

Metadata and documentation

Regional Training

Producing Register-based Population Statistics in Developing Countries

Tehran 27 – 31 October 2013

Harald Utne, Statistics Norway

harald.utne@ssb.no

Documentation on two levels

- Registers
- Register-based statistics

Documentation of registers

Characterized by:

- High volume of metadata
- Documentation for every administrative source
- Changes in administrative sources must be documented
- Complicated variables: Precise documentation
- Data processing must be documented

Documentation of administrative sources

- Record descriptions from register owners
- NSO should have (electronic) access to questionnaires, instructions for registration etc.
- All changes must be stored
 - Preferably in a calendar
 - Information organized by time of change, register, variable

Documentation of changes over time

Changes in register-based statistics

- Changes in definitions of administrative concepts
- New sources, new estimation methods
- Changes in classifications
- External changes that affect the statistics indirectly

Classification and definition data base

- Efficient storage of standards and classification
- Keeping track of changes

Coordination within NSO

- Organizational
 - Units responsible for statistical registers
 - Contact with register owners
- Technical
 - Standardized naming conventions (same variable = same name)
 - Standardized data formats
- Methodological
 - Common methods for dealing with non-response, imputation etc

Content related coordination

- Standardized populations
 - Same populations in all relevant statistics
- Standardized variables
 - For variables used in several statistical registers
 - Naming, processing and documentation of variables
- Standardized groupings of important classifications
 - Important tool: Classification database

Group exercise

For register-based statistics

- What are (or would be) the main quality issues in your country?
- How could quality be measured in your statistics?
 - External sources for comparison/benchmarking
- Do you have good systems for documentation and metadata?
 - If improvements are needed, in what way?