

## NSDS Essentials – check list

1. Country \_\_\_\_\_

2. NSDS status
- NSDS in place and under implementation
- NSDS in place but NOT under implementation
- NSDS expired and a new one under preparation
- NSDS under preparation

3. The titles of the past and/or current NSDSs

Title	Implementation period	
	From (year)	To (year)

## NSDS Essentials – check list

L: Launch; A: Assessment; VS: Vision and strategies; IP: Implementation planning

Theme	Possible indicators	Chronology <sup>1</sup>				Review
		L	A	VS	IP	
<b>1. The NSDS should be integrated into national development policy processes and context, taking account of regional and international commitments. It should:</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have <b>political support and commitment</b>, and be <b>championed</b> by high-level national official(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statement by high level officials (president, ministers, parliament, etc.) on statistics development</li> <li>National resources identified and request for donor assistance to develop statistics</li> <li>Adoption of NSDS by government</li> </ul>	√			√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be <b>demand-focused</b> and user-friendly, responding to needs and priorities for information to enable national governments to manage for results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of an assessment of user needs</li> <li>Existence of a report on needs for PRS and/or MDG monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>Existence of an evaluation report on how the needs of users have been met in the past</li> </ul>		√			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop statistics as a public good, <b>funded</b> from government budgets, complemented (where appropriate) by international support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimation of funding from national budget</li> <li>Estimation of funding from donors</li> </ul>				√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be <b>mainstreamed as part of national development policy</b>, including for the design, monitoring and evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategies, sector strategies, and other national development plans, as well as assessing progress toward the MDGs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of overall development policy statements, e.g. PRSP, MDG Report, sector strategies: (1) to assess if statistics have been used to develop, implement and monitor the policies; and (2) to assess if statistical development is addressed as a part of development policy</li> <li>NSDS responding to the statistical needs of national development policies</li> </ul>		√			√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respect all relevant <b>legislation or regulation</b>, recommending changes where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the legislation related to statistics;</li> <li>Proposal of a new or revised law on statistics</li> </ul>		√			√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>work within the national context</b>, both cultural and institutional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of modalities of past donor programmes</li> <li>Donor programmes set within the context of NSDS as a coherence framework for all national statistical activities</li> <li>Donors programmes comply with UN's "Some guiding principles for good practices in technical cooperation for statistics"</li> </ul>		√	√	√	
				√	√	

<sup>1</sup> The stage of NSDS design process at which these indicators are most likely to be relevant

<sup>2</sup> After completion of NSDS design

## NSDS Essentials – check list

Theme	Possible indicators	Chronology				Review
		L	A	V S	IP	
<b>2. The NSDS should be developed in an inclusive way, incorporating results-based management principles and meet quality standards. It should:</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be the output of a <b>consensus-building/advocacy process</b>, which helps build <b>commitment and partnerships, with clear processes for consultation throughout</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear processes for consultation throughout NSDS design and implementation</li> <li>Explicit advocacy program to build national and international support to statistical development</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be the output of genuinely <b>nationally led, owned and inclusive participatory processes</b> including all stakeholder groups (e.g. users, analysts, producers; government, private sector, civil society; international and regional organisations, bilateral donors and specialised agencies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National leadership in design and implementation processes, typically by NSO</li> <li>Assessment of the role of external assistance in facilitating the design of NSDS</li> <li>Existence of a mechanism of consultation of all stakeholders</li> </ul>	√ √ <sup>3</sup> √	√  √	√  √	√  √	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>incorporate <b>results-based management</b> principles in the design of the NSDS and manage its implementation with performance indicators (e.g. for the supply of statistical information, value for money, user satisfaction, governance, support to national policies, confidentiality) and a performance reporting, monitoring and evaluation plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a monitoring and evaluation plan for NSDS implementation, incorporating performance indicators</li> <li>Existence of a reporting strategy on NSDS implementation</li> </ul>				√ √	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follow the <b>values and principles</b> portrayed by the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics to produce useful high-quality data that will have the confidence of users of statistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics cited as reference framework in design and implementation of the strategy</li> <li>Concerns of users about data integrity and quality addressed in the strategy</li> </ul>				√ √	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>draw on <b>international standards, recommendations and experience</b> to capitalise on worldwide knowledge and for consistency between countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluations and/or recommendations of GDDS or SDDS used</li> <li>Follows UN “Handbook of Statistical Organisation”</li> </ul>		√		√	

<sup>3</sup> Prior to the NSDS process

## NSDS Essentials – check list

Theme	Possible indicators	Chronology				Review
		L	A	V S	IP	
<p><b>3. The NSDS should be comprehensive and coherent and provide the basis for the sustainable development of statistics with quality “fit for purpose”. It should:</b></p>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cover the whole <b>National Statistical System</b> (NSS) including all data collection, analysis, dissemination and use from censuses, surveys and administrative systems, as well as the mechanisms for coordination and consultation (recognising that implementation might need to be sequenced)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coverage of all statistical production units: NSO, Central Bank, and sectoral and line ministries (Education, Health, Agriculture, Infrastructure, Finance, etc.)</li> <li>Coverage of both census/ survey statistics and administrative statistics</li> <li>Coverage of analysis issues and inclusion of analysis units in the design process</li> <li>Description of coordination and consultation mechanisms</li> </ul>		√		√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a platform for the long-term, <b>sustainable</b> development of statistics whilst also addressing immediate data needs for development progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a long-term vision for development of statistical capacity</li> <li>Detailed work program for the next years</li> <li>Adequacy between statistics planned and key user needs</li> </ul>			√		√ √
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a resource for evidence-based decision making, with <b>quality “fit for purpose”</b> (relevance, accuracy, timeliness, independence)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment based e.g. on Data Quality Assessment Framework, PARIS21 Statistical Capacity Building Indicators</li> <li>Follows UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics</li> </ul>		√			√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>serve as a <b>coherence framework</b> for international and bilateral assistance for statistics and to avoid parallel systems for monitoring and evaluation needs generally of donor programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donor programmes set within the context of NSDS as a coherence framework</li> <li>Description of donors’ coordination mechanisms</li> <li>Reporting of donors’ activities and complementarities;</li> </ul>			√	√	√ √

## NSDS Essentials – check list

Theme	Possible indicators	Chronology				Review
		L	A	V S	IP	
<b>4. The NSDS should show where the statistical system is now, how it needs to be developed and how to accomplish this. It should:</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide an <b>assessment of the current status</b> of the NSS (where we are), incorporating a <b>comprehensive appraisal of statistical outputs</b> measured against agreed criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of an assessment report, against the needs of users</li> <li>Assessment of statistical outputs based e.g. on Data Quality Assessment Framework</li> <li>Existence of an assessment of organizational, institutional and infrastructural development</li> <li>Existence of an assessment of human resources development, including adequacy of training and training facilities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√</li> <li>√</li> <li>√</li> <li>√</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>maintain statistical production and procedures, building on existing activities and on-going processes</b>, during the design and implementation of the NSDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of the merging of existing activities and those planned in the NSDS</li> </ul>				√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a <b>vision for national statistics</b> (where we want to go), <b>strategies to deliver the vision</b> (how do we want to get there), which address institutional and organisational constraints and integrate all statistical planning frameworks, and <b>performance indicators</b> (how do we know we have arrived): <b>not just a work plan</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a vision;</li> <li>Existence of overall strategy with a clear assessment of the constraints and the risks;</li> <li>Existence of a monitoring and evaluation process</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√</li> <li>√</li> </ul>	√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>incorporate <b>sub-strategies</b> for leadership and management, financial management, human resources, communications, infrastructure (e.g. information technologies) and dissemination as well as the technical work areas (e.g. national accounts, poverty statistics, health statistics)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of sub strategies for management and organisational aspects of statistical production</li> <li>Existence of sub strategies on production areas</li> <li>Existence of sub strategies on infrastructure and dissemination</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√</li> <li>√</li> <li>√</li> </ul>		

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Theme	Possible indicators	Chronology				Review
		L	A	V S	IP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set out an <b>integrated statistical capacity building programme</b>, which:</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>builds capacity to implement and adapt the strategy</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a capacity building strategy including training needs assessment</li> </ul>				√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>turns statistics into information</b> through analysis, dissemination, publicity and user education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of an analysis and dissemination policy;</li> <li>Existence of a data documentation policy</li> <li>Existence of a communication policy</li> </ul>				√ √ √	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>prioritised and timetabled</b> (not everything can be done at once)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of prioritisation of activities</li> <li>Existence of timetable, including sequencing of data development</li> </ul>				√ √	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides the framework for (annual) implementation <b>work plans</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of annual work plan, and mechanism to update them</li> </ul>				√	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>realistic, pragmatic and flexible</b> enough to cope with changes in priorities, new information needs and lessons learnt and is as easy to accomplish as possible;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a monitoring and evaluation plan for NSDS implementation, incorporating performance indicators</li> <li>Mechanisms in place to monitor changing user needs and priorities</li> <li>Flexibility in work programming mechanisms through e.g. annual updating</li> </ul>				√ √ √	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outline the <b>financing requirements</b>: responding to user needs but realistic about resources (implies prioritisation, sequencing, cost effectiveness: e.g. considers alternative ways of compiling data such as administrative sources and sample surveys).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimation of funding needs from national budget</li> <li>Estimation of funding needed from donors</li> <li>Evidence of prioritisation of activities</li> <li>Existence of a mechanism to coordinate donors</li> <li>Analysis of choices as far as methods of compiling data are concerned</li> </ul>		√ √  √		√ √ √ √	

## NSDS Essentials - check list

### Monitoring the design and implementation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS): peer review and self-assessment criteria

#### Introduction

1. Since 2003, added emphasis has been given to supporting strategic planning for statistics as a key element in promoting a culture of evidence-based policy and decision-making in order to improve effectiveness in reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). PARIS21 is focussing its efforts on assisting all low-income countries to design and implement NSDSs by 2006, with a view to starting to implement them by the following year and producing better national statistics by the time of the next Millennium review in 2010. This aim was a key element in the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS) adopted by the International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results in February 2004. Since then there have been many questions about what does and what does not constitute an NSDS.

#### What is an NSDS?

2. In effect "NSDS" is a generic term for any strategic statistical development plan, which can take many forms, depending on country experiences and situations, and names - e.g. Statistical Master Plan, Plan for National Statistical Development, Strategic Plan, etc. What is more important than the form or the name is the quality of the strategy, which depends largely on the design processes and whether or not it is implemented, which will in turn depend crucially on those processes. The PARIS21 documentation "NSDS Essentials" and "NSDS design Guide" set out key principles important to the success of an NSDS, including:

- Importance of **high level political support and clearly defined leadership, typically by a country's central statistics bureau**
- Need for a **well planned process (or road map) to design the NSDS**
- Thorough process for **identifying and prioritising user needs and to assess data gaps and weaknesses**
- Review of **existing statistical production and analysis; capacity, legal and institutional framework and coordination arrangements**
- **Agreeing** (at the appropriate political level) **on desired outcomes, building on what already exists and is in progress**, e.g. in the context of PRS and MDG monitoring and many countries participate in the GDDS improvement programmes
- **Setting priorities and strategies for implementation**
- **Managing change**
- And **engaging and motivating staff**

#### Check list

3. Building on these key principles the PARIS21 Secretariat has developed the attached check list derived from the NSDS Essentials. The purpose of the check list is to provide a common reference for the quality of an NSDS and its design and implementation processes. This can be used to assess the current status of strategic

management of statistical development of a country in a more precise and organised way. It can be used to assist monitoring of progress towards the Marrakech objective and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in relation to support for statistical development, both by countries and financial and technical partners.

4. The check list is based on the “NSDS Essentials” and organised around the following four domains:

- The NSDS should be integrated into national development policy processes and context, taking account of regional and international commitments
- The NSDS should be developed in an inclusive way, incorporating results-based management principles and meet quality standards
- The NSDS should be comprehensive and coherent and provide the basis for the sustainable development of statistics with quality “fit for purpose”
- The NSDS should show where the statistical system is now, how it needs to be developed and how to accomplish this

5. Each of these domains is divided into their component parts and a list of possible indicators is suggested in each case to aid the review process. The list of indicators is not intended to be exhaustive and countries may want to choose indicators of most relevance to them in relation to the principles. The examples given cover the inclusion of specific topics within the NSDS document, how the NSDS relates to other documents, such as PRSP or MDG reports, and sometimes to the establishment of processes which could make the difference. This information cannot usually be derived from the NSDS document alone. A future refinement of this methodology could incorporate an index to measure statistical development and strategic planning, based on rating the review comments.

### **Administering the check list**

4. The final evaluation of NSDS status must remain the responsibility of countries and the intention is that the check list would be used primarily for self-assessment by countries and/ or as part of peer reviews. Administering the check list on a comparable basis will allow comparisons between the current status of different countries’ statistical capacity and strategic management.

5. A pilot has been carried out on one country, which has informed the development of the check list, including the choice of indicators. The next step will be to apply the check list more widely as part of self-assessment and peer review processes (for instance shortly in Uganda and Kenya) and to introduce countries to them at PARIS21 and other workshops.

PARIS21 Secretariat

7 February 2006