

Strategy for the development and implementation of a statistical system in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

Abstract

One of the strategic objective of Abu Dhabi government 5 year plan is to develop and establish a statistical system in Abu Dhabi to support fact-based decision making and policy formulation. The current statistical system in Abu Dhabi faces many challenge: the data producers works in siloes and hence many of the statistical work are overlapped. There is no central management and coordination unit to perform formal quality assurance mechanism and produce harmonized data. Many statistics are produced in multiple version and there is s no statistical guidelines standard and rules to follow. Statistical work is not considered a priority in the emirates, and some data producers forego devoting resources to improving statistical work. There are no specialist or focal coordinators and integrated IT systems to manage statistical work impacts the timeliness and quality of data and statistics. Again week user orientation, limited meaningful engagement and feedback mechanism for key users and statistics are not being used in decision making are also the challenges to the Abu Dhabi Statistical System.

SCAD as a regional statistics office taking lead in the process of developing and establishing a statistical system to supports collection, production, dissemination and promotion of official statistics, in spite of limited statistical capability and awareness in the Abu Dhabi Emirates. SCAD has devised a strategy plan to support this objective focusing on its internal development and external coordination. In this paper we will discuss three section: first the assessment done to understand the current situation of Abu Dhabi Statistical System, second the proposed future model of Abu Dhabi Statistical System and how the model help in closing the challenges. In the third section the implementation actions taken to move towards the desired state and the measures taken to manage the implementation of a Statistical System.

A business planning calendar is established with a series of coordination and planning activities to ensure the implementation and execution of the Statistical System across the data providers in the Abu Dhabi Emirates.

Keywords: statistical system, strategic objectives, strategic themes, strategy communication, business planning calendar.

1. Introduction

To devise the strategy plan for establishing a statistical system in Abu Dhabi, an extensive assessment was conducted with all related stakeholders in 2013. From the assessment several challenges were identified and the sketch for the current statistical system was developed. Based on best practice learned from other statistical systems a decentralized hybrid model was developed and proposed as the "to be state" for the Abu Dhabi statistical system. A systematic strategy plan was devised with priorities, initiatives and measures to develop and implement the statistical system was formulated. Since 2014, several initiatives are initiated in establishing the statistical system and implementing the proposed statistical system model. The progress of establishment and development are measured through key measures to ensure the development and implementation of the decentralized hybrid statistical system. The challenges, strategy plan and the impact of the initiatives are discussed further in this paper.

2. Challenges in the current SSAD

From the strategic assessment conducted in 2013 with all stakeholders the following challenges for the statistical system of Abu Dhabi were identified

2.1. Data producers work in silos and statistics work are overlapped

SCAD is not aware of all the data collected by other government entities that could be used to create statistics through admin registers and many other government entities produce, request, and share statistics without SCAD coordination. Hence there are many sources for one statistic and statistics work are overlapped in Abu Dhabi, Eg. Population (EIDA and SCAD population estimates do not match)

2.2. Lack of central coordination unit

Coordination with stakeholders is generally on an as-needed basis rather than through regular planned processes. There exists varying methodologies and indicators between Emirates with big gaps in comparable data. Although SLAs exist between other data producers they do not specify standards, scopes of work (eg. data sources, indicators) and requirements for data and statistics

2.3. No quality assurance mechanism

No formal channel to measure, monitor, and enforce standards among data other statistical data producers in Abu Dhabi and no clear process for dealing with non-compliance. ADFCA and EAD use different definitions for the same indicators; Dubai & AD indicators are also not comparable.

2.4. Weak user orientation

Advisory Committee does not represent all user groups and has no 'working groups'. Indicators are chosen based on the discretion of the statistics sector / GSEC rather than business cases based on user feedback. Many ADGEs do not contain in-house statistical units or trained statisticians needed to produce or interpret data. Statisticians at SCAD

spend significant amount of time doing non-statistical work. There are no formal capability development plan for the Statistical System in Abu Dhabi. IT

2.5. No unified statistical guideline

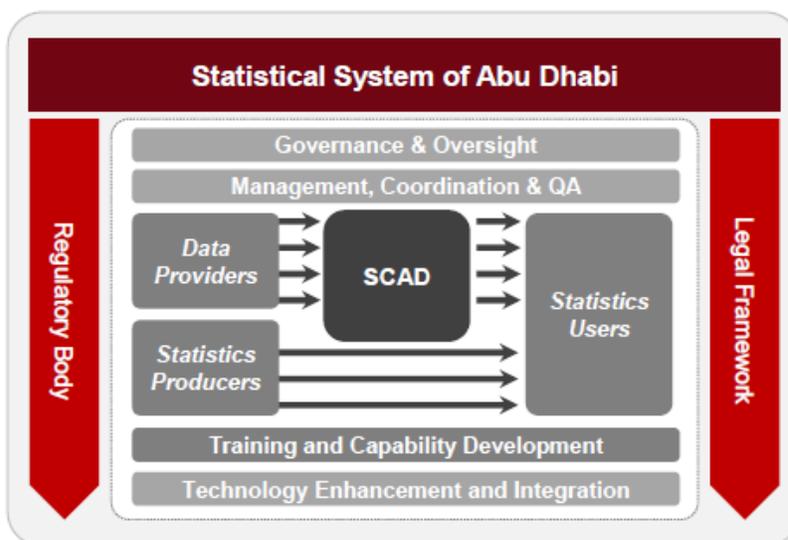
Many standards (eg. GSBPM, GDDS) are not used by all data producers and large variation exists. There are no unified statistical methodology or guideline handbook developed for Abu Dhabi.

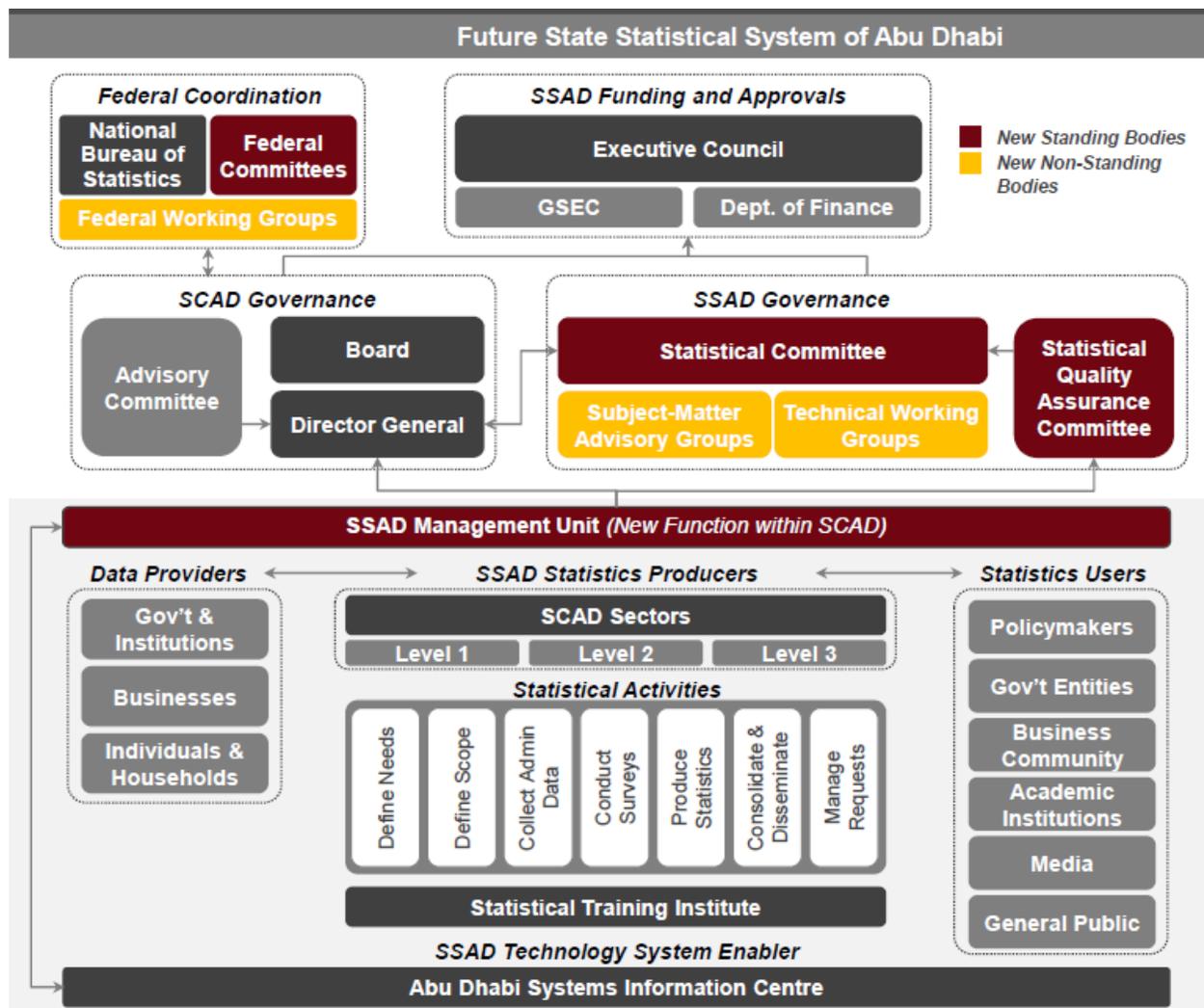
2.6. No priority of statistical work in the Emirate

No prioritization of 'Tier 1' indicators to ensure quality and timeliness of the most critical statistics. Many ADGEs do not have specialists or full time focal points to manage data and have not purchased IT systems (eg. GIS). IT systems from raw data sources are not linked, variations in automation between ADGE; still strong margin for human error.

3. Future model for SSAD

There is a need to establish greater clarity in the governance, oversight and coordination of the Statistical System of Abu Dhabi (SSAD) going forward. The proposed SSAD has been designed to ensure better representation of users and producers, improve oversight and governance of the system and enhance the quality-driven statistical production. The governing principles for the SSAD future state are establishing a high level governance mechanism, set a clear direction and agenda, improve coordination between data producers, effectively monitoring ongoing quality improvements activities and promoting standards and ensuring compliance across the SSAD. The proposed governance bodies will improve coordination and provide needed oversight and quality assurance in the future state SSAD





3.1. Statistical Committee

This include highest level representation of key interest groups (users, producers, institutions and experts). They help to set the direction, priorities and agenda for the system (SSAD Master Plan) and review progress. Provide oversight of SCAD and recommendation on the SSAD Annual Work Program/ Budget and regulate compliance in the system against a set Code of Practice

3.2. SSAD Management Unit

Conduct and coordinate strategic, policy and program planning for the system and monitor implementation of SSAD Master Plan. Act as the secretariat for the Statistical Committee. Develop QA Framework for the system and monitor quality improvement and performance. Coordinate program of 'statistical auditing' against the Code of Practice.

3.3. Statistical QA Committee

Recommend and oversee program of 'statistical auditing' to the Statistical Committee. Independently moderate statistical audits for the data producers in the statistical system and report on quality, integrity and risk issues of SSAD to Statistical Committee

3.4. Federal Committees

Support in harmonizing statistical classifications, standards, methods and indicators at the federal level and promote comparable data in various fields across the UAE, GCC and international level.

4. Initiatives taken to implement the SSAD

4.1. Establishing stakeholder management unit and enhancing stakeholder relationship

To clarify the mandates, requirements, scopes of work and general working terms and expectations between SCAD and other entities in the SSAD. Specific policies, initiatives and guidelines to be implemented should be outlined in SLAs so that all parties are aligned to their roles and are able to develop plans and budgets and allocate resources accordingly.

- The SSAD management function should develop a prioritized list and calendar spelling out which SLAs need to be revised as a matter of importance over the coming 1-2 years. SCAD should develop a comprehensive checklist of required items to be covered in SLAs and review them in subsequent meetings with the entities. Some areas of consideration:
- Revision of SLAs to specify requirements for frequency of supply of data from SCAD to ADGE
- Revision of SLAs to specify requirements for frequency of supply of data from SCAD to ADGE
- Revision of SLAs to specify requirements for electronic exchange
- Revision of SLAs to specify metadata standards required of ADGE
- Revision of SLAs to include instructions for ADGEs on how to communicate changes and what procedures should be followed to mitigate issues

4.2. Implementing the quality framework for admin data

Enable better management of quality across the system in a systematic way by establishing an overarching SSAD-wide Quality Assurance Framework and supporting quality management system. The SSAD QA Framework should consist of quality dimensions relating to processes, statistical inputs and outputs, institutional environment and the statistical system. The QA Framework should include:

- Statistical Quality Policy
- Statistical Quality Manual for Producers
- Statistical Quality Model
- Statistical Quality Standards & Guidelines
- Statistical Quality Templates & Tools
- Self Assessment Template

- GSBPM Progress Assessment Template
- Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire
- Survey Performance Metrics Template
- Statistical Quality Appraisal Template
- Statistical Quality Report Template / Guidelines The SSAD Management Function would coordinate and oversee the development, review and approval of the QA framework.

4.3. Developing statistical methodology and guideline handbook

To harmonize standards in data collection, statistical production, and dissemination for all producers of official statistics in Abu Dhabi and to provide one consolidated official source for all statistical guidelines and standards for Abu Dhabi. An electronic repository defining principles, standards and guidelines for data collection, statistical production, and dissemination, that all producers of official statistics in Abu Dhabi will be required to adhere to. The handbook should include:

- Code of Practice
- Statistical Standards (conceptual frameworks, definitions, classifications, methods)
- Processes (GSBPM)
- Dissemination guidelines

4.4. Improving the efficiency of survey clearing house

Reduce duplication and respondent burden, and enhance quality of surveys in the SSAD. This initiative establishes a survey clearing house (SCH) - a body within SCAD that acts as the central clearance point for all surveys that are run, funded or conducted by ADGEs for the purposes of official statistics. A SCH will help reduce duplication in survey activity, minimize burden on users, and ensure surveys are fit for purpose. Responsibilities of the SCH would include:

- Oversight: Maintain oversight and awareness of all statistical surveys taking place in Abu Dhabi in order to limit overlap in survey scope. Ensure that no surveys are being produced without notification to SCAD/SCH.
- Quality Assurance: Checks all surveys and ensures that best practice methodologies are followed.
- Capability development: Provide ADGEs with technical assistance to improve the quality of their survey data collection and processing
- Maintain and share with all ADGEs a register of all "SCH-approved" surveys

4.5. Implementing E statistics

The purpose of this initiative is to improve quality, innovation, and efficiency through the statistical value chain, by enhancing the adoption of information technologies.

Examine and propose means by which to enhance the use of technology through the statistical value chain in the SSAD. This initiative would require close collaboration between ADSIC and SCAD. Key components should include:

- Automation of data transfer from ADGEs to SCAD, with prescribed data transmission standards (successful completion of e-statistics project)
- Multi-mode surveys (e.g. online questionnaires, computer-assisted interviewing – CATI, CAPI, etc.)

- Adoption of appropriate IT tools to support implementation of standardized statistical production processes (GSBPM)
- Systems to support metadata transmission as per international standards (e.g. SDMX)
- Compatible IT systems to develop administrative and statistical registers that are able to integrate administrative data from multiple sources

4.6. Measuring statistical maturity

5. Key measure of the statistical system

SSAD objectives	KPI	Baseline	2016	2020
Provision of accurate and reliable statistics	Percent KOS Meeting Periodicity Standards	38%	90%	95%
	% of KOS produced from admin source	45%	84%	95%
	Percent of sufficiency of SCAD products to the users needs	86%	89%	95%
	Percent of Services Delivered on Time	73%	77%	95%
	Customer satisfaction with statistical products	51%	76%*	90%
	Level of trust with SCAD	93%	93%*	95%
Develop the Statistic System Governance and Raising Awareness	% statistical awareness	37%	63%*	85%
	%Stakeholder satisfaction	76%	76%*	90%
	Percent of enhanced SLAs in place with ADGEs	7%	30%	100%
Ensure Quality of Statistical Data and Products	% admin datasets complying with the minimum quality standards	63%	63%*	90%
	% of KOS and reports released on time	76%	93%	100%
	% KOS meeting timeliness standards	80%	92%	100%
Build Statistical Capability	SSAD Human Capital Readiness (HCR)	-	25%**	95%

6. Role of business planning calendar

The business planning calendar is established which include all the planning activities related to SSAD work program, performance improvement actions, SLA review and monitoring activities, implementing quality mechanism, training activities, etc...Each activity is coordinated by an internal focal point, and the input for the activities is based on the defined relationship and requirements with the stakeholder.

Key activities	Deliverable	Champion	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stakeholder Mapping							
Identify & categorise stakeholders	List of Stakeholders	SCAD	▲				
Define needs & expectations	Stakeholder Profile	SCAD	▲				
Prioritise stakeholders	Stakeholder Prioritisation	SCAD	▲				
Map stakeholders	Stakeholder Map	SCAD	▲				
Planning Engagement							
High level stakeholder consultation	Stakeholder statistical needs	SCAD		▲			
WoG survey request	WoG survey needs	ADGE		▲			
Training need assessment	Assessment - TNA	SCAD	▲				
SSAD training calendar	Training calendar	SCAD	▲				
SLA review and update	Updated SLA	SCAD		▲			
Define stakeholder communication & engagement plan	Stakeholder Engagement Plan	SCAD		▲			
Stakeholder consultation – Annual work program	Workshop	SCAD			▲		
Publish SSAD Annual work program	SSAD Annual work program	SCAD			▲		
Engaging & Measuring Effectiveness							
Statistical data and information transfer	Statistical data (e-statistics)	ADGE	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Stakeholder meeting – strategy and performance awareness	Engagement Workshop	SCAD			▲		
SLA assessment	Assessment - SLA	SCAD			▲		
Quality assessment – Self assessment request	Assessment - Quality	ADGE				▲	
Quality assessment report	Assessment report	ADGE				▲	
Consolidated performance report & action plan	Action plan	SCAD					▲
SLA progress report	Status report	SCAD	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Entity Specific Engagement Actions							
1...					
2...					
3...					
4...					

7. Conclusion

In this paper we have discussed the activities taken by SCAD to establish the statistical system in Abu Dhabi is discussed. A strategy framework is put in place to overcome the unique challenges and necessary initiatives are worked out to develop and implement the statistical system in the Emirates. The need for a business planning calendar and its role in coordinating and performance improvement activities are also discussed.

References.