

Developing NSO Professional Capability

*Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
Ninth Management Seminar
Heads of National Statistical Offices
September 2010
Geoff Bascand*

Statistics New Zealand People Strategy

- ⊙ Exceptional leaders
- ⊙ Influential connectors
- ⊙ Intelligent communicators
- ⊙ Expert professionals

→ capability framework

Capability framework defines competencies and establishes

- ◎ Generic skills
 - ❖ Communication, work & project management, etc
- ◎ Business-specific, subject matter skills
 - ❖ National accounts, health statistics, IT, etc
- ◎ Statistical skills
 - ❖ Basic / quantitative
 - ❖ Core statistical
 - ❖ Specialised and advanced skills

Balancing internal capacity and external skills

- ⊙ Recruitment, training & development supply most skill needs
- ⊙ Specialised skills often obtained externally
 - ❖ International exchange and knowledge sharing
 - ❖ Commissioning third-party advice and review
 - ❖ Bringing external experts into the NSO for joint work
- ❖ NSO also promotes and builds statistical skills in other agencies

Commissioned third-party advice

- ◎ Non-profit satellite account
 - ❖ Sector knowledge lacking
 - ❖ External *stakeholder* reference committee
 - ❖ Consultation and 2-way communication
 - ❖ Crucial information-gathering & feedback
- ◎ Productivity statistics
 - ❖ Expert knowledge lacking in some areas
 - ❖ Secondments from other NSOs
 - ❖ Peer review by external experts
 - ❖ *Technical* advisory committee

Bringing external experts into the NSO for joint work

- ⊙ Innovative new longitudinal datasets using mixed admin and survey data
 - ❖ External capability was critical to their success
- ⊙ Longitudinal Employer-Employee Database
 - ❖ External sponsor & user groups
 - ❖ Specialist data warehousing IT skills contracted in
 - ❖ Subject matter experts and research analysts seconded in
 - ❖ Development team of 9: 6 internal, 3 external
 - ❖ Production team of analysts: 5 internal, 5 external

Bringing external experts into the NSO:2

- ◎ Longitudinal Business Database
 - ❖ 2 internal analysts and 2 external seconded researchers
 - ❖ Data integration, survey design in harmony with admin data, priority setting for data integration
 - ❖ Joint research papers and analysis of data properties

Benefits of co-opted external skills

- ⊙ Stronger user perspective and understanding of data uses
- ⊙ Researchers gain better understanding of data generation process and NSO capabilities
- ⊙ Mentoring and skill development of NSO staff
- ⊙ Access to and utilisation of specialised skills otherwise unaffordable to NSO
- ⊙ Promotion of datasets amongst local & international user community

Challenges in co-opting external skills

- ⊙ Managing confidentiality and access to embargoed data
- ⊙ Balancing user needs of policy agency with independence and reputation of NSO
- ⊙ Differences in working methods and release practices
- ⊙ Having adequate capability to benefit from mentoring

Conclusions

- ⦿ Most capability needs to be recruited and developed in the NSO
- ⦿ Important new datasets and new statistical measures have been built by co-opting external skills into the NSO
- ⦿ Key benefits are:
 - ❖ Capability development
 - ❖ Strengthening relationships between the NSO and external users