



"MISUSE OF STATISTICS: TIME TO SPEAK OUT"

IAOS Virtual Seminar

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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

1. Time to Smell Coffee the unfinished business
2. Context of statistical development
3. Statistics of politics and politics of statistics
4. Unfinished Business
5. What is now new
6. What of Coronavirus
7. Prospects for the future



**Statistics
South Africa**

Preferred supplier of quality statistics

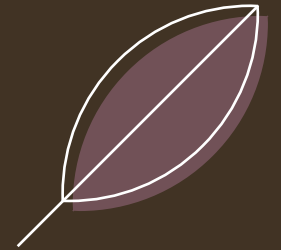


**The unfinished business in the
Fundamental Principles of Official
Statistics: Threats and Responses
High Level Forum on Official Statistics
42nd UNSC
New York**

**Pali Lehohla
Statistician-General South Africa
21 February 2011**



“OR IS IT TIME TO
SMELL THE COFFEE”





Ms Graciela Bevacqua former head of CPI Argentina

- **Government price watchdog asks economists to explain data**
- **Inflation a leading concern among voters as poll nears**
- **Last year, the Fernandez administration invited the IMF to help Indec to
 - **build a national CPI****
- **IMF said in December that it would submit its final recommendations for the new CPI in April (2011)**
- **Last year, Graciela Bevacqua, who was responsible for running Indec's CPI, told a Senate hearing that Moreno had pressured her to doctor inflation data so it would appear innocuously low.**
- **Mrs. Bevacqua said that she was “persecuted and pressured everyday to change the numbers” and accused Mr. Moreno of bullying her and other Indec staffers. Other Indec employees have told similar stories.**

Source [ARGENTINA SALVAJIZADA](#) **3rd February 2011**



Statistics of politics and politics of statistics

MS Graciela Bevacqua former head of CPI Argentina

Has Mr Moreno violated Principle 1. *Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society, serving the Government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honor citizens' entitlement to public information.*

Has Mr Moreno violated Principle 2. *To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.*

What is the IMF going to do and what will it declare as a finding?

Justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done

By

KOMMENTAAR

Positioning A Statistics System which is a daunting task



The NSS goal is to produce high quality statistical information for planning etc.



Statistics of politics and politics of statistics

Mr Walter Radermacher DG Eurostat

Greece is the only euro country that lied about using these complex swap contracts after Eurostat told countries to report them in 2008, Radermacher said.

Radermacher vows new toughness when officials from his staff head to Greece this month to come up with a “solid estimate” of the total value of debt hidden by the opaque contracts. “This is a new era,” he said.

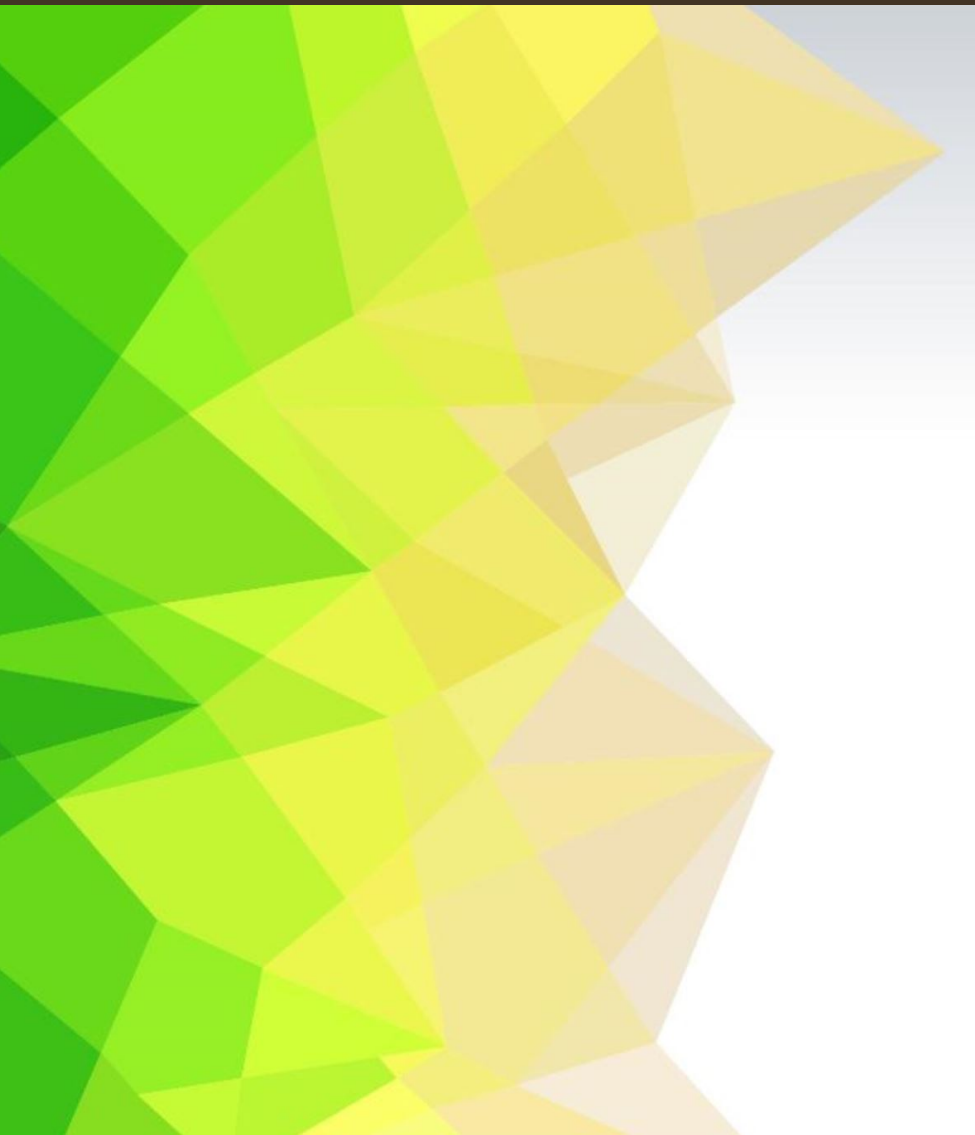
What pathways is Radermacher signalling in terms of a strong and autonomous statistics system? Where does he draw power, legitimacy and confidence from for such a bold statement? Will IMF in the case of Argentina learn something from Radermacher

Principle 3. *To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.*

8 september 2010

JUSTICE MUST NOT ONLY BE DONE BUT MUST BE SEEN TO BE DONE

- ⌚ Are the fundamental principles sufficient for “justice to be done?”
- ⌚ Are the fundamental principles sufficient to comply with “justice must be seen to be done?”
- ⌚ Do the fundamental principles protect peer damage?
- ⌚ Do and should the fundamental principles protect peers from external forces?
- ⌚ What institutional arrangements and practices provide for successful implementation of the fundamental principles?
- ⌚ The case of Andreas Georgio of Greece s a constant reminder of the challenges of the unfinished business



THE CASE OF ARGENTINA

Perhaps all is well that ends well. I was presently surprised that the Argentinian authorities wrote a very generous message to the South African authorities about my contribution to reform in the statistics of Argentine. This gives me hope that Andries will ultimately have justice





“UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT”



STATE OF STATE SYSTEMS (FIVE ELEMENTS)

1. Political and Legislative Mandates
 - *Executive (Cabinet and President)*
 - *Parliament*
2. Judicial mandates
 - *Judiciary*
3. Citizenry mandates
 - *Regular Mandate Refresh*
 - *Civil Society engagement*
4. Public Finance mandates
 - *Auditor General*
 - *Public Finance Management*

and more recently

5. Rights Based mandates
 - *Human Rights Commission,*
 - *Public Protector etc*
- The Pandemic has elevated the role of statistics

START FOR IMPACT

Statistics for
Transparency
Accountability
Results and
Transformation

START anchors durable and capable country
systems that can improve governance

Absence of evidence undermine and threaten :

- ⌚ Decimates accountability and transformation;
- ⌚ Stimulates barren political engagements;
- ⌚ Feeds absence of political will; and
- ⌚ Creates inertia, inaction and malpractices
- ⌚ `The pandemic creates possibilities for the future

THREATS TO FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS

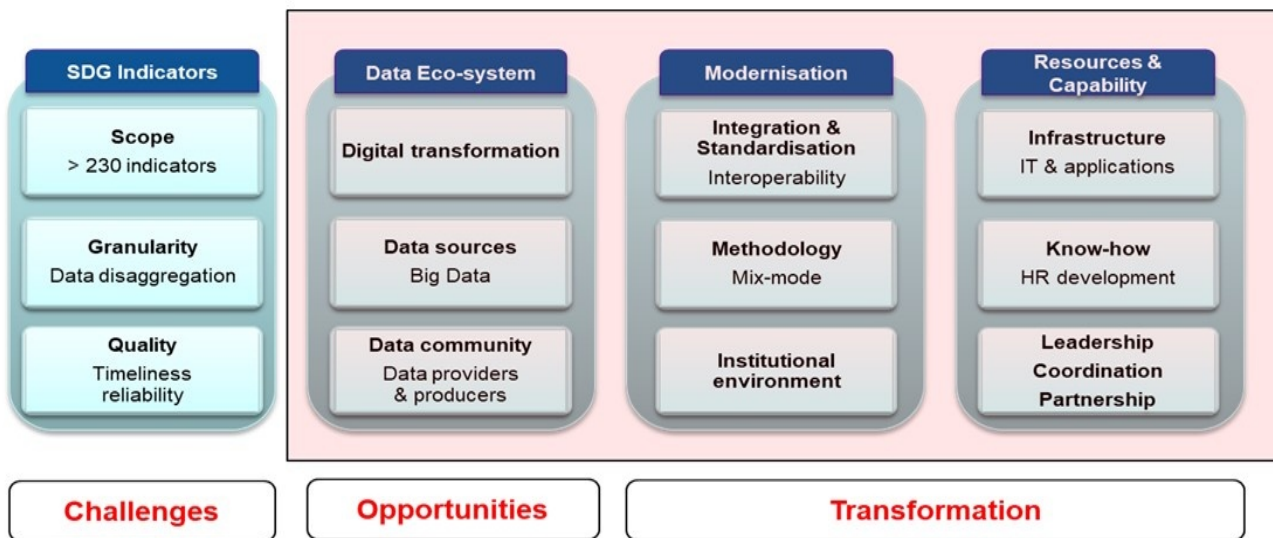
Absence of evidence which undermine and threaten :

- ⌚ accountability and transformation;
- ⌚ stimulates barren political engagements;
- ⌚ feeds absence of political will; and
- ⌚ creates inertia, inaction and malpractices
- ⌚ Information technology as the new threat

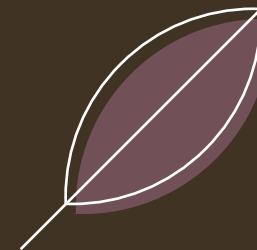


What did change since 2003?

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, and related regional and national development policies, involve a transformation of national statistical systems to grasp new opportunities



THE ADVANTAGE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND THE 2030 AGENDA



- [overview](#)
- [Members of the Advisory Group](#)
- [General Outline of the Handbook](#)
- [Chapter I - Introduction \(in progress\)](#)
- [Chapter II - Overview \(in progress\)](#)
- [Chapter III - Basis of Official Statistics \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter IV - National Statistical System \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter V - National Statistical Office \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter VI - Users and their needs \(new\)](#)
- [Chapter VII - Quality Management \(currently under revision\)](#)
- [Chapter VIII - Data Sources, Collection and Processing \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter IX - Analysis and analytical frameworks \(new\)](#)
- [Chapter X - Dissemination and User Communication \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter XI - Common Statistical Infrastructure \(new\)](#)
- [Chapter XII - Human Resources Management and Development \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter XIII - Data, information and knowledge management \(new\)](#)
- [Chapter XIV - Information Technology Management \(updated on July 13, 2020\)](#)
- [Chapter XV - Management of buildings, finance and physical space \(new\)](#)
- [Chapter XVI - International Statistical System \(in progress\)](#)
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WHAT THE HANDBOOK FOCUSES

