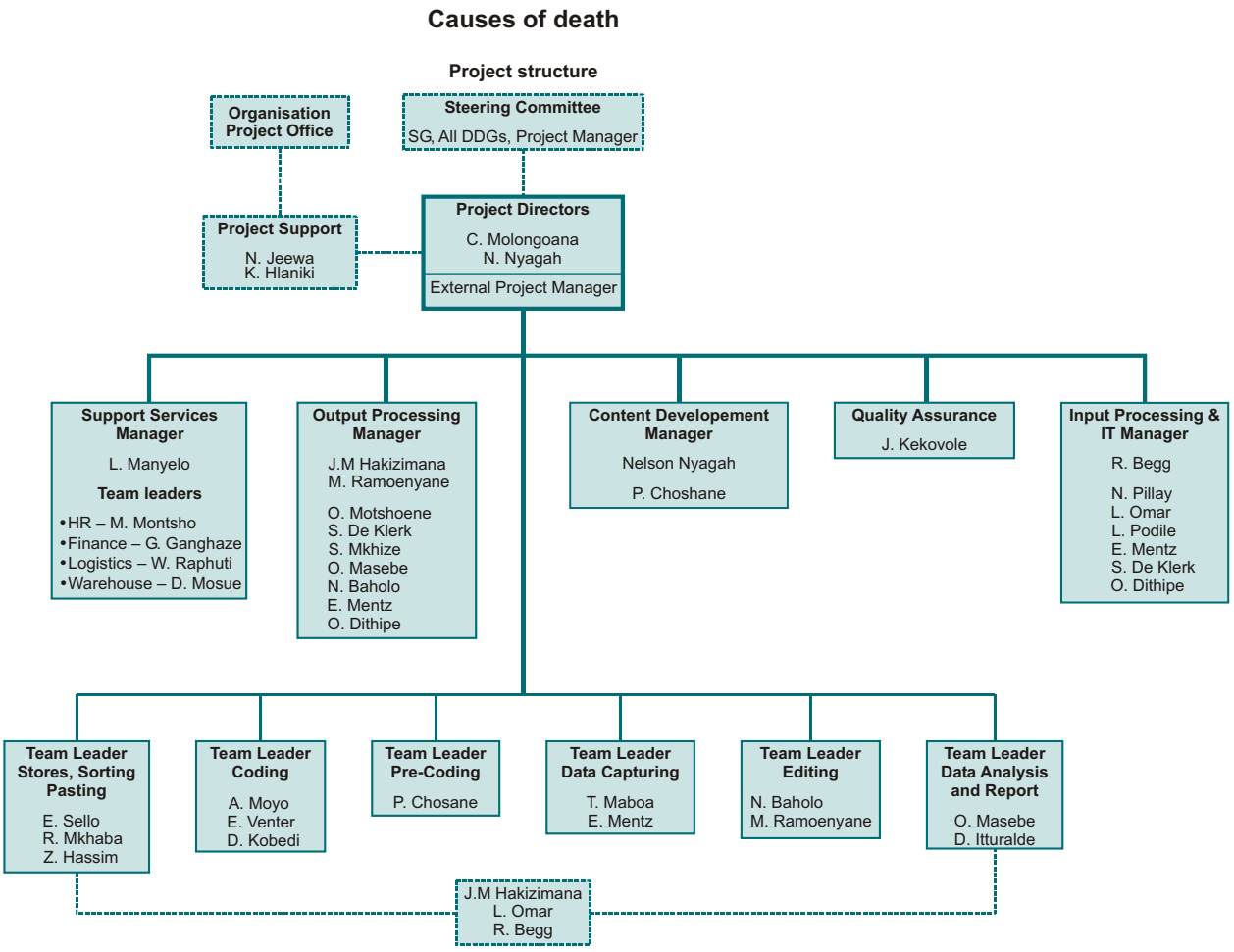
Examples of death notification forms

The coding of mortality forms is quite a daunting task as the forms obtained from DHA are not necessarily filled-in properly. This creates gaps in coding certain variables, for example, residential address, occupation, type of business/industry, etc. Another issue is that coders and capturers can only record information obtained from forms as recorded by doctors. For instance if a patient died as a result of HIV/Aids but the recorded causes show what are known as 'opportunistic illnesses' such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, or some type of cancer, the latter would be recorded, although in actual fact the underlying cause could have been HIV/Aids. For this reason the accuracy of causes of death ultimately depends on the doctors' reports.

To meet the set timeline, the project operates on a 24-hour-7-day per week basis. The project is headed by a Project Director and supported by five senior managers. Under them are team leaders overseeing each process (see the structure). The Project Director operates under the auspices of a steering committee, headed by the SG, that meets once a week to evaluate the progress and advise on key strategic issues. The personnel complement to date is approximately 600.

As mentioned before this project is not only a priority for Stats SA but for the government as well. We therefore wish the project team all the best during this strenuous period of long hours of hard work and every success at the end of the project.

Calvin Molongoana (Project Director), and
Nelson Nyagah (Deputy Project Director)



Natural Resource Accounting

Recognition is growing that income is not being accurately calculated for economies based on natural resources. Some would even say that, for these economies, national accounting methods produce misleading calculations. They lead to measurements that neither faithfully describe economic performance ex post, nor can they be used as a basis for useful policy proposals. For such economies, current accounting practices exaggerate income, encourage unsustainable levels of consumption, and obscure the necessity to implement greatly needed policy adjustments. The problem is relevant to practically all countries where non-renewable resources are being exploited and where renewable resources are being run down without being restored (El Serafy 1989: 10).

In the light of El Serafy's statement it can be stated unequivocally that South Africa needs an assessment and revaluation of its natural environment. In this way acknowledgement for a broadened definition of capital and welfare which includes natural assets will occur. The National Accounts division has embarked on a holistic approach to national accounting in which all possible measures of wealth, and actions that have an impact on wealth, are included. The objective of this form of accounting is to improve policy-making on all levels for *sustainable* development.

All economies are heavily dependent on the environment as a source of material and energy, as a sink for waste products and as the physical habitat for human communities. This capacity of the environment constitutes our 'natural' capital. Over the past few decades, most countries have come to embrace the notion of *sustainable* development, expressed in popular form by the Brundtland Commission Report, *Our Common Future*, as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Conference on Economic Development, 1987).

What are Natural Resource Accounts and what can they tell us?

As has become clear in recent years, economic development issues and environmental issues are often closely related. Patterns of development that erode the environmental resources on which they must rely are obviously unsustainable, and the environmental degradation they may cause can undermine economic growth. Unfortunately, most developing countries face pressures to overexploit their natural resource base and to undervalue environmental degradation.

In measuring economic performance and setting guidelines for public policy, countries (including developing ones) rely heavily on the aggregates shown in national income accounts. These aggregates are compiled in accordance with the United Nations system of national accounts (SNA), which was established about half a century ago, when the world's population and the size of the world economy as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP) were much smaller than they are now. Consequently, countries put much less stress on natural resources and the environment at that time and saw no need to include better treatment of natural resources and the environment in the SNA.

The 1968 SNA guidelines, which were valid until recently, emphasised GDP. The latter measures mainly market activity, although it includes estimates of some non-marketed goods and services. The GDP is certainly an important management tool at the macroeconomic level, but it has a number of shortcomings, and if focused on too much can turn the attention of authorities away from sustainable development policies.

As a measure of broadly based development, GDP falls short in the following respects, among others:

- The concept of capital maintenance applies only to man-made capital and thus excludes natural capital;
- It pays limited attention to the contribution of the environment to economic activity;
- It fails to take into account the impact of economic activity on the environment; and
- It values activities at cost rather than worth.

In view of the research in the area of environmental accounting since 1983, the revised 1993 SNA has introduced satellite accounts that include environmental concerns in the computation of income. These satellite accounts for the environment are known as Natural Resource Accounts (NRAs), and they represented a compromise in that they would not change the core of the SNA and the relevant time series. NRAs would provide countries with a set of supplementary accounts

and indicators and would encourage them to compile relevant information in the area of natural resources and the environment. These accounts would also make it possible to compute an environmentally-adjusted net domestic product (EDP) and an environmentally-adjusted net income/ national income (ENI).

Natural Resource Accounting is a subcomponent within National Accounts in Stats SA. The subcomponent's role is to research and develop Natural Resource Accounts (NRAs) for South Africa. The first natural resource account for South Africa, *Water accounts for nineteen water management areas* – Report No. 04-05-01(2000), was published on 29 January 2004. The figure below is extracted from this report.

The figure indicates that 63% of the total water abstracted is used by the agricultural sector, 14% by households, 11% by urban requirements, 6% by mining and heavy industry, 4% by rural requirements and 2% for power generation.

This is the kind of information that can be extracted from these accounts for policy decision-making.

The NRA subcomponent will embark on the mission to educate, especially policy-makers in relevant government departments, on the use of natural resource accounts. Statistics South Africa's website can be visited to view papers on these accounts and enquiries can be directed to nra@statssa.gov.za

Compiled by Sechaba Nkomo
National Accounts

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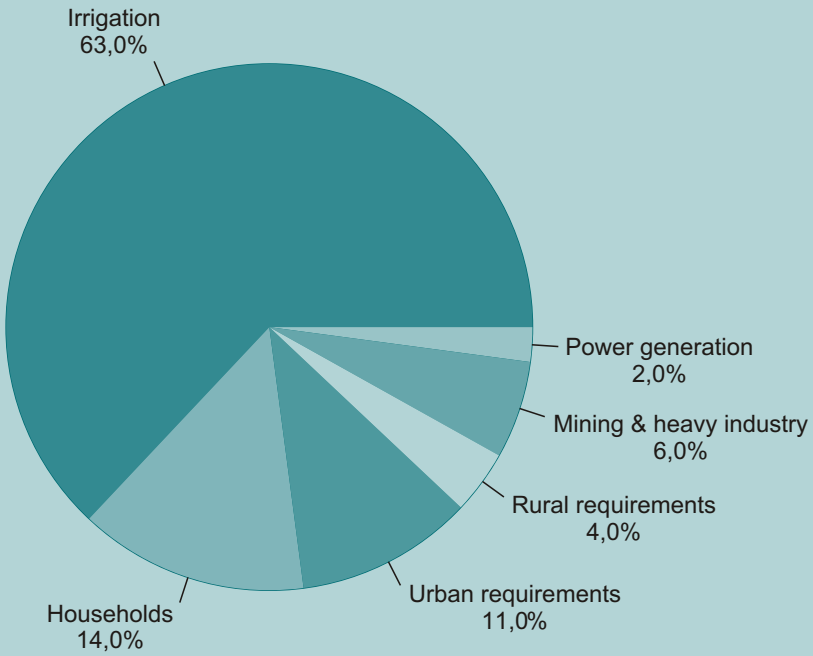
Water use by sector, 2000 (%)



Rebasing and benchmarking of South Africa's national accounts statistics

There are three approaches to calculating Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates of any country. These are production, income and expenditure. In South Africa, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) is responsible for producing the official GDP estimates. The organisation uses the production and income approach. In addition, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) compiles the GDP using the expenditure approach. The National Department of Agriculture (NDA) plays a pivotal role in the estimation of GDP as they are responsible for providing the information used for calculating the value-added estimates of the agricultural industry, as well as some of the expenditure information on food.

All these methods require periodic rebasing and benchmarking. Rebasing is the process in which the reference year of the constant price estimates is updated, e.g. the reference year is changed from 1990=100 to 1995=100. The exercise of benchmarking entails the incorporation of new areas of economic activity that were previously not covered or inadequately covered as well as new detailed industry information. The implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA) occurred in conjunction with the previous revision, benchmarking and rebasing of South Africa's national accounts statistics. It is for this reason that in 1998 the three institutions, Stats SA, the SARB and the NDA, joined together and planned for the implementation of the 1993 SNA, the rebasing (1995=100) and the benchmarking of South Africa's national accounts statistics.

In June 1999, the first national accounts results based on the 1993 SNA were published. They revealed that the level of the revised GDP at current prices was significantly higher (between 11 and 14 per cent) than the previous GDP estimates for the period 1993-1998. Approximately R12 billion (2,5% of the previous GDP) was added as the result of changes in definitions in the revised 1993 SNA. The remainder of the increase was due to new activities and new data sources yielding better estimates of existing activities, notably research reports on selected aspects of production by universities and parastatals, the SARB and Stats SA. With the implementation of the 1993 SNA, Stats SA for the first time compiled and introduced independent annual national accounts estimates for the period 1993-1998. At that stage Stats SA stated that in future, independent annual national accounts estimates would be compiled for the latest two years and be published in November of each year. The purpose of independent annual estimates is to benchmark the level of national accounts estimates for the specific year by incorporating new data that was not yet available when the quarterly estimates were compiled. Prior to this, Stats SA only compiled quarterly national accounts and the annual estimates of GDP were derived as the sum of the GDP for the four quarters of the specific year.

International practice requires national accounts estimates to be revised at least every five years. As noted above, the last revision was done in 1999. Stats SAis therefore required to revise the national accounts estimates from 1998 to 2003 and to change the base year from 1995=100 to 2000=100. This process started in the third quarter of 2003, with the cooperation of the SARB and the NDA. The plan is to publish the revised national accounts estimates in November 2004. This process is the most important project aimed at ongoing improvement of the quality of the national accounts statistics.

The planned revision of national accounts in relation to the new baseline year will not have any major definitional changes, because the 1993 SNA definitions have not been revised. There are, however, cases where it is now possible to implement aspects of 1993 SNA that were not previously incorporated. This process may lead to some changes to the previous GDP estimates. The revisions to GDP estimates will emanate from new data sources such as detailed industry censuses or large sample surveys, the 2001 population census and other relevant studies, or research that has become available since 1999.

Furthermore, the compilation of the rebased and benchmarked national accounts statistics will be based on a set of Supply and Use Tables (SUT) as a framework. The SUT incorporates all three approaches of the GDP estimation into one framework, thus making it easier to interrogate the data from all three approaches, and the ability to identify possible weaknesses in data sources. The latest SUT was published in June 2003 for the 2000 reference year, and will also be revised as we continually strive for improvement in the quality of information supplied to users.

Gross Domestic Product estimates per region

Gross domestic product estimates per region (GDPR) have been developed since 2000 in collaboration with consultants from Statistics Sweden. A region is defined as a province. The first results of the research project were published as a discussion paper on 21 November 2002. Due to the nature of a discussion document, Stats SA invited stakeholders to open discussions regarding the GDPR statistics.

During the research project – which spanned more than two years – Stats SA strove to create public awareness of the forthcoming statistics. This was addressed, *inter alia*, through various workshops and provincial road shows. A workshop was convened and held in March 2001 at Stats SA's Head Office in Pretoria during which the forthcoming GDPR was announced and discussed.

During the second half of 2002, Stats SA conducted road shows in the various provinces. The road shows aimed to promote national accounts statistics in general and GDPR estimates in particular. The GDPR estimates presentation covered, *inter alia*, the compilation methods, the data sources and the scope of the GDPR estimates. During the road shows, Stats SA also announced the establishment of a national workgroup on GDPR statistics. Apart from Stats SA, membership of this workgroup includes representatives from each provincial government, National Treasury, the Department of Provincial and Local Government, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Financial and Fiscal Commission. Due to the embargo on the statistics, no results were released to any party prior to the publication date.

The representatives from each provincial government (nominated by the relevant MECs) were tasked to establish provincial GDPR workgroups. The provincial representatives acted as conveners for their respective provinces. The purpose of the provincial workgroups was to ensure active

Peterlene Moila (standing) and Marietha Gouws hard at work on rebasing and benchmarking of national accounts statistics

and vigorous discussion regarding the results, methodology and data sources used in the GDPR discussion document. Stats SA drafted a template, which served as the format in which the provincial workgroups were required to critique the GDPR estimates of their own province. During February and March 2003, Stats SA either visited or video-conferenced the various provinces as the nominations for the provincial representatives were received. The purpose of these visits or video conferences was to inform the provincial representative of the theory behind the calculation of national accounts statistics, the methodology and data sources used in the compilation of the GDPR statistics and the function of the provincial representative.

Furthermore, a work programme was drafted for the year 2003. All planned actions (joint meetings, visits, technical interactions, workshops) took place.

The GDPR estimates for the years 1995–2002, in both current and constant prices, were published on 25 November 2003. This was the first time that national accounts estimates on a sub-national level had been published as official statistics since the adoption of the 1993 System of National Accounts. These results are available in the November statistical release (P0441).

Marietha Gouws
National Accounts

Building capacity in census data analysis and utilisation in the Southern African Development Community

Introduction

When the transition from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) to the Southern African Development Community (SADC)[1] occurred in August 1992, the challenges for South Africa, previously excluded from SADCC, were enormous. With the transition from SADCC to SADC went redefined objectives that called for a more pro-active role for South Africa in the political economy of the region. As the SADC region works towards achieving its objectives and successfully implementing its Programme of Action, statistical agencies in the region positioned themselves accordingly to meet the demands for accurate, relevant and timeous statistics. A collective SADC Programme of Action as well as the national Programmes of Action and development strategies for the member states of SADC brought about the realisation that the role of statistics in policy formulation needs to be enhanced.

Rising to the challenge for statistics in the region, the SADC Statistics Committee (SSC) was established in 1995. The membership of the SSC comprises heads of the national statistical agencies in the member states. The role of the SSC, amongst other things, is to assist the SADC Secretariat with the development of statistics in SADC. This committee quickly gained recognition for the work it pioneered in developing statistics for the region. One significant activity spearheaded by the SSC has been monitoring the 2001 round of censuses. This activity gave birth to the SADC Millennium Project, which is currently in its second phase. In a bid to address the need for policy oriented demographic and spatial analysis in the region, in 2001 the SADC Council of Ministers approved the Analysis and Utilisation of Census Data Project, which is Phase II of the SADC Millennium Census Project. This article provides a background on the SADC Millennium Project and its role in building capacity in census data analysis and utilisation in the SADC region.

A history of census-taking in the SADC region

In the past 50 years, all countries in the SADC region have undertaken at least three population censuses, with three countries (Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland) having carried out decennial censuses since the 1960s. South Africa carried out its first complete census using the canvas method in 1996 and a follow-up census in October 2001. Other countries in the region intend conducting ten-year censuses. Eight SADC member states have conducted a census or large-scale demographic survey during the period 2000-2002. These are Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The history of census-taking in the SADC region is characterised by gross underutilisation of census data, the primary preoccupation having been the execution of the processes of enumeration, data processing, the production and publication of census tables and in some cases the publication of population projections. Very little attention has been paid to evaluating the quality of census data, conducting in-depth analyses of data, including spatial analysis, and disseminating data in format and media that meet the diverse needs of users. Consequently, census results have not adequately informed policy formulation and programme implementation, and socio-economic development in general, more so because government policy-makers and planners were ill-equipped to utilise the results.

[1] The organisation was founded in 1980 with the primary objective of enhancing the economic and social development of member countries and improving the quality of life of its citizens. Initially, there were only six members of the community. However, over the years, membership has grown to fourteen countries, these being: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Not only have census data been underutilised, but there has also been very poor archiving of data, resulting in its loss in a number of countries. The few countries that have preserved their data tend to have poor metadata on census codes and definitions, which has limited the utility of their census data.

The underutilisation of census data has discouraged many governments from funding census projects and international donor agencies from providing technical and financial assistance. This in turn has posed serious challenges for census-taking in the SADC community. Census-taking has also been challenged by the inadequate pool and rapid turnover of personnel skilled in demography, statistics, cartography and data processing.

Although all fourteen countries in the SADC region have each conducted at least three population censuses during the last fifty years, data gleaned from population censuses needs to be adequately analysed and utilised to inform the policy-making and development process of the region and of member states individually.

The SADC Millennium Project: building statistical capacity in census analysis and utilisation

The fourteen SADC member states, with their varied histories of census-taking and varied levels of expertise in conducting census activities, have been co-operating in the field of statistics for the past five years under the auspices of the SADC Millennium Census Project: Phase I. This first phase mainly entailed implementing joint training programmes and promoting common approaches in data collection and processing. The project envisaged the efficient use of expertise available in the SADC region, and laying a foundation for the harmonisation of data systems.

An assessment of Phase I of the SADC Millennium Census project in 2000 revealed that while the project's objectives were largely achieved, it did not address SADC's need for policy-oriented demographic and spatial analysis of census data to inform policy formulation and implementation. Consequently, at its meeting in August 2001 held in Blantyre, Malawi, the SADC Council of Ministers approved the Analysis and Utilisation of Census Data Project (Phase II of the SADC Millennium Census project). The Council directed that funding for the project be sourced from international cooperating partners. The project is funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

The main aim of the Analysis and Utilisation of Census Data Project is to facilitate strengthening the capacity of SADC member countries in demographic, social and spatial analysis in order to promote the understanding and utilisation of census data by government policy-makers and planners. This objective will be achieved through the training of census/statistical data analysts. Training will involve the evaluation of the quality of census data, techniques in demographic and statistical analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of data that meets the diverse needs of users, particularly development planners. Mechanisms will also be established for outreach to policy-makers and planners to promote better understanding and utilisation of census information.

The process of building capacity in the analysis and utilisation of census data has already begun. In addition to harmonising census data collection and processing methods, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, the SADC Millennium Project has successfully conducted its first workshop on census analysis. The workshop, held in Maputo, Mozambique in August/September 2003, drew key data analysts from each statistical office in the region. These analysts are trained in the use of cutting-edge software packages and techniques to evaluate the quality of census data, techniques in demographic and statistical analysis and interpretation, and dissemination of data. They

analyse census data in a manner that can best be utilised by policy-makers in the development process.

The project is planning a second workshop in September 2004 to be held in Tanzania. The purpose of this workshop will be to train government policy-makers and planners from within the SADC region in the utilisation of census data to inform policy formulation processes.

It is hoped that the SADC Programme of Action will ultimately bring about state-of-the-art dissemination and utilisation of statistics, thereby greatly enhancing policy decision-making and implementation. This in turn will result in good governance and the alleviation, and hopefully eradication, of poverty and disease in the region and in the African continent as a whole.

Miranda Mafafo
International Relations

Dr Joao Loureiro, President of INE, Mozambique's Statistical Agency, and Dr Miranda Mafafo, SADC Project Coordinator, at the data analysts workshop's official opening

The National Travel Survey 2003

Introduction

The National Travel Survey is a household-based survey aimed at collecting detailed information on transport problems and travel patterns of the South African public. The information collected will assist the national Department of Transport (DOT) in research, planning and policy formulation.

The objectives of the National Travel Survey were to:

(a) assist with the effective targeting of subsidies

(b) assist in targeting areas for the investment of transportation funding

(c) measure the key performance indicators for land passenger transport as required by the National Land Transport Transition Act (Act 22 of 2000) and the National Land Transport Strategic Framework

(d) understand the transport needs and behaviour of household members at all times of the day and for all purposes

(e) ascertain the cost of transport for individuals and households and assess its affordability

(f) assess customer attitudes towards transport services, service providers and transport facilities

(g) measure existing car ownership and usage

(h) understand travel choices in the different market segments, and

(i) determine accessibility to opportunities (work, health, education, social needs, markets, etc.).

The national Department of Transport, in consultation with different transport authorities throughout the country, identified 342 national travel analysis zones (TAZs). Stats SA overlaid the TAZs with the Census 2001 enumerator areas (EAs). From this overlay, 5 041 primary sampling units (PSUs) were scientifically selected to represent these travel analysis zones. In each of these PSUs 10 dwelling units were selected for enumeration.

The sample distribution

Province	Farm	Hostel	Industrial	Informal: urban	Small holdings	Tribal	Formal: urban	Total
Western Cape	56	10	2	27	6	-	474	575
Eastern Cape	37	1	-	45	4	449	278	814
Northern Cape	30	-	-	6	7	11	120	174
Free State	64	15	5	23	3	26	277	413
KwaZulu-Natal	70	9	2	75	8	385	397	946
North West	56	20	5	3	2	147	149	382
Gauteng	19	55	6	124	26	2	702	934
Mpumalanga	44	3	2	25	2	105	174	355
Limpopo	29	2	3	5	4	325	80	448
Total	**405**	**115**	**25**	**333**	**62**	**1 450**	**2 651**	**5 041**

Design of the survey

The design of the survey was such that all households in the selected dwelling units would complete a household questionnaire. One person from each household was to be selected to complete the last section (Section 7) on 'Attitudes to transport services'. The selected person had to be 15 years or older. It was stipulated by the national Department of Transport that no proxies should be used in this survey for Sections 6 and 7 of the questionnaire. The original design also included a travel diary to be completed by all persons over the age of 15years in the households interviewed.

Testing

A series of behind-the-glass tests of the questionnaire was undertaken as well as pilot surveys in Gauteng and Mpumalanga. After numerous discussions with the Advisory Committee, it was decided that the questionnaire should be the only data collection instrument to be used, and the diary be dropped.

Publicity

Publicity for the National Travel Survey was in the form of a poster explaining what the survey was, how it would be conducted, when, and who to contact for further information. The posters were put up in most of the sampled PSUs, and approach letters were also used during the verification of the PSUs as an introduction and information letter to gain entry where necessary.

Recruitment

The following personnel were used nationwide:

	Number
Provincial survey managers	9
Regional survey managers	30
Assistant regional survey managers	95
Survey clerks	9
Fieldworkers	1 026
Supervisors	295
Data capturers	35

Fieldwork

Fieldwork for the survey was conducted nationally over the period 25 May 2003 - 20 June 2003. Due to low responses within certain TAZs, a reconciliation exercise was undertaken in November 2003. Once the reconciliation exercise was complete, the overall response rate increased to 86%.

The accompanying table gives the breakdown of results by province and type of result, while the map shows the response rate as one of six categories for each travel analysis zone.

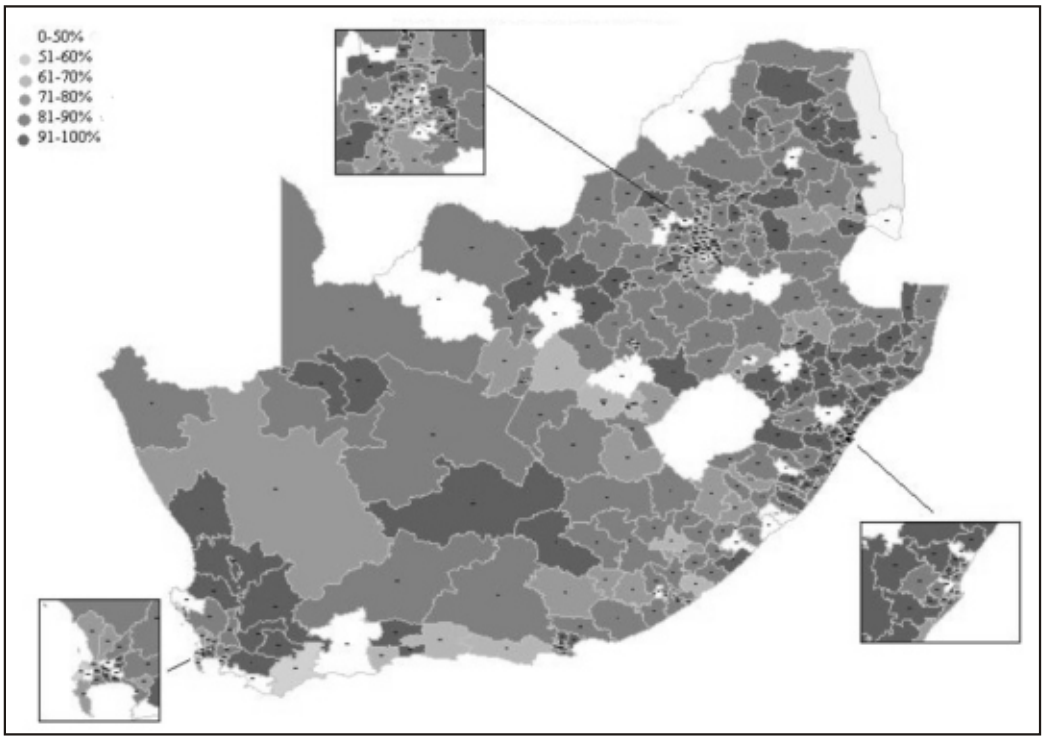
Type of result in each province (numbers and percentages)

Province	Unit	RC1	RC2	RC3	RC4	RC5	RC6	RC7	RC8	RC9	RC0	Total
Western Cape	N	4 916	218	226	9	0	155	74	228	5	11	5 842
	%	**84,2**	**3,7**	**3,9**	**0,2**	**0,0**	**2,7**	**1,3**	**3,9**	**0,1**	**0,2**	**100,0**
Eastern Cape	N	7 265	344	43	7	3	516	43	249	15	24	8 509
	%	**85,4**	**4,0**	**0,5**	**0,1**	**0,0**	**6,1**	**0,5**	**2,9**	**0,2**	**0,3**	**100,0**
Northern Cape	N	1 564	12	4	2	0	156	19	34	0	6	1 797
	%	**87,0**	**0,7**	**0,2**	**0,1**	**0,0**	**8,7**	**1,1**	**1,9**	**0,0**	**0,3**	**100,0**
Free State	N	3 552	92	54	7	1	323	55	118	2	12	4 216
	%	**84,3**	**2,2**	**1,3**	**0,2**	**0,0**	**7,7**	**1,3**	**2,8**	**0,1**	**0,3**	**100,0**
KwaZulu-Natal	N	9 111	133	165	9	1	348	136	137	5	7	10 052
	%	**90,6**	**1,3**	**1,6**	**0,1**	**0,0**	**3,5**	**1,4**	**1,4**	**0,1**	**0,1**	**100,0**
North West	N	3 433	67	40	5	1	226	40	48	1	17	3 878
	%	**88,5**	**1,7**	**1,0**	**0,1**	**0,0**	**5,8**	**1,0**	**1,2**	**0,0**	**0,4**	**100,0**
Gauteng	N	8 112	497	555	39	3	194	217	154	16	7	9 794
	%	**82,8**	**5,1**	**5,7**	**0,4**	**0,0**	**2,0**	**2,2**	**1,6**	**0,2**	**0,1**	**100,0**
Mpumalanga	N	2 889	91	91	5	1	194	21	65	2	7	3 366
	%	**85,8**	**2,7**	**2,7**	**0,2**	**0,0**	**5,8**	**0,6**	**1,9**	**0,1**	**0,2**	**100,0**
Limpopo	N	3 986	70	40	7	1	288	45	63	2	24	4 526
	%	**88,1**	**1,6**	**0,9**	**0,2**	**0,0**	**6,4**	**1,0**	**1,4**	**0,0**	**0,5**	**100,0**
South Africa	N	44 828	1 524	1 218	90	11	2 400	650	1 096	48	115	51 980
	%	**86,2**	**2,9**	**2,3**	**0,2**	**0,0**	**4,6**	**1,3**	**2,1**	**0,1**	**0,2**	**100,0**

Most common reason for unsuccessful interviews in each province

RC = Result code

1	Completed questionnaire	**6**	Vacant dwelling
2	Non-contact	**7**	Listing error
3	Refused	**8**	Other
4	Part completed questionnaire	**9**	Incomplete (Section 6)
5	No usable information	**0**	Incomplete (Section 7)



The above map is an indication of the response rates per travel analysis zone.

Fighting AIDS: A new Stats SA resolve

In February 2004, Stats SA leadership reaffirmed their commitment to start paying more attention to preventing possible cases and fighting the spread of HIV/Aids in the organisation.

The current environment in the organisation is that the Aids epidemic is at an early stage of development and its long-term evolution is still unclear. To begin to raise awareness and educate staff, about 3000 copies of the Aids policy and programme were distributed to staff both at national and provincial offices. In addition, Aids presentations were made to staff, recording a successful attendance of about 85%.

Furthermore, a constant and sustainable approach to raising HIV/Aids awareness was developed. Various media such as daily email-talk letters, lift-news, articles in Pulse (a weekly electronic newsletter) and monthly posters are used for this purpose. Additional material in the form of brochures and posters is continuously developed. This material covers topics such as testing, peer education and counselling. We are also in the process of developing a web page.

Staff mobilisation is one of the core strategies on which success against HIV/Aids has been built. We have had support programmes such as a seminar on World AIDS Day, 1 December 2003, which was well attended by staff; and the Aids Forum, held on 19 and 20 February 2004, which culminated in the appointment of the Aids committee. This committee comprises sixteen members of staff from both head and provincial offices. Dr Ros Hirschowitz, DDG for Quality and Integration, chairs this committee.

Addressing socio-economic and cultural factors that render individuals and families vulnerable to HIV/Aids is crucial to a sustainable and expanded response. In this regard, Stats SA staff enjoy the provision of and access to Voluntary Confidential Counselling and Testing (VCT) and other related support services. More than 58 sessions have been held and about 21 cases attended to on pre- and post-test counselling.

Finally, the programme is gaining momentum. The majority of staff have embraced it. The next step is to put a five-year plan into place. In the long run, success of the struggle against the epidemic requires us to act on the basis of human concern and humane values. Stats SA is definitely on a firm path to achieving this success.

Melusi Msimango
HIV/Aids Programme Coordinator

Microbicides firmly on the agenda

Stats SAwas represented at a conference on HIV/Aids, held in London, from 28 to 31 March 2004. The objective of the conference, attended by about 1 000 delegates from 52 countries, was to discuss microbicides. Microbicides are substances that could be incorporated into lubes, creams or gels and used during sex to prevent HIV or other sexually-transmitted infections (STIs).

Several speakers at the conference emphasised the urgent need for such a prevention measure, particularly for women in the developing world, who have neither the money nor the right (in some cases) to ensure condom use. Microbicides, however, are not likely to be available until 2010, at the earliest. Researchers intend to start a three-phase trial of six different substances this year, whose results are expected in 2007. It is hoped that these trials, although known to be among the most difficult scientific trials ever designed, will produce meaningful results.

One of the speakers at the conference, British Department for International Development (DFID) Minister Hilary Benn said, 'It's not good enough that all we have is the male and female condoms. We need to find products that enhance women's reproductive health.'

Another speaker, Geeta Rao Gupta of the International Centre for Research on Women, noted that the 'use a condom' messages were utterly unsuitable for women. Eight per cent of Thai women with HIV were infected by their first and only partners. She related a conversation with a prevention worker in Ghana who said, 'I cannot keep pushing the A-B-C (Abstain, Be faithful, Condomise) message to women who cannot use it … I cannot keep on leading sheep to the slaughter.'

The conference ended on a positive note, with indications that the introduction of microbicides, once tried and tested, would greatly reduce HIV and STIs.

Melusi Msimango
HIV/Aids Programme Coordinator

Progress of the National Statistics System

Rationale

One of the strategic themes of Statistics South African (Stats SA) is the development and implementation of a national statistics system to fulfil one major goal – to meet user demand for quality official statistics. This was necessitated by the apartheid legacy of a system that was characteristically fragmented, lacked quality, had no reliable information on disadvantaged social groups and areas, produced disparate outputs that confused users, did not match user needs, and had insufficient capacity to produce the required statistics. The results were a post-1994 information gap in development planning and decision-making; and a desperate need by the new government for information. Stats SA, the statutory agency with the responsibility for producing official statistics, does not have the capacity required to meet user demand. Consequently, there emerged a free-for-all situation characterised by a plethora of peddlers of questionable statistical information. A National Statistics System (NSS) has been designed to address these needs, which are bigger than could be handled by any one organisation alone.

The NSS is intended to be a *partnership* of users, producers and suppliers of official and other statistics for the efficient production and effective use of these statistics for planning and decision-making. In practice, the NSS is an integrated network of state institutions that focus on improving the quality of statistics by producing statistics relevant to user needs, using well-established or peer-agreed methodology, producing accurate and timely statistics, making statistics accessible and comprehensible to users, enhancing the comparability of statistics and protecting statistics from undue influence.

A number of benefits should accrue to users. The NSS should inform the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system of government to measure progress and the effectiveness of government policies, programmes and projects (PPP). In other words, the NSS will provide baseline information for planning and for measuring performance over time and administrative space. It will also facilitate integration of planning among institutions and PPP. Producers of statistics will benefit from a reduced workload by sharing the burden. In the process they should be more effective and efficient in their work. A system of national statistics will also remove the vexing problem of incoherent datasets from different producers. Suppliers of data will be relieved from response fatigue, the other side of which is improved response rates, which will enhance data quality. The NSS will minimise unnecessary overlaps or duplication with the collection or publication of statistics among organs of state. Finally, the NSS will facilitate identification of data gaps, which should lead to the building of statistical capacity among partners.

Outcomes

The Statistics Act, 1999 (Act No. 6 of 1999) mandates Stats SA to drive the development and implementation of the NSS. The NSS Division at Stats SA was established in December 2001 for this reason. Since then the division has advocated effectively for the use of statistics in planning and decision-making, the establishment of an integrated system of statistics in the country, and the role of Stats SA as the leader of official statistics in the country. The results have been spectacular. The demand for official statistics has never been greater. South Africa is internationally known for her NSS innovation. The profile of Stats SA has been raised beyond expectations, in spite of some of the quality issues the department has had to deal with. There is of course the danger of raising expectations that may not be immediately met.

The NSS has catapulted South Africa onto the world stage of national statistical agencies. For example, during the UN Statistical Commission's Thirty-third and Thirty-fourth Sessions held in New York in 2002 and 2003 respectively, the Statistician-General was twice elected a Rapporteur of the Commission. In addition, he co-chairs PARIS21 (Partnership In Statistics for Development in the 21st Century). Moreover, Statistics South Africa is one of the ten members of the Commission's Task Team on Development Indicators, represented by the Executive Manager of the NSS division. Anyone who has attended international conferences can attest to

the high regard with which South Africa is held in national statistics. This is due to Stats SA's new vision for the production of national statistics.

The division has also sought to create partnerships with other departments, beginning with the Department of the Presidency, to encourage closer user–producer relationships that enhance the relevance of statistical products. Partnerships with other producers have also been established to promote the relevance of statistical work to user needs. In the process the division has sought to empower other departments and state agencies with M&E skills for measuring performance. In collaboration with other sections of Stats SA, the division has provided technical support to other departments, notably the Department of Education (DoE).

The NSS division coordinated the technical assistance provided by Stats SA to the DoE's *Educator Qualifications Study*, the objective of which is to determine the extent to which the current qualifications and teaching skills of educators will match the reduced number of teaching subjects resulting from the envisaged rationalisation and transformation of the high school curriculum. The outcome will be a retraining of educators whose skills do not fit into the new curriculum. The study also involves estimating the amount of equipment and infrastructure required for the new venture.

Stats SA supported the DoE with the production of the two questionnaires needed for the survey, co-ordination of field operations, data processing, data analysis and report writing. The project is almost complete. The experience has demonstrated the feasibility of teamwork and integration within Stats SA. Support staff came from the Data Processing Centre, Logistics, Quality and Methodology, Provincial Coordination, Provincial Offices and indeed the NSS Division, which coordinated the study.

Technical support has also been provided to the Office of Programmes in the Presidency, which is responsible for three divisions – Office on the Status of Women (OSW), Office on the Rights of the Child (ORC) and Office on the Status of the Disabled People. The OSW is a traditional partner in that the NSS division has been providing technical support to its indicators programme. The division also provided support to the strategic planning process of the Office of Programmes.

Stats SA through the NSS division, Stats SA played a prominent role in providing statistical information for the Ten-Year Review. The division also coordinated technical support for the Department of Agriculture and the Gauteng Youth Commission. Engagement with the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) resulted in the division providing assistance to the department in the form of baseline data to support the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP). The division also supported the Department of National Treasury's 'input–output model' with statistics on employment, education, income and housing.

Within Stats SA, the NSS division has contributed significantly to the re-alignment of the organisation. Stats SA's strategic vision and first-ever strategic plan clearly bear the hallmarks of the NSS framework. The alignment has two aspects to it. The first concerns the alignment of the organisation's internal components and activities towards a prioritisation of client needs. For the first time Stats SA has sought to know client needs by establishing direct contact with clients, thus avoiding the traditional practice of second-guessing their needs. The second aspect of the alignment, which is closely associated with the first, has been the re-orientation towards an outward focus of the programmes and activities of the organisation. Stats SA has increasingly moved away from doing things according to tradition to doing things for specific clients. The process of alignment has necessitated a review of the organisation's structure, which is currently taking place. In short, the department is becoming user-oriented.

Another major outcome of the NSS activities on the internal workings of the department is the increasing practical attention given to quality issues. The NSS Division has provided a

framework for assessing the quality of line function outputs and products. The responsibility for the provision of the substantive quality criteria for line function activities and for ensuring their implementation, however, lies with the Quality and Methodology division.

Deliverables

Since the beginning of 2002, the NSS division has produced a large amount of work, considering that the division works at the coalface, and there is no blueprint for it to follow, as is the case with most of the other divisions. A workshop on international best practice to identify indicators was held in Cape Town during April 2002, sponsored by PARIS21 and co-hosted by Stats SA and the Presidency. The Minister of Finance, the Hon. Trevor Manuel, opened the workshop. Emanating from this workshop a host of statistical advocacy tools have been developed, notably an internationally acclaimed advocacy video on the importance of the use of statistics in planning and decision-making. As an uptake of the workshop's recommendations, Stats SA has undertaken a lot of advocacy work mostly with Forum of South African Directors-General (FOSAD) clusters, national departments and other agencies. Again as a result of the workshop, the department is represented in the clusters in order for both to be familiar with policy issues and to advise on issues pertaining to measurement. A major recommendation of the workshop was for the department to support clusters and departments to identify cross-cutting development and departmental indicators on a bilateral basis. In the process of doing this, selected departments have been empowered with M&E methodology.

A framework document identifying the institutional framework and functions of the NSS went through the Cabinet Lekgotla of January 2002. A certification framework for designating as *official* the statistics of other organs of state by the Statistician-General has also been developed and is already in operation.

A framework for defining statistical quality has been developed from sources on international good practice. Dimensions of statistical quality are indicated in the accompanying chart.

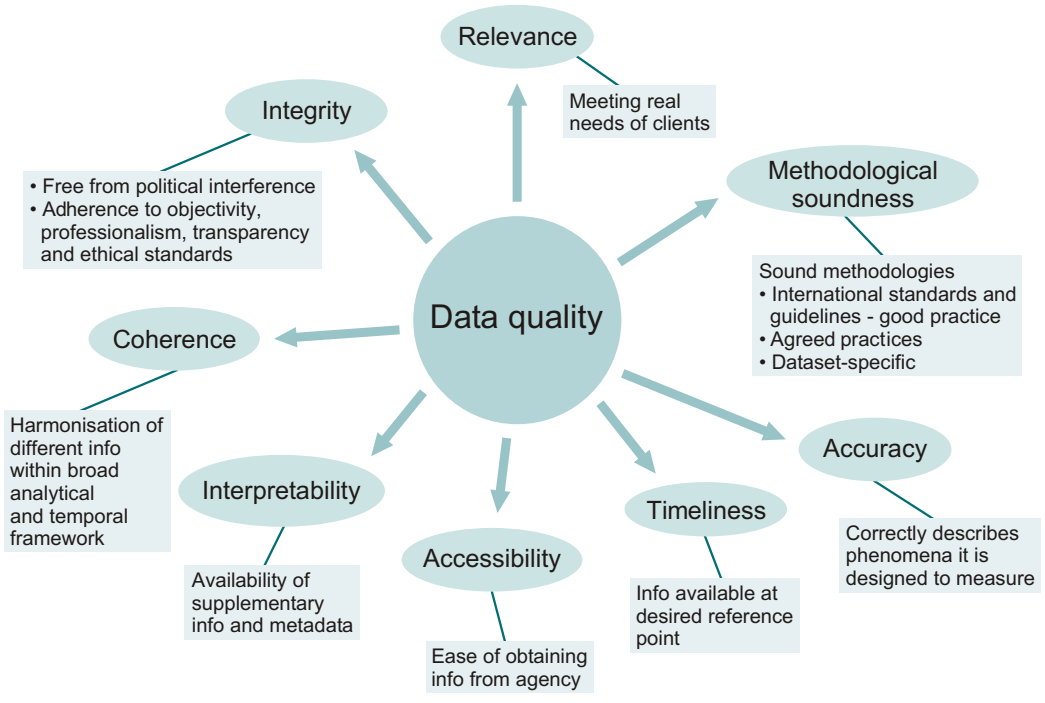


Chart: Dimensions of statistical quality

Early in 2003, the NSS division took over the sponsorship of the *Second Generation Live Database (SGLDB)*. As a data dissemination tool, the SGLDB is intended to reside within Stats SA's proposed data warehouse, from where it will ultimately source the requisite development indicators for dissemination.

The initial stage of the statistical capacity building programme, supported by the World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB), was successfully completed in May 2003. The mission was undertaken by Leo Goldstone and Peter Hodgkinson, who recommended an audit of six departments. The result was a mission report outlining the framework for undertaking the assessment of statistical capacity in selected departments. The second stage, the assessment itself, carried out by the World Bank mission, is currently in progress. It is being undertaken by Gösta Guteland, formerly of Statistics Sweden, and Mary Strode, formerly of PARIS21. Gösta was a one-time long-term technical assistant to the department, while Mary strongly supported development of the NSS from PARIS21. Both consultants are relatively familiar with the statistical environment in South Africa. Their mission report is expected after mid-May 2004.

Millennium development goals and indicators

In 2000 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration. One hundred and forty-seven heads of states and 189 member states, including South Africa, were party to the adoption. In the Millennium Declaration member states committed themselves to the right to development, peace and security, gender equality, eradication of poverty, and sustainable human development. A key outcome of the Declaration was the identification of 8 goals and 18 related targets, called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to guide national development and facilitate international comparisons. Thereafter a number of international agencies came together under the Office of the UN Secretary-General and agreed on 48 quantitative indicators to monitor progress towards these goals. The international agencies include the United Nations system, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The 48 indicators are known as the Millennium Development Indicators (MDIs). As indicated, they were expressly intended to measure the performance of the governments of the member states towards achieving the MDGs. The goals, targets and indicators were presented by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in September 2001. The main benefit of MDIs is that in many instances MDIs qualify or provide a foundation for national development indicators (NDIs). They also provide a framework for a country to compare its own progress against that of others.

The MDGs were intended to be nationally owned through broad participation of all relevant institutions, including government, civil society organisations (CSOs), foundations, and the private sector. Each country is expected to produce periodic MDG reports as monitoring tools. The reports are meant to be 'public affairs documents targeting a broad audience including the general public, the media, experts and policy-makers'. Support for the preparation of the MDG country reports is provided by the UN Country Team led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Coordinator. This support is in the areas of national capacity for data collection, analysis and application.

MDGs were formulated within an environment of world poverty, which affects most developing countries. They are closely associated with the rationalisation and effective use of donor funding. This explains why in practice there is a tendency for the poorest countries to have made various attempts to implement the goals and provide country reports as expected. This is particularly so among the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs), which are required by donor agencies to produce Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Perhaps because South Africa is not a HIPC and is therefore not required to produce such a paper, the process of producing MDG country reports has been internally driven and more nationally focused. The

NSS staff, left to right: Mandisi Titi, Nigel Bragg and Fani Mohlala working on the *Educator Qualifications Study* project

Department of Foreign Affairs has the overall responsibility for the MDG process. The process is, however, driven by Stats SA in keeping with international norms; consequently, Stats SA has usually been invited to present MDG progress reports at UN conferences and workshops. The NSS division is also involved in reviewing the MDGs within the framework of Inter-Agency and Expert Meetings on MDGs, of which the last two meetings were held in Geneva and New York City. The Social Cluster is responsible for monitoring progress. Currently we are at the stage of constituting a country team.

The way ahead

There are four key objectives lined up for 2004, namely; compilation of a national Statistics Master Plan, a framework for building statistical capacity in the country, developing an organisational structure for the NSS beyond Stats SA, and actual implementation of the NSS. The Statistical Master Plan as well as statistical capacity building will result from the statistical audit currently taking place.

John Akiiki Kahimbaara
National Statistics System

Understanding and accessing *geographies* through intuitive spatial products

Looking back, one can recall Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), previously Central Statistical Services, producing a single geographical product, a publication named *Standard Code List of Areas.* Today, a range of products have been produced from paper to digital, simple to sophisticated, to meet the requirements of our extensive users.

The flagship product for Geography is the 2001 *Census Atlas* presented by our Statistician-General, Mr Pali Lehohla, to the State President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, on 8 July 2003 at the official launch of the 2001 Census results. The atlas consisted of approximately 9 000 maps on 30 themes at the national, provincial and municipal levels. While one paper version was produced for the President, a CD-ROM version was created in a user-friendly format and made available on the Stats SA website. Over 1 000 copies have been distributed free of charge to Stats SA users.

Technical advances and efficiencies were made in the atlas production processes that were completely automated. This allowed for the swift creation of the *Ward Atlas* (commonly known by our users as the *My Constituency* product), which contains demographic, social and economic information for each electoral ward.

The Statistician-General, Mr Pali Lehohla, presenting the Census 2001 Atlas to President Thabo Mbeki

A standard geographic product is the *Spatial Data CD-ROM*. This CD-ROM provides the digital boundary files of each spatial layer in the geographical hierarchy of South Africa. Users are able to import geographic files (shape files) into their Geographic Information System (GIS) for spatial analysis and display purposes. Spatial layers include enumeration areas (EAs), sub-places, main places, metros and municipalities, district councils and provinces. Accompanying documentation on the CD-ROM is *Geography Hierarchy and Attributes Metadata*, which describes the geographical structures used for the 2001 census and an explanation of South African geographies used. This document enables you to understand the relationships that exist between the various levels of geography, and how they were coded.

A discussion paper, *Investigation into appropriate definitions for urban and rural areas in South Africa*, looks at different definitions of urban and rural and compares the 1996 and 2001 figures based on geographical area types.

All the products described here can be found on the website.

Sharthi Laldaparsad
Geography

Data Management and Information Delivery (DMID)

Stats SA's data management and information delivery (DMID) project, also known as the data warehouse, was launched by the executive management team on 26 January 2004. This project is undertaken by Stats SAin conjunction with SAS, and is managed by Mr Ashwell Jenneker.

Background

National statistics have been collected in South Africa since 1904, but for most of the twentieth century, the purpose of producing official statistics was to facilitate decision-making to benefit the minority white population.

Since then, the Statistics Act (No. 6 of 1999) was established in order 'to provide for a Statistician-General as head of Statistics South Africa, who is responsible for the collection, production and dissemination of official and other statistics, including conducting a census of the population, and for co-ordination among producers of statistics; to establish a Statistics Council and provide for its functions; to repeal certain legislation; and to provide for connected matters.'

Stats SA is driven by the need to produce quality and integrated official South African statistics, to facilitate the following:

- Quality decision-making by government
- Integrated planning focusing less on monitoring the disparate efforts of different government departments and more on outcomes from integrated government structures
- Monitoring and evaluation of programmes that support government priorities. Monitoring and evaluation requires the ability to integrate information from different data sets, to provide a holistic view of the progress of government initiatives.

To be designated as official, information and outputs must:

- Be relevant to the diverse user population
- Have integrity and be credible
- Adhere to internationally accepted standards, guidelines and good practices
- Be accurate and reliable
- Be consistent
- Be produced timeously
- Be accessible and clear to users.

Project motivation

Stats SA and SAS have completed a series of assessment interviews to initiate the project. The findings of the assessment phase included the following issues:

- Lack of common standards and methodologies, with each section following its own set of procedures, independently of other divisions within the organisation
- Non-compliance to those standards, concepts and principles that have already been defined to introduce uniformity in the organisation
- Islands of metadata throughout the organisation and lack of easy access to them
- The need for easier access to all data produced by the organisation (current and historical raw data, analysed data and publications) by everyone in the organisation.

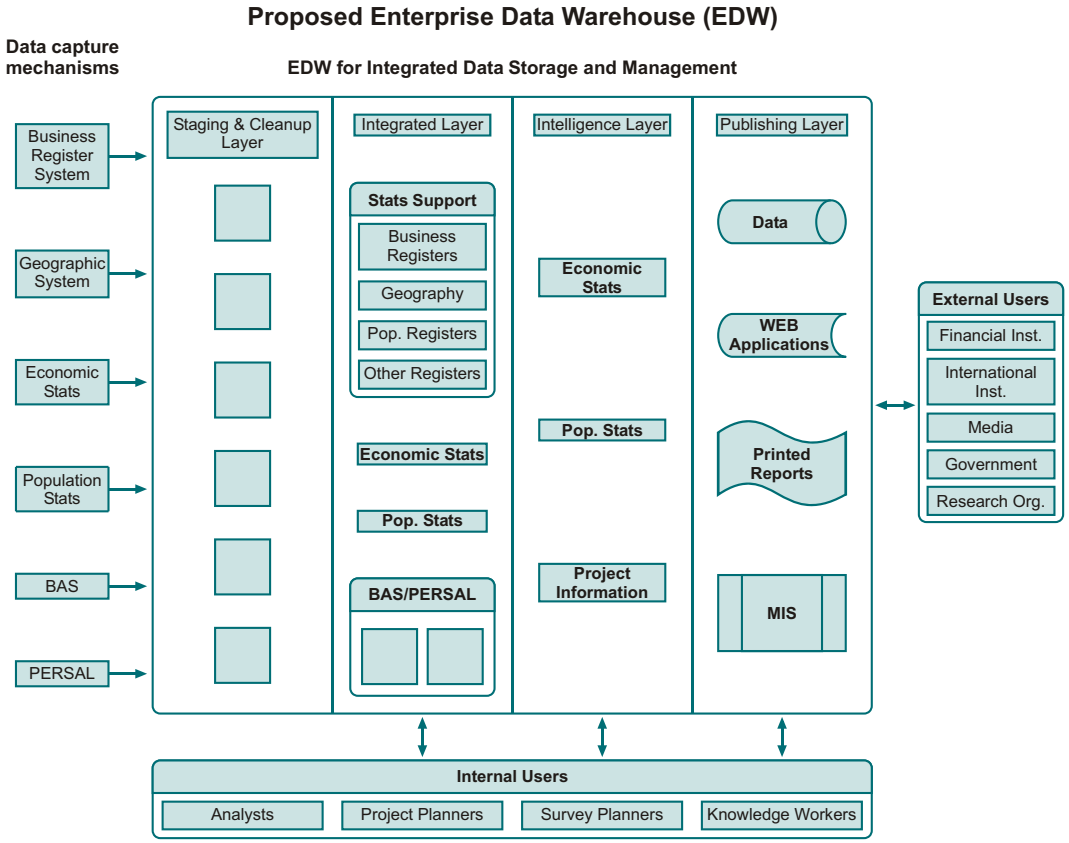
To address these issues and to address a number of additional information delivery-related problems currently experienced within the organisation, SAS recommends that Stats SA build an architecture that will enable efficient storage and delivery of information to both internal and external users, and, at the same time, implement standard methods for data collection, processing and dissemination. Benefits to the organisation would include:

- Incorporation of quality standards in statistical production
- Common understanding of definitions of Stats SA information by users, both internal and external
- Central availability of data to users, both internal and external
- Expansion of the Stats SA analysis capability, through ready availability of historical data and integration of previously disparate data sources
- Transparency of work effort throughout Stats SA, therefore elimination of duplicated effort
- Increased capability to plan and monitor resource usage on Stats SA projects
- Provision of a foundation that can grow as national priorities dictate.

The proposed Information Delivery Architecture will comprise a centralised data store (data warehouse) in which clean, integrated and standardised data will be held. The initial population of the warehouse will be from the current storage devices holding the historical data, thereafter data will be sourced from Stats SA's data capturing mechanisms currently in use. There may be a need to re-design some of these mechanisms and incorporate them into the warehouse environment.

The architecture introduces various layers of data storage incorporating different levels of integration between the business clusters. These will range from detailed to integrated and highly summarised. Each business cluster can then interrogate its own data at detailed or integrated levels. The integrated level provides a standardised platform for analysts, planners and power users to perform various analyses and value-adding processes, the outputs of which are stored at an intelligence layer to allow for further interrogation and publishing.

The architecture will include an Information Exploitation and Delivery component that will allow all business users to easily access, manipulate and present the information stored in the data warehouse in the most appropriate manner to support their decision-making.



This level of integration will enable the various clusters to adopt robust practices that will help Stats SA to establish a position amongst world leaders in the production of national statistics.

In addition the warehouse will greatly streamline the internal project managing process and alleviate the data-inputting burden on Stats SA personnel. Further to this the warehouse will also significantly facilitate the population of the National Statistics System.

The warehouse sub-projects identified in the Readiness Review have been prioritised according to their importance in national decision-making, implementation effort and return on investment; they can be implemented independently as increments in warehouse delivery, each with its own measurable objectives.

Compiled by editor
Source: Project Definition Document, Version 2.0

Statistical information services at Stats SA

A national governmental statistical agency has the function of providing statistical information for government and the private sector on a country's population and its major activities, particularly in the fields of economics and finance, but by no means limited to these areas.

Stats SA, in common with most other statistical agencies, goes about this brief by collecting data mainly by means of surveys and censuses. In addition some use is made of administrative records for statistical computation.

After data has been captured, processed and analysed, they are written up in releases and reports which then pass through the division of Statistical Information Services (SIS) to complete the statistical production and publication chain.

SIS has mainly two functions: one, to add value to statistical reports and releases by firstly, presenting them in conceptually consistent, coherent, visually attractive and reader-friendly formats, and secondly, by disseminating these products in a user-intelligible way to well-targeted audiences.

Let us look a bit closer at the presentation and dissemination functions of SIS.

On the presentation side, the main component is publishing which consists of three interrelated units: design and layout, editing and proofreading, and compilation of cross-sectional publications. Each of these units currently has a staff of four members.

Graphic design

The design and layout unit has taken shape over the past eight years and it has contributed significantly to present Stats SA's products in line with the latest trends in graphic design. These products include statistical reports, brochures, posters, CD covers, calendars, etc., and corporate reports, e.g; the Annual report and the Strategic plan.

The design team not only adds a visual dimension to Stats SA's products but also provides an integrated graphics service for the visual representation of major projects implemented by the agency. Three recent examples come to mind: the Census at School project, Census 2001 and the Agriculture Census of 2002. In these instances the design team provided a range of products and services to accompany each step of the publicity, presentation and dissemination process. These services included branding for the publicity campaign and the statistical products produced – banners, posters, pamphlets, gift boxes, invitations, T-shirts, golf T-shirts, bush shirts, presentations, folders, and digital and paper products.

A striking banner with the cleverly designed logo – by Martin van Aardt - for the Agriculture Census 2002

During the past few years the use of photographs in products has been extended, and as mapping of statistical data develops in the agency, this dimension of visual imagery will also be reflected increasingly in our products.

Editing and proofreading

This unit works very closely with the design team and provides a range of services with regard to the content and to some extent also to the layout of products. First it sees to it that concepts and definitions are used consistently within and between products.

Secondly, it edits texts to ensure clear and correct use of language. Closer to the nature of texts produced in Stats SA, this unit also looks at consistency between text on the one hand and tables on the other. The unit also provides an advisory service on language and layout issues and produces a style guide which reflects Stats SA's language and layout standards. Proofreaders guard with an eagle eye against typographical and other errors in each text before it goes to print.

Compilation of cross-sectional publications

This unit produces three important publications which draw on information from inside and outside the agency. These are the two annual publications *Stats in brief* and *South African Statistics,* and the quarterly *Bulletin of Statistics.*

Stats in brief is Stats SA's flagship publication and currently draws information almost exclusively from our own data sources. This year's edition is a celebratory one and includes figures which cover as much as possible of the past ten years. This publication has the highest print run of all of Stats SA's publications and aims at reaching a wide spectrum of the public.

South African Statistics provides the researcher with an overview of the figures on major activities of the country on an annual basis. It includes data drawn from the statistical sources of ten to twelve other government departments.

A spectrum of Stats SA's products, released in conventional paper format and digitally

The *Bulletin of Statistics* is another useful research compendium in that it provides monthly figures in annualised format. It has been in existence for 38 years and remains sought after by the academic community.

Apart from the technical aspects of compiling these publications the compilation team works hard at accessing the required information from outside sources. As the National Statistics System takes shape, one envisages greater interdepartmental cooperative work in the production and publication of cross-sectional publications which cover figures from all government departments.

Printing and distribution

The distribution section of this unit straddles Publishing and User Management Services in that it receives its stock from Publishing and disseminates products to users aided by its mailing databases and through the channels provided by User Management Services, i.e. Marketing, User Information Services and the library. The distribution section also administers sales and subscriptions of charged-for products.

The section also prints all Stats SA's releases and the inside pages of all standard reports as well as *SA Statistics* and the *Bulletin of Statistics.* A high volume digital printer was recently installed in this section, which means that components can now send jobs to print electronically. Colour printing by this unit is envisaged to become a reality in the near future.

A typing and layout team in Printing and Distribution provides a service for all components in the agency.

Our printing unit recently acquired the use of a digital printing machine which enables print jobs to be sent electronically to the print unit

User management services

User management services is involved in proactive and reactive dissemination of information to internal and external stakeholders. This component consists of three units, Marketing, User Information Services and StatsOnline.

Marketing proactively promotes the use of Stats SA products and services to eleven identified target segments. These are national government; provincial government, local government, parliamentarians, NGOs, constitutional institutions and major public entities, international agencies, the private sector, the media, research and educational institutions and the general public. Marketing services target these segments by delivering presentations, participating in exhibitions, conducting training on specialised software packages such as the SuperCross Community Profiles and conducting surveys to establish stakeholder needs. Results of surveys on stakeholder needs are used to develop new products and services or improve existing ones.

User Information Services comprises a call centre, which provides a rapid response information provision service by telephonic, electronic and face-to-face interaction with stakeholders, as well as a library service. Historical Stats SA publications which date back to 1904 can be accessed via the electronic archive service provided by the library.

StatsOnline, Stats SA's digital face, publishes all current and time-series products to users worldwide. This website has been revamped to better service the requirements of its users. The new-look website will be launched shortly. A StatsOnline community will be established to promote two-way communication and to turn the reactive website into a proactive tool that provides the right kinds of information at the right time, to the right stakeholders.

Frans Boot
Publishing

StatsOnline's new home page

Thesis on internal communication at Stats SA

For the last five months two Dutch interns, Yvonne Geers and Rene Bakker, have been conducting research on the internal communication at Statistics South Africa. In the Netherlands they study at the Fontys University for Professional Education in Communication and the internship at Stats SA is their final year project for their degree. Below they describe their research and most important findings and recommendations. They formally presented their thesis to the Executive Management Team (EMT) and other members of staff at Head Office in Pretoria on Wednesday 9 June 2004.

Introduction
The internship started mid-January and has been a very pleasant learning experience. Our main task was to develop an internal communication strategy for Stats SA. One of our key objectives was to develop an inclusive internal communication strategy, because we believe that everyone has a role to play in the organisation's internal communication. The basis for such an approach was the poor average score (40 out of 100) internal communication obtained in the 2002 Staff Opinion Survey. Through this strategy, we hope the average score will increase by at least 15 points in the 2004 Staff Opinion Survey.

Research
We began our project with preliminary desk research and interviews with staff. It appeared from those interviews that there was a pressing need to improve internal communication at Stats SA. The challenge was to develop a strategy that would allay all the concerns.

In an attempt to achieve our objective of getting to the core of the problem, we used qualitative research method. We adopted representative sampling as part of our data collection method. We used three representative samples, namely all occupational levels and age and population groups. The structure of our discussion groups also took that shape.

We then held 14 group discussions, each consisting of a maximum of 10 attendees. During our sessions, we projected statements on the wall and asked the respondents whether they agreed or disagreed and why. The discussions went very well, with some of the attendees even calling the sessions 'therapeutic'.

Findings
After finalising our group discussions, we collated and analysed the data, using qualitative analysis. Our analysis showed one underlying problem, and that is *'information is not shared properly'*. We also identified four problem areas. It appeared that information is not shared properly:

- between sections
- between the Head Office and Provincial Offices
- between occupational levels
- in the entire organisation.

Recommendations on internal communication strategy
From these conclusions we began developing a communication strategy. Since our underlying problem of information not being shared is too broad to tackle in just one strategy, we made a breakdown of the proposed internal communication strategy into communication objectives, each covering a different part of the broader concept of information sharing.

Communication strategy objectives:

Continuous liaison between divisions and sections

- cluster meeting must be convened once a month. The agendas and minutes of these minutes must be circulated to all staff.
- Managers from all clusters must also meet once month. Present at these meetings should be two managers from each cluster, executive managers, DDGs and the SG. The agendas and minutes of these meetings should also be circulated to all staff.
- Coordination and MIS should coordinate the establishment of project task groups.

Improved communication between Head Office and Provincial Offices

- Provincial Coordination should act as liaisons between the Head Office and Provincial Offices, by explaining all channels of communication, their purpose and accessibility.
- Task groups should be established to facilitate interaction amongst provincial offices.

Effectiveness of meetings
Meetings should be formalised, with:

- a chairperson and a deputy-chairperson
- select minute-takers

clear agendas, circulated at least two days in advance
minutes, indicating responsibilities to everyone
feedback on previous meetings
participants purposely identified.

Informing staff about policies and the strategic plan

The current means of communicating policy changes should be changed. Instead, policy-makers should organise workshops. In order to achieve large attendance, they should get staff to attend through incentives. Presentations must be done enthusiastically and timely. Also, large groups should be avoided to achieve better results.

Additional material such as posters and cartoons should be used to support such workshops.

Informing staff about changes and reasons

Effective and efficient use of internal media
Direct communication of changes to staff by management

Changes should be communicated in time, before they become effective. A lot of concern was raised about the reshuffling of staff.

Improved management, interpersonal and communication skills

The following measures should be taken to improve information sharing between managers and staff:

Organise personnel management courses for management.
ncourage more direct interaction between managers and staff.
Alert management to the importance of their staff.

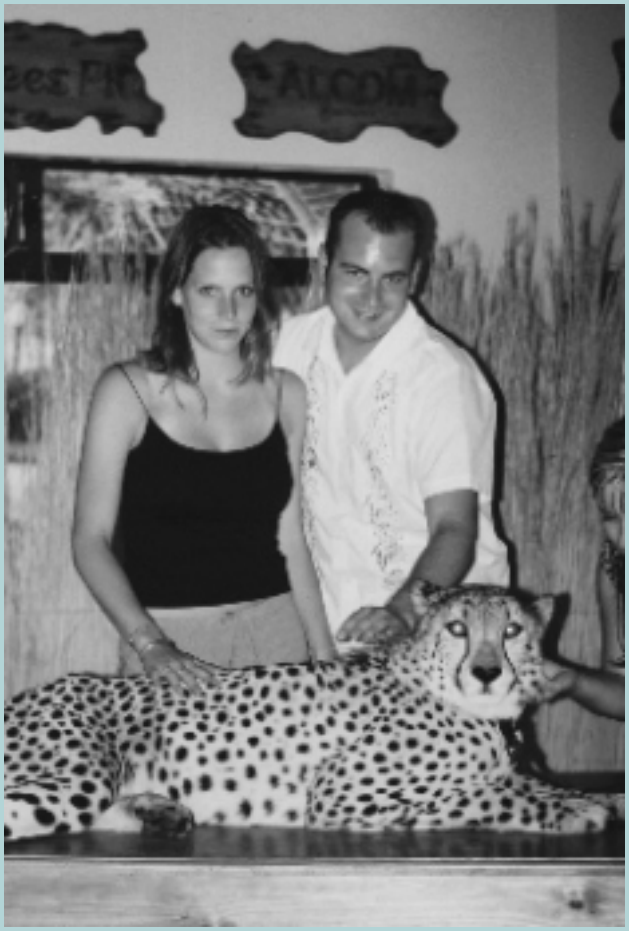
Improving internal media to the satisfaction of staff on different levels

Implement our recommendations in our thesis regarding internal media[1].
Create and circulate a document on what exactly has changed, how staff can influence and contribute to the internal media. This document should make staff aware of the purpose of the different internal media.

In conclusion, we hope that our recommendations on Stats SA's internal communication will be implemented, which should improve the communication, making the working conditions better. This should also improve the score for communication in the next staff opinion survey.

If you want to read more about this, our thesis is available at the Head Office in Pretoria. Please contact Connie Muvunyi at ConnieM@statssa.gov.za

Yvonne Geers and Rene Bakker



Yvonne Geers and Rene Bakker

[1] Internal media here refers to channels of communication

Stats SA in the past

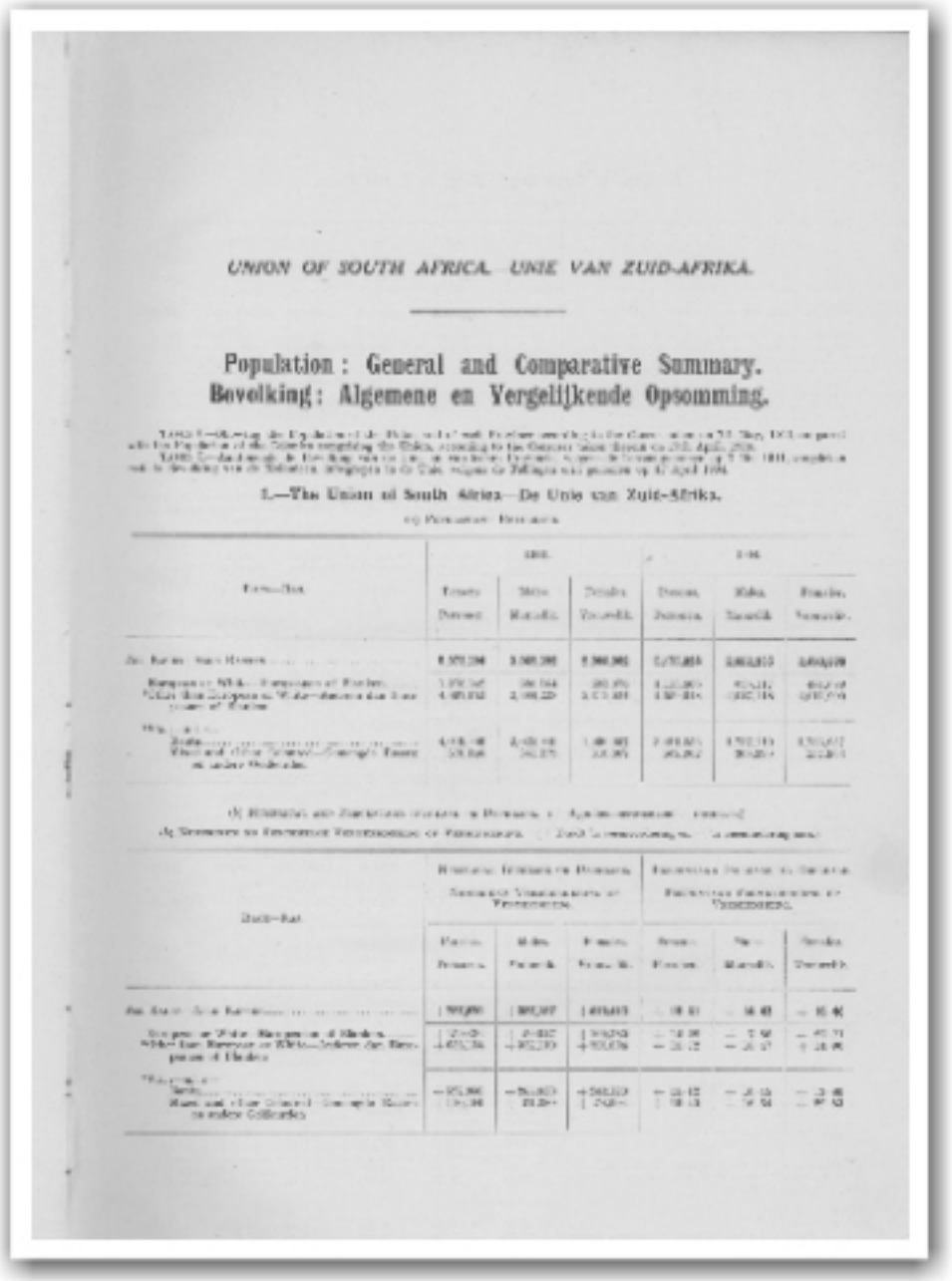
In some contexts the count *one hundred* evokes ideas of celebration and excitement – not necessarily so amongst statisticians though, as they work with many multiples of hundred in their run of the mill activities conducting surveys and censuses. But in other contexts *one hundred* is regarded as an important figure, e.g. the century scored by a cricketer or the centenarian grandparent or great-grandparent in a family or community. Countries, institutions and businesses also regard 100 years of existence as an important milestone in their histories.

As with other institutions in society, statistical agencies like celebrating their centenaries. These may take on various forms. One such form is to produce a book or books in which the past is reviewed and celebrated. For example, our colleagues at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) are at present putting the final touches to a book on the history of the ABS which will be released when this agency celebrates its centenary in April 2005. The ABS celebrations will coincide with the 55th session of the International Statistical Institute. Two other examples of statistical agencies celebrating historical milestones may be mentioned. When the Dutch statistical agency celebrated its centenary in 1999 it produced no less than three publications: one book targeted the general public, another covered subject areas and the third dealt with methodological issues. A few years ago when Stats Sweden celebrated its 250th anniversary it arranged a range of events and special publications.

The collection and publication of official statistics in South Africa date back to the time of the four colonies which formed the Union of South Africa in 1910. Archival evidence suggests that the Cape Colony, for example, was conducting regular population censuses in the nineteenth century. When British rule was established throughout the country after the Anglo-Boer War, all four colonies conducted population censuses in 1904.

On a national level the first statistical agency in South Africa was established soon after the Union of South Africa in 1910 and the first national population census was conducted in 1911. The results of this census were compared with those of censuses conducted in the colonies in 1904.

Map showing the density of the population of South Africa in 1911. Already in 1911 population density was the highest in the urban areas of Transvaal, Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape.
(From *Census of the Union of South Africa 1911: report and annexures.* Pretoria, 1913)



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA. UNIE VAN ZUID-AFRIKA.

Population: General and Comparative Summary.
Bevolking: Algemene en Vergelijkende Opsomming.

I.—The Union of South Africa—De Unie van Zuid-Afrika.

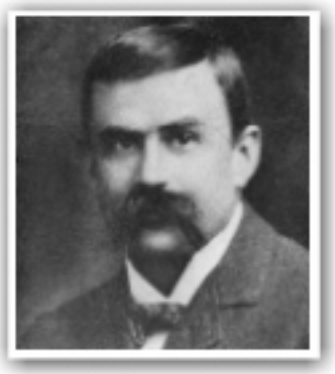
Table which shows the total population of South Africa (5,98 million) in 1911
(From *Census of the Union of South Africa 1911: report and annexures.* Pretoria, 1913)

As a national agency Stats SA will thus be celebrating its centenary in six years time. With a view to the celebrations that will take place in 2010 we have dipped into the past and discovered some interesting facts.

The agency has had 14 heads since 1910 and they show an overall demographic trend from English-speaking white (1910-1946), through Afrikaans-speaking white (1946-1995), back to English-speaking white (1995-1998) and then to African (1998 to date) – a fairly close resemblance to the political power structure of the country over these periods. Two of these incumbents were in office for 10 years, one only for a year, while the average period was 6,7 years.

We have found photographs of ten of these heads and they are shown below. Our research will hopefully lead to the discovery of photographs of the other four heads.

The first eight heads (designated directors) of Stats SA



John Bruce Moffat
1910-1914

Clarence Wilfrid Cousins
1917-1924

Dr John Edward Holloway
1925-1933

Angus William Curruthers
1934-1939

Dr Ernst Gideon Malherbe
1939-1945

Ernest Peel Pearce
1945-1946

Johannes Izak Raats
1946-1956

The two previous heads (designated deputy director-general) and the current Statistician-general, a rank equivalent to that of director-general

Dr Andries Petrus Treurnicht du Toit
1985-1995

Dr Mark Frederick Orkin
1995-2000

Pali Jobo Lehohla
2000 to date

As Stats SA has assembled a small team of staff members headed by Risenga Maluleke to research and write up the history of the agency, this article serves to whet your appetite for this exciting project and also to enlist your support. We need as much documentary and other evidence of the organisation's past to enable us to paint a rich picture. Documents, photographs, objects, and any useful information on Stats SA's history will be much appreciated. Staff members (current and retired) and members of the public who can provide information or other evidence about the past of the organisation are kindly requested to contact any of the team members who are:

Risenga Maluleke (email: risengam@statssa.gov.za; cell 0833055462),
Trevor Oosterwyk (email: trevoro@statssa.gov.za; cell 0829089104) and
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Publishing