



# The PNSD Bulletin

## January 2008



## The Plan for National Statistical Development (PNSD)

### About the PNSD

It is approximately 7 months since Uganda started implementing its PNSD. The progress is steady but not uniform across the participating sectors. The PNSD is Uganda's strategy for strengthening statistics development, and was officially launched by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, as a peak activity during the opening of Statistics House, on October 12, 2006. Subsequently, another Phase (II) of 10 sectors embarked on designing their Sector Strategic Plans for Statistics (SSPS). The PNSD underpins the notion of identity, and fostering of collaboration and co-operation among sectors engaged in data production and utilization. The PNSD implementation start up activities involved statistical advocacy, improving physical, IT and statistical infrastructure, statistics inventories as well as improving skills across the participating sectors. This will be subsequently followed by, data development - standards, data audit, and matching production to the policy making cycle.

### Progress - Implementation of the PNSD

As the central coordinating and implementing agency, UBOS, signed Memorandum of Understanding (Letter Agreement) with each of the participating sectors. This was a basis for commitment to the implementation of their SSPSs under the PNSD. Implementation of the PNSD was initiated by funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) mainly for the start up activities to bring all participating agencies to the same level in terms of infrastructure, skills development etc. Over time, UNICEF expressed interest in the process of revising the statistical legislation and popularizing statistics. UNICEF demonstrated this commitment by funding some of the activities highlighted under the statistical advocacy component of the PNSD in the last quarter of 2007.

The key factors in this endeavour are the building of; administrative structures and contributory funding, data bases, and statistical infrastructure that point to quality improvement. To achieve this, working groups have been established within, and between sectors namely; sectoral committees and Inter Agency Committees respectively. In addition, statistical and IT inventories are undertaken. The working groups facilitate the more general process of steering coordination and collaboration in the production and utilization of statistics. Sectoral Committees in particular provide input into the development and implementation of SSPS from the sector's perspective, and promote exchange of information and ideas about improving quality of statistics within the sector. The IAC on the other hand allows in-depth discussion of inter-sectoral issues related to the above. This framework is likely to lead to significant cost savings through reduced duplication of efforts.

Whereas, the PNSD programme is likely to reduce excessive duplication and overlap, this is not necessarily the main opportunity or unstated agenda. There is much more to **networks** than economics! While it may be true that the sectoral mainstreaming initiative could be construed as

having a strong economic appeal, particularly to government and stakeholders, it is not the only agenda or implication. It is very true that there will be more evidence based planning, policy formulation and management for results at various levels of governance, and may call for government to closely scrutinize statistical production.

In January 2008, two IAC meetings were conducted for Phase I and II sectors. The meetings focused on progress of SSPS implementation and, completion of SSPS design and implementation issues respectively.

### **Institutional arrangements**

The planned institutional arrangements for the PNSD implementation have not been completed. This awaits the initiation of the substantive minister in charge of Planning in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) to steer the process. Initial efforts towards this mission involved proposals to constitute a National Statistical Steering Committee to oversee the PNSD implementation, advocate and lobby for funding of SSPSs, and guide prioritization of data production in line with the policy making cycle. The Steering Committee is to be informed by the Inter Agency Committee, which also relies on the outcome from Sectoral Committees.

### **Funding**

While UBOS and the collaborating sectors greatly appreciate the initial support from DFID and UNICEF, it is clear that the funding gap is still big and requires more intervention and commitment from government and the Development Partners. As we begin the year 2008, UBOS will continue to dialogue with donors through the Informal Statistics Donor coordination meetings, but also go an extra mile to reach out to the key sectors' lead donors. Sectors have also been encouraged to independently source for funding of their SSPSs and the Bureau is willing to back up the process.

### **Achievements**

There is empirical evidence in the improvement of IT and Physical infrastructure, Organisational development, sensitization of senior officers in the sectors, dissemination of statistics, and, skills development in most sectors under Phase I.

### **Challenges**

There are observed challenges that have slowed up the implementation process, although they can be mitigated through increased advocacy and identification of champions within the sectors, to propel the process. These include;

- unclear funding prospects to sustain the PNSD/SSPS implementation
- extremely slow bureaucratic procurement procedures.
- Inconsistent reporting by sectors
- change of contact persons due to structural adjustments etc.

### **Planned Activities**

- Preparation of annual workplans and budgets by participating sectors by end of Feb 2008
- Conduct review sessions for each sector in Phase II – 14-26 Feb 2008
- Stakeholders Workshop for Phase II sectors
- High Level Seminar for Phase II sectors
- Follow up on SSPS implementation - Continuous
- PNSD progress review – March 2008

#### **Contact Persons**

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