



Policy Steering

The Role and Use of Performance Measurement Indicators

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EXAMPLE 13: A GOOD IDENTIFICATION SHEET

DOCUMENTATION SHEET		
Indicator	<i>Title</i>	
Programme	<i>Reference to the government programme</i>	
Objective	<i>Reference to the relevant objective within the programme</i>	
Action	<i>Reference to the relevant action within the objective</i>	
Department responsible	<i>Name of the department making use of the indicator within the programme</i>	
Description of the indicator		
Measurement unit		
Periodicity of measurement		
Last known result	<i>Year</i>	<i>Value</i>
Development and quality of the indicator		
Nature of basic data	<i>Numerator, denominator, field covered.</i>	
Method of data collection	<i>Survey, administrative collection....</i>	
Departments and bodies responsible for collection	<i>State the body/bodies responsible for collection</i>	
Method of calculation	<i>State the formula</i>	
Means of interpretation		
Known limits and bias	<i>State the limits of use (significance) or, in the case of a proxy, the bias with regard to the desired indicator</i>	
Means of interpretation	<i>Specify its significance in relation to the area – What, precisely, is the indicator measuring?</i>	
Direction of interpretation	<i>Decrease or increase</i>	
Documentation schedule		
Delivery date	<i>Date on which the document containing the value appeared</i>	
Improvement in progress	<i>State whether the department producing the indicator intends to alter the calculation or collection method.</i>	
Comments		

ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY

A

Accessibility: dimension of statistical quality which measures the conditions subject to which users have access to data.

Accountability: the duty to provide explanations, to answer for one's actions.

Accuracy: the accuracy of a figure is based on painstaking adherence to the method employed, from collection to processing.

Administrative data: the statistical variables resulting from administrative data arise from administrative activities (registry of births, marriages and deaths, customs, court registries), or collection from administrative departments (school censuses).

Availability: dimension of statistical quality which measures what is made available to the user and in what form.

B

Baseline: value taken by the indicator when it is included in the performance assessment framework.
NB: it is not always the value of the present year.

E

Effectiveness: the production of the results expected of public policy.

Efficiency: the relationship between the resources used (inputs) and the results (outputs).

Error: the uncertainty value surrounding a variable. The weaker the error, the more precise the figure.

F

Frequency of measurement: in the case of statistical data, the period of time between two collections.

Function of an indicator: definition of what an indicator measures in respect of a given phenomenon (e.g. the enrolment ratio measures the degree to which the education system covers the population).

M

Methodological soundness: dimension of statistical quality which measures whether the statistics produced comply with statistical best practices.

Millennium Development Goals: the eight objectives which all members of the United Nations have agreed to strive to achieve by 2015 in order to tackle poverty. Each of the goals has specific targets and indicators attached to it.

N

National Statistical System: group of public service statistics producers governed by the same legislation.

P

Paris21 initiative: joint initiative by a group of development partners, based at the OECD, which aims to promote public service statistics and the use of best practices.

Performance assessment framework (PAF): a framework composed of a set of statistical or logical variables, the value of which is known and for which a quantifiable objective is established in relation to a measure.

Precision: a precise figure is one known with a margin of error compatible with its use. *NB: a figure may be sufficiently precise for one use and not for another.*

Progress: estimated value taken by the indicator year-on-year to achieve the ultimate target.

Q

Quality of an indicator: the indicator's capacity to fulfil its measurement role in terms of time and space. It is a summary concept described according to different sets of criteria which are more or less identical (SMART, CREAM etc.).

R

Relevance of an indicator: indicator relevance is one of the dimensions of quality.

Reliability: a reliable figure is one produced to consistent quality and known in terms of precision, availability date etc.

S

Serviceability: dimension of statistical quality which measures how well production complies with demand (e.g. a piece of data produced very late is not very serviceable).

Statistical capacity: a set of (tangible and intangible) elements required to produce information continuously and within the time allowed.

Statistical legislation: body of law and regulations defining the role and code of ethics for public-sector statistics.

Statistical significance: defines the gap between the population surveyed and the reference population. For example, a sample is said to be statistically significant when it reflects the distribution of several characteristics of this population.

Survey data: data obtained from a survey of a sample of the population. *Be careful, however, as this term is misused: censuses are surveys, but ones which measure a variable in relation to the entire population.*

T

Target: the final value the indicator must reach at the end of a given time-frame (generally that of a corresponding programme). *NB: the target can be a numerical value or (upward or downward) valuation.*

Type of indicator: classification made according to an indicator's position in the logical chain of a process (e.g. input indicators, output indicators, impact indicators).

ANNEX 2: FURTHER READING

Some essential documents on performance measurement

Mesure de la performance et incitations dans la gestion publique

Dominique Bureau, Michel Mougeot

© La Documentation française, Paris, 2007-ISBN: 978-2-11-006636-7

<http://www.cae.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/066.pdf> - extract:

If you have time:

BRAUN, G., ***Étude comparative portant sur la réforme de l'État à l'étranger***, Information Report No 348 (2000-2001) on behalf of the Finance Committee, tabled on 31 May 2001 by Gérard BRAUN
<http://www.senat.fr/rap/r00-348/r00-3481.pdf>

UK National Audit Office Value for Money work:

http://www.nao.org.uk/what_we_do/value_for_money_audit.aspx

Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/38/34579826.pdf>

The European Consensus on Development:

http://www.delsen.ec.europa.eu/fr/telechargements/edp_statement_oj_24_02_2006_fr.pdf

Accra Agenda for Action:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ACCRAEXT/Resources/4700790-1217425866038/FINAL-AAA-in-French.pdf>

Policy dialogue:

http://www.internationalhealthpartnership.net/CMS_files/documents/joint_assessment_tool_and_guidel_EN.pdf

Some essential documents on indicators

DESROSIERES, A, ***Gouverner par les nombres: l'argument statistique***, T2, Presse de l'école des Mines; 2008. This book offers specific case studies, studies relating to household budgets, planning commissions, local statistics and national accounting, looking at the production of public-sector statistics and their use by public authorities. Although it does not specifically address DCs' problems, it is an excellent critical work.

For general information about indicators, the main reference websites are:

- OECD: <http://www.oecdlibrairie.org/oecd>
- World Bank: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL>
- IMF: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/>
- Eurostat: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/>

Though a little iconoclastic, the Pénombre website www.penombre.org regularly publishes short articles on the use of figures.

If you have time:

Agriculture

A large number of reference documents concerning agriculture in the broader sense can be found in the documents section of the FAO site:

<http://www.fao.org/documents/>

Education

The most straightforward document is one drawn up by Claude SAUVAGEOT for UNESCO as part of the COMED programme, Dakar, June 2001:

www.dakar.unesco.org/sised/

From a general point of view, the website of UNESCO's statistical body provides access to the most important documents relating to indicators and statistics in this field:

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/>

Telecommunications

The International Telecommunications Union website regularly provides quantified scorecards about sectoral indicators. The latest publication to appear on the site is: *African Telecommunication/ICT Indicators 2008: At a crossroads*:

<http://www.itu.int/publ/D-IND>,

Some essential documents on statistical quality

- 1) ***Handbook on Data Quality Assessment Methods and Tools***, Eurostat, 2007. This document lays down the main quality dimensions applicable within the European statistical system.
- 2) ***Quality Assurance Framework***, Statistics Canada, 2002. This is a policy document setting out Statistics Canada's approach to ensuring quality management in the NSS.
- 3) ***Quality concepts for official statistics***, Encyclopaedia of statistical sciences, John Wiley and son. This article provides the most useful definitions of statistical quality.

If you have time:

IMF

<http://dsbb.imf.org/Applications/web/dgrs/dgrswork/>: on the IMF website, you will find numerous country reports concerning the evaluation of statistical quality, particularly in those areas dealt with by the organisation.

Statistics Canada

<http://www.statcan.ca/>: the Statistics Canada website is one of the best equipped in terms of online documentation and the quality-based approach employed by this organisation is probably one of the best developed.

Eurostat

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page>: on the Eurostat website you will find all the documents and reports concerning the quality-based approach within the European statistical system.

<http://www.paris21.org/pages/designing-nsds/NSDS-documents-knowledge-base/index.asp?tab=KnowledgeBase&option=doc>: on the Paris21 site, under the 'Knowledge Base' tab, you will find the majority of reference documents on the subject

International Organisation for Standardisation

<http://www.iso.org/iso>

Some experiences with the southern countries

<http://www.who.int/healthmetrics/>: on this site, you can find the results of quality assessments of health information systems.

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/>: the website of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), which carries out quality assessments of education information systems. On this site, you will find the approach derived from the IMF/World Bank framework which is used by the UIS.

ANNEX 3: SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK IN RELATION TO AN INDICATOR

Questions	Answers
Who is responsible for its calculation?	A key question, as if there are doubts about its quality, I need to know where I can find an explanation.
What is the collection mechanism used to obtain the data?	<p>The data are administrative data, survey data or both.</p> <p>Does this or do these mechanisms provide users with information about the methods and results? If yes, where can I get hold of it?</p>
At what stage of processing is the figure provided?	<p>Are the data provisional or definitive? In the latter case, in which publication was this indicator disseminated?</p> <p>An official figure is one that has been published, whether it has been included in a publication or press release or made available online.</p>
Survey data: what is the degree of precision (even theoretical) of the value?	<p>Unless methodological publications can be stated which define the very measurements in question, common sense will have to be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a degree of precision of around 1 % is exceptional, even in the northern countries. ▪ in the DCs, the majority of household surveys have desired degrees of precision of less than 5 %. In practice, at national level, they are between 5 % and 10 %, as precision soon deteriorates following geographic disaggregation (at the second level of disaggregation, e.g. regional or provincial, the value is meaningless). <p>The only case where precision is not a concern in the comparison is when the sample (i.e. the individual questioned) is the same in both surveys.</p>
Administrative collection: on what basis is the calculation made?	Check whether the publication indicates the completeness of the collection, i.e. the ratio between the number of units on the administrative register identifying the individual questioned and the number of answers obtained.
Is the collection made under the same conditions?	<p>You will often need to check whether the collection has taken place during the same periods, whether in a survey or certain administrative collections not carried out on an ongoing basis (e.g.: school surveys).</p> <p>Are the budgets in place the same from one collection to the next? It is materially impossible to guarantee results of a consistent quality by spending three times less money (unless the method is changed).</p>
Is the calculation method the same for two deliveries of the	When the data are published, always refer to the publication and look for elements indicating a possible change.

indicator value?	You should be wary of 'vague' sources. The source should refer to the collection mechanism and not to an administrative body (a ministry or otherwise).
Are the variations between two values plausible?	<p>Again, unless the producer has provided an explanation for the unusual nature of the variation, you will need to apply some common sense.</p> <p>For all variables touching on fundamental aspects of an economy or society, marked variations from one year to the next are very often down to a change in methods.</p>
What is the value of the unit?	<p>For all indicators expressed as a ratio, percentage or index, you should always keep in mind the value of the unit: in the case of 71 %, what is the absolute value corresponding to 1 %?</p> <p>This simple calculation can help to avoid erroneous conclusions about the achievement of targets: boosting an enrolment ratio by 1 % is hugely significant in terms of the number of new pupils and, consequently, the accompanying budgetary effort. At 0.9 % progress, the effort has been made, even if the target has not officially been reached.</p>
Is the variation trend known?	<p>Some basic considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ in the case of two values obtained a few years apart, it is impossible to draw a straight line linking them or to conclude that there has been an upward or downward trend;▪ in order to be able to confirm a trend, observations over a period of at least 10 years are required (and longer if possible).

ANNEX 4: DATA QUALITY FRAMEWORKS USED BY THE WORLD BANK/IMF AND EUROSTAT

The World Bank/IMF and European approaches differ in some respects:

- the European approach is, above all, a normative approach (in the sense that it has the force of law) aimed at qualifying the result. As a result, the dimensions of quality are predominantly methodological and technical;
- the approach taken by the World Bank and IMF is more descriptive and is closer to a holistic quality-based approach; it is concerned, certainly, with the quality of figures, but also with the entire process of quality management.

IMF system		EUROSTAT system
0 Prerequisites of quality <i>0.1 Favourable legal and institutional environment</i> <i>0.2 Resources commensurate with needs</i> <i>0.3 Relevance of the statistical information</i> <i>0.4 Quality management</i>	Institutional and organisational arrangements	1 Professional independence 2 Mandate for data collection 3 Adequacy of resources
1 Assurances of integrity <i>1.1 Professionalism as a basic principle</i> <i>1.2 Transparency in statistical policies and practices</i> <i>1.3 Ethical standards</i>		11 Relevance 4 Commitment to quality 5 Confidentiality 6 Impartiality and objectivity 9 Limited respondent burden 10 Effectiveness and efficiency
2 Methodological soundness <i>2.1 Concepts and definitions in line with international standards</i> <i>2.2 Scope in line with international standards</i> <i>2.3 Classification/sectorisation in line with international standards</i> <i>2.4 Base for recording</i>	Core statistical processes	
3 Accuracy and reliability <i>3.1 Appropriate source data</i> <i>3.2 Verification of source data</i> <i>3.3 Sound statistical techniques</i> <i>3.4 Assessment and validation of intermediate data and statistical outputs</i> <i>3.5 Revision studies</i>		7 Sound methodology 8 Appropriate statistical procedures 12 Precision and reliability
4 Serviceability <i>4.1 Periodicity and timeliness</i> <i>4.2 Consistency of data</i> <i>4.3 Revision policy and practice</i>	Statistical products	
5 Accessibility <i>5.1 Accessibility of data</i> <i>5.2 Accessibility of metadata</i> <i>5.3 Assistance to users</i>		13 Timeliness and punctuality 14 Coherence and comparability 15 Accessibility and clarity