

INDIAN STATISTICAL SYSTEM

The Indian Statistical System functions within the overall administrative set up of the country. India has a federal structure of Government. The division of responsibility for administration between the Union Government and the State Governments is on the basis of three-fold classification of all subjects, namely, the Union List, the State List, and the Concurrent List. The last category represents the areas where both the Union and State Governments can operate. The subject Statistics is in the Concurrent list. There is a further division of responsibility, by subjects or groups of subjects, among the different Ministries/Departments of the Union Government and among the Departments of State Governments, on the basis of their administrative functions. In accordance with this structure, the Indian Statistical System is largely decentralised both horizontally as well as vertically with elements of central supervision. All-India large-scale statistical operations, such as Population Census, Economic Census, Agricultural Census and Livestock Census, and nation-wide sample surveys, including the Annual Survey of Industries and the Socio-Economic Surveys, as well as compilation of macro-economic aggregates like national accounts, All-India Price Indices and industrial production, are mainly Central activities, with substantial involvement of State agencies in data collection.

The State Governments and statistical organisations of the States also collect and generate data on a number of variables. The Central Government acts as the coordinating agency for presentation of statistics on an all-India basis even in fields where the States have the primary authority and responsibility for collection of statistics. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is the nodal agency for all statistical activities at all-India level. The State Directorates of Economics and Statistics (DESSs) carry out the responsibility of coordination of all statistical activities at the State level and keeping liaison with the MOSPI for the purpose of coordination at all-India level, and for maintaining norms and standards in the field of official statistics.

Statistical System at the Centre:

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is the nodal agency for planning and facilitating the integrated development of the statistical system in the country, and to lay down norms & standards in the field of official statistics, evolving concepts, definitions, classification and methodologies of data collection, processing and release of results. The Ministry has two wings, one relating to Statistics and the other is Programme Implementation. The Statistics Wing called National Statistical Organisation (NSO) consists of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), and the Computer Centre. The Programme Implementation Wing has four Divisions, namely, Twenty Point Programme Division, Infrastructure Monitoring Division, Project Monitoring Division, and Member of Parliament Local Area Development Division. The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), which is a premier statistical institute, receives budgetary support from the MOSPI.

Central Statistical Office:

The CSO, headed by a Director General, consists of four Divisions, namely, the National Accounts Division (NAD), the Economic Statistics Division (ESD), the Social Statistics Division (SSD) and the Training Division. The CSO has an Industrial Statistics

Wing, namely, the CSO-IS Wing, which is located at Kolkata. The Central Statistical Office is responsible for coordination of statistical activities in the country, and for evolving and maintaining statistical standards. Its activities include National Income Accounting; conduct of Annual Survey of Industries, Economic Censuses and its follow up surveys, compilation of Index of Industrial Production, as well as Consumer Price Indices, Gender Statistics, imparting training on Official Statistics, Five Year Plan work relating to Development of Statistics in the States and Union Territories; dissemination of statistical information, work relating to trade, energy, construction, and environment statistics, revision of National Industrial Classification, etc.

National Academy of Statistical Administration (NASA):

National Academy of Statistical Administration (NASA), established in February, 2009 is a premier Institute fostering human resource development in Official Statistics at national and international level. The Academy, confronted with the challenges of keeping the statistical workforce abreast with the dynamics of evolving socio-economic environment and technological advances has been continuously striving not only to develop curriculum but also to implement effective delivery mechanisms by focusing on its pedagogy.

National Sample Survey Office:

The NSSO functions under the overall direction of a Steering Committee with requisite independence and autonomy in the matter of collection, processing and publication of NSS data. In addition to the non-official Chairman, the Steering Committee is composed of academicians, data users from Central and State Government departments and senior officers of the Ministry. The NSSO is headed by the Director General and Chief Executive Officer (DG&CEO), who is also the Member-Secretary of the Steering Committee. The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) carries out socio-economic surveys, undertakes field work for the Annual Survey of Industries and follow-up surveys of Economic Census, sample checks on area enumeration and crop estimation surveys and prepares the urban frames useful in drawing of urban samples, besides collection of price data from rural and urban sectors. The major activities of the NSSO pertain to Survey Design, Field Operations, Processing of data collected and releasing of the results based on surveys.

Computer Centre:

The Computer Centre handles the data processing jobs of the MOSPI, provides training to statistical personnel on software, maintain the MOSPI's website and the National Data Warehouse of Official Statistics.

Coordination and Administration Division (CAD):

This Division is responsible for coordination for the National Statistical Office with its two attached offices viz. the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). It is also responsible for coordination with State Governments/ State statistical agencies.

National Statistical Commission (NSC):

Through the Government of India Resolution of 1st June 2005, Government has set up a Commission, namely, the National Statistical Commission (NSC) consisting of a part-time Chairperson, and four part-time Members, one each from the fields of economic statistics, social and environment statistics, censuses and surveys, and national accounts and state statistical systems. The Secretary, Planning Commission is also a Member in ex-officio capacity. The Chief Statistician of India serves as the Secretary to the NSC. The mandate of the NSC is to serve as a nodal and empowered body for all core statistical activities of the country, to evolve, monitor and enforce statistical priorities and standards and to ensure statistical coordination.

Legal Support for Collection of Data:

The Central Government's Allocation of Business Rules, 1961 (as amended from time to time) provides for the roles and responsibilities of the MOSPI. The main Statistics Act under which data is collected by the MOSPI is the 'Collection of Statistics Act, 2008'. The other most important Act for collection of statistics on demographic aspects of population is the 'Population Census Act 1948', which is administered by the Office of the Registrar General of India, functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Besides these two important Acts, there are a number of Acts, Rules and Procedures being administered by various administrative agencies on their subjects, through which statutory returns are collected by these Ministries/Departments.

Central Ministries / Departments:

Besides the NSO at the Centre, most of the Ministries / Departments of the Government of India have either statistical divisions or statistical cells for all the statistical activities of the Ministry / Department. These Divisions/Cells are mostly manned by officers belonging to two organised Central Services- the Indian Statistical Service (ISS) and the Subordinate Statistical Service (SSS). The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is the Cadre Controlling Authority for both these Services, which provide another layer of coordination. Furthermore, these Statistical Divisions/Cells are headed by senior level statistical functionaries of the ISS at the JAG / SAG level for effective coordination with NSO.

Statistical System in the States / UTs:

The Directorates of Economics and Statistics (DESS) in the States / UTs act as the nodal agencies for coordination of all statistical activities in the States/UTs. While most of the States / UTs have been formally declared by the State Governments as the Nodal Agencies on all statistical activities, a few though not yet formally declared, act as coordinating agency on statistical matters in the State/UT. Most of the States / UTs have District Statistical Offices (DSOs) which act as the field offices of the DESS for collection / compilation of statistical data in the districts. The DESS perform almost the same functions in the States / UTs as the NSO at the Centre viz. bringing out some key statistics, coordination with the Central and State statistical agencies, dissemination of statistics, etc.