

Code of Statistical Practice

Need for a Code of Statistical Practice

1. The Indian Statistical System is a decentralized system. The official statistics are generated as a by-product of administration and through censuses and surveys, including evaluation studies and case studies. There are also occasions when statistics produced in the private sector are used by government agencies. Besides, the private sector also produces some statistics which are disseminated by them from time to time. There are also cases where the private sector enterprises procure statistical data/ reports from the Government Departments and disseminate them with or without value addition, at times even without disclosing the source from which the data/ reports were obtained. These situations are likely to cause confusion among the public, particularly the users. Multiplicity of producers of data, particularly on same or similar characteristics have been giving rise to conflicting statistics, being placed in the public domain.

2. It may not be possible to restrict production of statistics by multiple agencies, particularly when private agencies intend to produce statistics that are same or similar to those being produced by government agencies. But, it may be possible and also necessary to lay down a set of principles in the form of good practices, which if the agencies choose to, could follow.

3. The statistical reports and/ or the unit level data are either not disseminated regularly or disseminated without specifying the sources and methodology used. As a result, the users and the public at large are inconvenienced, mainly in the following ways, -

- (1) They have no way by which release of a statistical product could be expected by a certain time, as the number of government agencies is very large and distributed geographically across the country.
- (2) If the sources and methodology are not known, the users may not understand the manner in which they can use the products and the limitations in the use of data.
- (3) If a statistical report is disseminated and the corresponding unit level data is not disseminated, the users may not believe in the product.
- (4) The unit level data could be used for statistical purposes in a manner other than what the producer of a report from that data could have envisaged. In the absence of availability of unit level data, the users will have to be satisfied with the manner in which the data has been summarised or aggregated in the reports by the concerned agencies.

4. In addition to the above, there are a few other situations, such as not advising the informants about the purpose of collecting data and the manner in which their identities would be kept confidential, and no precautions being taken while storing data, which need to be addressed while laying down good practices.

Scope

5. In view of the aforesaid reasons, it is necessary to lay down some principles in the form of good practices, which may be followed by government as well as private agencies. The principles, if followed

by the concerned agencies, would facilitate users, the media and the public to understand and assess the veracity and credibility of the products.

Whom it would apply

6. The principles laid down hereunder are intended to be followed voluntarily by the government as well as private agencies. The agencies may, while collecting data or disseminating statistical reports and/ or unit level data, on their own declare whether they have followed all or any of the principles and on the contrary also may declare the reasons as to why all or a few of the principles could not be followed by them. If feasible, they may pre-announce deviations from the principles and the reasons thereof, in respect of each statistical product.

Terminology used

7. In this Code of Statistical Practice, unless the context otherwise requires,

- (1) "official statistics" means statistics derived by the Government agencies from statistical surveys, administrative and registration records and other forms and papers, the statistical analyses of which are published regularly, or planned to be published regularly, or could reasonably be published regularly;
- (2) "government agency" means any Ministry or Department or its instrumentality, in the Union Government or in a State Government or in a Union territory Administration, or any local government that is to say, Panchayats or Municipalities, as the case may be; and
- (3) "informant" means any person, who supplies or is required to supply statistical information and includes an employee of any Government agency and a owner or occupier or person in-charge or his authorised representative in respect of persons or a firm registered under the Indian Partnership Act, 1932 or a co-operative society registered under any Co-operative Societies Act or a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or any association recognised or registered under any law for the time being in force.

Principles

8. The following principles in respect of different types of statistical activities are laid down under the Code of Statistical Practice.

Collection of data

- (1) At the time of data collection, the informants shall be told of the purpose for which data is being collected from them and the manner in which the data collected would be disseminated.
- (2) The informants shall be told of the manner, the sources to be tapped and the persons to be contacted for the purpose of accessing data collected from each of them or about them.
- (3) At the time of data collection, each informant shall be told whether furnishing data by him is voluntary or a statutory requirement and in case of statutory requirement, the consequences of not furnishing data and of furnishing false data.

Release of statistical reports and unit level data

- (4) An agency producing statistics shall publish a calendar of release in respect of all its regular statistical products.

- (5) In case of pre-release of calendar for regular statistical products, each agency shall publish the reasons for deviation, if any, for delay in release of any product as per the calendar.
- (6) Unit level data needs to be placed in the public domain in respect of all the statistical reports and publications released.
- (7) The unit level data must be disseminated only after suppressing or deleting identification details of informants and in a manner that even after such suppression/ deletion, no data could be identified as pertaining to a particular informant by the process of elimination.
- (8) All statistical releases and publications including unit level data shall provide references to metadata, methodologies used, sources of detailed concepts and definitions followed for its production.

Explanation: Metadata or 'data about data' is a specific form of documentation and refers to the information that is made available to users in order to improve their understanding of the data. Comprehensive and complete metadata helps users to make informed and full use of data and minimises the likelihood of misuse.

- (9) Metadata in respect of all the statistical releases and publications including unit level data shall also be made available to the widest possible audience through appropriate electronic portals and other dissemination channels.
- (10) 'Discovery metadata', i.e., information enabling users to identify and access data relevant to their needs shall be compiled for every resource and shall be made available in a comprehensive catalogue in both paper and electronic format.

Explanation:

- (a) The details shall be kept up to date, be easily accessible and shall contain information about the title, content, geographic context, timeliness, availability and accessibility of each resource together with appropriate contact details. Access shall be enhanced through the provision of indexes, and availability through web-based search engines.
 - (b) Additional metadata shall be made available to users concerning the more technical details of each resource. This will comprise, among other things, a description of the data collection arrangements including sample design, questionnaires, coding instructions and classifications, editing, validation procedures including auto-corrections if any made in the data, methodologies, and method of data collection, quality of data, confidentiality and anonymisation procedures and any other relevant materials.
 - (c) Metadata attached to electronically held data which is to be preserved permanently, or for a significant length of time, shall include information about the software used to arrange and process the resource. This is to ensure that the data can continue to be understood, manipulated and accessed over time.
- (11) In respect of reports or data disseminated on the basis of data or reports of any other statistical agency, reference to such sources and the value addition made before dissemination needs to be explained. In case, there is no value addition, the product shall not be sold even at negligible cost to customers without the consent of the original producer. Even while disseminating such products free of cost, the source of production and the manner in which it was acquired needs to be quoted.

- (12) All statistical publications and unit level data, including those put out in websites, shall indicate contact details of persons whom the users can approach for any clarifications.
- (13) In case of periodical statistical reports/ publications and data releases, a separate section should indicate changes made in methodologies, practices, concepts as applicable to the publication/ data from the previous publication.
- (14) In all cases of periodical release of key statistical indicators, the following aspects should be clearly brought out in each release.
- Extent of new data actually used, either as percentage of responses or as a percentage of estimates based on direct data
 - Revisions made in the figures already released and reasons for the revisions
 - Impact of revisions in terms of percentage change
 - Date of next release
- (15) All releases in respect of reports of sample surveys should provide for the estimates of sampling errors of key estimates.
- (16) Identities of informants shall not, without their consent, be revealed to anyone not directly involved in the statistical work in the concerned agency and, shall not be used for any non-statistical purposes.
- (17) The measures taken to store statistical reports and unit level data and the manner in which confidentiality of data to prevent its misuse particularly where it contains details of informants would be maintained, shall be spelt out.
- (18) The prices to be collected from customers purchasing statistical reports/ publications and unit level data, the manner in which prices are arrived at and the conditions, if any, prescribed in their use shall be spelt out.
- (19) The mechanism of receiving complaints and queries from users, customers and informants needs to be evolved and made public. The action taken on the complaints also needs to be made public through periodic reports.

Guidelines on Outsourcing statistical activities

Background

1. Statistical activities include activities such as designing methodology for surveys and censuses, data collection, including administrative statistics, data entry in electronic media, data validation, data processing and compilation, tabulation and report writing, data storage, providing access to data and dissemination of data and reports. These activities have to be performed in a professional way to earn public confidence in statistics, particularly when the statistics are produced within the Government.

Identification of statistical activity for outsourcing

2. For the purpose of identifying a statistical activity for outsourcing, the following points are normally kept in view.

- (1) A statistical project needs to be framed in such a way that its objectives are clear and it is intended to fulfill the objectives sought to be achieved.
- (2) All possible methodological alternatives suitable for a statistical project and the corresponding advantages and disadvantages need to be studied and the best possible alternative in accordance with the judgment of the concerned Government agency needs to be arrived at.
- (3) In case of a Census or a sample survey or a case study or an evaluation study, the list of indicators which are required to be measured and the level (say, geographical unit) at which estimates or measurement values are required is to be identified.
- (4) In cases where technology appropriate for the job is not known to the Government agency, it is advisable to initially go for a pre-qualification bid to obtain suggestions from the bidders on the available technological options.
- (5) Wherever feasible, tabulation plan and list of parameters to be estimated need to be specified first and the methodology including data collection formats should be prepared to meet the requirements so specified.

Need for guidelines

3. In the Government setup, need arises to take up statistical activities as a onetime exercise or for the purpose of augmenting resources to meet some time bound goals in respect of regular statistical activities. Outsourcing is a solution in such situations. The guidelines are guidelines and these are intended to bring notice to the concerned authorities about the requirements that they may keep in view while entering into contracts on outsourcing. The main goal of outsourcing a statistical activity should be to satisfactorily complete the activity within a time frame.

Terminology used

4. In these guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires,
 - (1) "official statistics" means statistics derived by the Government agencies from statistical surveys, administrative and registration records and other forms and papers, the statistical analyses of which are published regularly, or planned to be published regularly, or could reasonably be published regularly;

- (2) "Government agency" means any Ministry or Department or its instrumentality, in the Union Government or in a State Government or in a Union territory Administration, or any local government that is to say, Panchayats or Municipalities, as the case may be;
- (3) "statistical project" includes any item of work on official statistics decided to be taken up by any Government agency through outsourcing relating to designing methodology for a Census or a sample survey or a case study or a evaluation study, collection of data either primary or secondary by any method including observation method and from administrative records, data preparation electronically on the basis of data collected/ records maintained, field supervision of data collection, quality scrutiny and validation of data, tabulation of data, preparation of general and analytical reports, storage and security of data and includes planning and project management activities, documentation and other activities incidental to all these activities;
- (4) "outsourcing" means execution of a statistical project through an arrangement which involves a Government agency making use of a service from a private service provider;
- (5) "informant" means any person, who supplies or is required to supply statistical information and includes an employee of any Government agency and a owner or occupier or person in-charge or his authorised representative in respect of persons or a firm registered under the Indian Partnership Act, 1932 or a co-operative society registered under any Co-operative Societies Act or a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or a society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or any association recognised or registered under any law for the time being in force;
- (6) "sensitive information" means information or an opinion about an identified individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinion, membership of a political association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of a professional or trade association, membership of a trade union, sexual preferences or practices, criminal record; health information about an individual; or genetic information about an individual that is not otherwise health information; and
- (7) "contractor" means a service provider, private or otherwise, to whom a statistical project may be outsourced.

General Guidelines

5. No core statistical activity of a Government agency should be outsourced on a regular basis to the extent possible.
6. A Government agency may outsource a statistical project to any contractor, who in turn may engage agencies or persons to perform different jobs relating to the project or in the alternative, the Government agency may directly engage persons on contract basis for performing the jobs. Both these situations are outsourcing arrangements.
7. A Government agency must clearly identify the components of a statistical project to be outsourced with all appropriate technical details and action plan. Main goal shall be to ensure statistical product quality and timeliness of completion of outsourced statistical project.
8. The following aspects may be considered while drawing-up an outsourcing contract.
 - (1) It is advisable that every outsourcing arrangement in respect of a statistical project by any Government agency shall be in the form of a written executable contract.

- (2) Any statistical project to be outsourced must always be awarded according to the principles of fair competition, as generally understood and accepted.
- (3) On completion of an outsourced statistical project by a contractor, the contractor shall have no priority claim in future for similar statistical projects.
- (4) The job description for each person engaged in a statistical project needs to be specified. This is necessary for projects given to individuals or directly handled by Govt. agencies. In case of projects handled by contractors, the project proposals should include details of various types of persons who could be engaged along with their job descriptions and minimum qualifications.
- (5) The Contractor may be required to inform the concerned Government agency if the work to be carried out for that Government agency is to be combined or syndicated in the same project with the work for other Government agencies or private agencies.
- (6) The Contractor shall be required to inform the concerned Government agency, when any part of the work for that Government agency is to be subcontracted outside the Contractors' own organisation (including the use of any outside consultants), the identity of any such sub-contractor.
- (7) Contractor shall be obliged to avoid possible clashes of interest between the services provided to a number of Government agencies.
- (8) Contractors and persons involved in any outsourced statistical project must not, whether knowingly or negligently, act in any way that could bring discredit on the statistical profession or lead to loss of public confidence.
- (9) The contract shall stand automatically terminated at the expiry of contractual period. The notice period required from either side for termination of contract needs to be specified.
- (10) Contractors and persons engaged in a statistical project may be required to ensure the security and confidentiality of all statistical records in their possession, during the execution and after the cessation of the contract. They may be required not to disclose or use any information or record that has been in their knowledge in the performance of contract.
- (11) During the course of the contract or thereafter the Contractors may be required not to undertake any non-statistical activities like database marketing involving data about individuals which could be used for direct marketing and promotional activities.
- (12) The conditions, such as being guilty of any insubordination, intemperance or other misconduct or any breach or non-performance of any of the provisions of the contract or of any rules pertaining to breach of public service, by which the Government agency may terminate the contract without notice may also be specified.
- (13) When a Government agency decides to directly augment manpower on contract basis for performing different jobs, it is advisable to pick up persons for the contract from the place or its surroundings where the contractual work needs to be performed. The manner of identifying persons suitable for the contract may be advertised in that area in the local media as also to the Employment Exchanges located thereof. The results of the identification process shall be declared immediately on its conclusion.

- (14) All items such as machinery, equipments and consumables acquired with the cost of a Government agency for the purpose of execution of a statistical project as a part of the contract may be treated as Government assets.
- (15) The Contractors may be required to maintain proper accounts of the expenditure incurred for any statistical project. Most importantly, they may be required to furnish supporting documents of payments made to persons engaged by them.
- (16) Each Contract may specify schedule of payments between parties and to persons engaged in a statistical project. It may also specify penalties, if any, for delays as well as indemnifications against any and all responsibilities, claims, demands, suits, judgments, damages and losses, including the costs, fees and expenses in connection therewith or incidental thereto for: (i) any injury, illness or death to the persons engaged in the project, attributable to the performance of services under the terms of the contract; (ii) any losses, thereof, damage to, or destruction of any of properties; arising out of, or in any way connected with performance of the contract.
- (17) The Contract may contain the usual provisions relating to performance security, earnest money deposit and production of Bank guarantee against advances payable.
- (18) The Government agency or its representative shall have the right to inspect and/ or to test the material and services to confirm their conformity to the Contract. The specifications in a Contract may include what inspections and tests the Government agency requires and where they are to be conducted. The Government agency may notify the Contractor in writing of the identity of any representatives deployed for these purposes.
- (19) The Government agency's right, to inspect, test and, where necessary, reject the material and services may in no way be limited or waived by reason of the same having previously been inspected, tested and passed by the Government agency or its representative. The Contractor may make available for inspection and examination such records, plans and other documents, as may be necessary.
- (20) Every Contractor may be required to report periodically the progress of work carried out, to the concerned Government agency.
- (21) A Government agency may reserve the right to omit any item(s) from the scope of a Contract or to increase or decrease the quantities of items by a certain degree (say 25 %) from the quantities indicated in the Contract specifications, without any change in unit price or other terms and conditions.
- (22) Where a contractor has to use his own equipment, software etc., in the execution of a statistical project, he may be required, at his cost, to take all necessary steps including replacement if necessary to maintain the equipment, software etc., used during the currency of the contract for the smooth flow of work as per the prescribed time schedule. During the period of maintenance/ repair of the equipment, software etc., the contractor may be required to hire such equipment, software etc., in order to ensure non-stoppage of the work.
- (23) The Government agency on receipt of any complaint shall immediately communicate the Contractor of only those details of the complaint, as may be necessary to minimize any breach or prevent further breaches of the contract.
- (24) If any Contractor engaged in a statistical project receives any complaint from any source, he shall immediately communicate the complaint to the concerned Government agency.

- (25) Every contractor and every person engaged in a statistical project may, on completion of his work, be required to handover all the records and documents and furnish a certificate to that effect to the concerned Government agency or to an officer authorised for the purpose by that agency.
- (26) Persons engaged in a statistical project, shall be made aware of their obligations, not to access, use, disclose or retain personal information except in performing their duties of employment or contractual obligations; and are informed that failure to comply would render themselves liable to legal (civil and criminal) consequences.

Outsourcing collection of statistics

9. In respect of contracts for collection of data, the following aspects may be considered for suitable incorporation into the contracts.

- (1) The identity of the Government agency and the Contractor may be made available to informants at the time of collection of data. Informants may also be told or be able to find without difficulty or expense, their contact details. Address, telephone numbers or websites of the Government agency and the Contractor may be provided so that informants can check the bonafides of the person collecting data without difficulty and significant cost to themselves. It is advisable that persons engaged for collection of data carry proper photo identity cards containing the aforesaid details.
- (2) Informants' identities must not, without their written consent, be revealed to anyone not directly involved in the statistical project or used for any non-statistical purpose.
- (3) Nobody shall be adversely affected or harmed as a direct result of furnishing information in a statistical project.
- (4) If informants' co-operation in a statistical project is entirely voluntary at all stages, they must be so informed when asking for their co-operation.
- (5) In cases of statutory data collection, the informants need to be told about the relevant provisions for data collection including legal consequences for failure to furnish information or furnishing false information.
- (6) Each informant may be informed of the manner in which the informant could access the data collected from the informant in a statistical project, as also of the measures taken to deny access on that information to others.
- (7) Persons engaged for data collection shall avoid interviewing informants at inappropriate or inconvenient times. They should also avoid the use of unnecessarily long interviews.
- (8) Contractors and those working on their behalf (e.g. persons engaged for data collection) must not, in order to secure informants' co-operation, make statements or promises that are knowingly misleading or incorrect – for example, about the likely length of the interview or about the possibilities of being re-interviewed on a later occasion. Any such statements and assurances given to informants must be fully honoured.
- (9) Children are defined as being 'less than 14 years' and young people are defined as being '14 – 17 years'. No child under 14 years shall be interviewed without parents'/guardians'/responsible adults' consent. In the case of young people, where the information to be collected

is “sensitive information”, the consent of a responsible adult must be sought. Where the data collection involves any subjects or circumstances that might reasonably be judged to be of concern to parents or guardians of the young person (e.g. violence, drug taking), but does not include “sensitive information”, it is advisable to seek the consent of a responsible adult. Social norms, that varies community-wise, should not be crossed

- (10) It is advisable to avoid data collection in places where persons other than the informant or his family members have free access and where an informant could reasonably expect to be observed and/or overheard by other people present. In case of collecting sensitive information and any other information which an informant could reasonably feel inconvenience to furnish even in the presence of his family members, the data shall not be collected in a manner that the informant could not be observed and/or overheard by his family members.
- (11) The number of enumerators and supervisors needed for each geographical unit needs to be specified.
- (12) The minimum qualifications, including knowledge of local language and social norms, for the position of enumerator/ supervisor and the manner of identifying them for the contract job needs to be specified. They should not be taken on the regular rolls of the Government agency even on ad hoc basis. They should not be required to attend office of the agency on days where they are not required to perform any job relating to the contract. In other words, when there is no job under the contract to be performed on any day, the enumerator/ supervisor may be free to take up any other assignment.
- (13) It is advisable to identify enumerators, supervisors and other staff required in the contract or project on the condition that they shall not be entitled to get any claims, rights, interests or further benefits in terms of regularisation or consideration of further appointment to any equivalent post(s) or any other post(s) whatsoever, including any claims for further casual, ad-hoc, temporary or regular service in any Government agency.
- (14) Where female informants participate in data collection in a significant number, adequate number of female enumerators/ supervisors need to be recruited to eliminate gender bias in the data.
- (15) The data enumerators shall be provided with all the technical material for carrying out the work assigned to them, such as instruction manuals, data collection formats, and any equipment required for the purpose.
- (16) Before being put on the job, the enumerators and other supervisory staff need to be imparted detailed training on the methodology that they have to follow in data collection.
- (17) Where significant costs are to be incurred for imparting training to the enumerators and other supervisory staff and remuneration is to be paid to them for attending training programme, it is advisable to incorporate a condition in the contract that the remuneration for attending training would become payable only after certain amount of work is done after receiving training.
- (18) Specific time bound norms of work need to be prescribed for the enumerators and supervisors.
- (19) Norms for field work in a day/ week/ month needs to be specified keeping in view the requirement, if any, of covering seasonal activities of the informants.

- (20) Norms for field supervision (on-the spot as well as surprise) and levels of supervision need to be specified in such a way that it covers the work of as many enumerators as possible and spread evenly throughout the period of data collection.
- (21) At times when remuneration is fixed in terms of number of formats of data collection filled up, the enumerators may try to fill up more number of formats than what is normally possible, which affects the quality of data. Similar situations could be there even in case of supervisors. This aspect needs to be kept in view while fixing the norms for data collection.
- (22) Place of work for each person engaged in the contract also requires to be specified.
- (23) Quality scrutiny of data collected and where required making back-checks to the field to meet the concerned informants to ascertain the correctness of data from informants need to be provided for.
- (24) Paying piece rated remuneration to the enumerators and supervisors in terms of the quantum of work done by them subject to quality satisfaction is advisable. The deductions in payment as also termination of contract for not being able to fulfill the prescribed norms and standards of work need to be specified in very clear terms.
- (25) Where data collection work in a geographical unit, say a village or urban block takes more than 2-3 days for one enumerator, it is advisable to send a team of enumerators along with one supervisor to set-up a camp to get the work completed expeditiously. In case of prolonged work by one enumerator, it should be ensured that the quality of work does not suffer because of possible human lethargy/ home sickness.
- (26) The enumerators shall be encouraged to provide clarifications in respect of points raised during field inspections, and quality scrutiny by the concerned Supervisors.
- (27) The findings of supervisory staff and other officers who conduct field supervision (on-the spot as well as surprise) and quality scrutiny shall be documented.

Outsourcing storage, security and dissemination of data

10. The storage, security and dissemination of official statistics, reports and the individual data collected from the informants are very important activities. All care and caution has to be taken by every Government agency on these aspects. Where need arises to outsource these activities, the following safeguards may be kept in view.

- (1) De-identification means the removal from identified information of any details that identify the informant, or from which the identity of the informant can reasonably be ascertained, without retaining a means by which the information could be re-identified. De-identification is thus a permanent and irreversible process. Statistical projects should be designed in a manner that makes de-identification practicable.
- (2) All indications of the identity of informants must be permanently removed from the records of information that they have provided as soon as they are no longer necessary for statistical purposes. If information exists in a physical form that makes the removal of the identity of informants impracticable (e.g. on paper), the information should be recorded in another medium and the original records destroyed.
- (3) The requirement to destroy or delete records does not apply if the destruction, deletion or de-identification would involve the destruction or deletion of information relating to other individuals.

- (4) Where it is necessary to retain identifying details, they must be stored securely and separately from other information that the informants have provided (e.g. with the linkage maintained by the use of an intervening variable). Access to such material must be restricted to authorised personnel within the Contractor's own organisation for specific statistical purposes (e.g. field administration, data processing, panel or repetitive survey programmes like price data collection, or other forms of data collection involving recall interviews). There should be no attempt to make a separate duplicate copy of identity details.
- (5) Where data collected on paper formats is treated as confidential because of its containing identification details of informants, steps should be taken, wherever feasible, to remove that part of the paper formats where identification details are recorded and the rest may be given to the Contractor for preparing data electronically. If linkage of electronic data with the part of paper formats is required to be maintained, a system of linking numbers or codes need to be developed. In the alternative, the Contractor may be asked to perform the job in the premises of the Government agency where tight security measures could be imposed to avoid leakage of data in any manner outside the premises.
- (6) To preserve informants' anonymity not only their names and addresses but also any other information provided by or about them that could in practice identify them (e.g. their Company and job title) must be safeguarded. These anonymity requirements relate to any records from which the identity of the informant is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, including an informant's photograph, verbatim quotes and audio or video taped interviews.
- (7) The aforesaid anonymity requirements may be relaxed only under the safeguards, namely, (a) where the informant has given explicit written permission for this; and (b) where disclosure of names to a third party (e.g. a sub-contractor) is essential for any statistical purpose such as data processing or for further interview with the informant for an independent fieldwork quality check) or for further follow-up. The original Contractor shall be responsible for ensuring that any such third party agrees to observe the safeguards.
- (8) The Contractor must explicitly agree with the Government agency, specific arrangements regarding the responsibilities for security of data and for dealing with any complaints or damages arising due to faulty data/ services or data misuse. Such responsibilities will normally rest with the Government agency, but the Contractor must ensure that data are correctly stored and handled while in the Contractor's charge.
- (9) All documentation, data, reports and material/ data stored electronically that emerges out of the execution of a statistical project shall be the property of the concerned Government agency. The following records must remain the property of the Government agency and must not be disclosed by the Contractors to any third party without the Government agency's permission:
 - a) statistical project briefs, specifications, technical and training inputs, and other information provided by the Government agency.
 - b) the statistical data and findings from a statistical project (except in the case of syndicated or multi-Government agency projects or services where the same data are available to more than one Government agency).
- (10) If there is a requirement of post tabulation scrutiny and report writing, they are to be specified.

- (11) The manner and responsibility for releasing data or reports, if any, on completion of tabulation need to be specified.
- (12) While disseminating data, contractors shall ensure to inform users that the users are obliged
 a) to acknowledge the source of data in their publications and b) to accept responsibility of views expressed in reports based on the data.

integrated manner. It was felt necessary that all Ministries own DevInfo India data system as a part of their core statistical process built on a common platform, which can serve as an interface for a unified system of cross-sectoral analysis of data. Towards this objective, the CSO proposed that the following elements need to be recognized.

- a. Obligatory ownership of DevInfo India by all central Ministries that produce data for DevInfo India system
- b. Access to web-based version of DevInfo India through the web-portals of the Ministries
- c. Inter-Ministerial mechanism for enabling DevInfo India evolve as a process
- d. Concurrent on-line updation of database as and when new datasets are brought out by source Ministries
- e. Use of DevInfo India database for facilitating decision making and policy formulation in the administrative ministries.

7.43 The Commission endorsed the initiatives taken by the CSO and recommended that the MOSPI may co-ordinate with all the Central Ministries in implementing the aforesaid elements.

Proposal of the MOSPI on integration of economic census with Caste and/ or BPL census

7.44 Having conducted the 5th Economic Census in 2005, the MOSPI proposed to conduct the 6th Economic Census during June-September, 2011. A Standing Committee on 6th Economic Census has been constituted on 29th January, 2009 under the Chairmanship of the CSI for providing over-all direction and guidance for the conduct of Economic Census in all the States and UTs.

7.45 It was reported to the NSC that the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the Additional RGI met the CSI on 12th November, 2010 and apprised him about the proposal for conduct of Caste Census as well as Below Poverty Line (BPL) Census during 2011. They informed that the Ministry of Home Affairs has been of the view that since the three Censuses are being conducted simultaneously, it would be appropriate that the exercise is taken up simultaneously by suitably integrating data collection instruments and processing of data of the three Censuses. It was also informed that the integration would help in economising both in terms of manpower requirement for the three Censuses and also in reducing the overall cost for such an exercise. It was also reported that the Ministry of Home Affairs, due to time bound requirement of Caste Census, proposes to issue an Ordinance so that the services of school teachers may be utilized for the conduct of these Censuses. The CSI suggested that the DG, CSO along with Addl. DG, CSO (Economic Statistics Division) and Addl. RGI may consider schedules of the three Censuses and examine possibility of their integration.

7.46 The proposal of integration of the schedules were discussed in a meeting held in the Chamber of the DG, CSO on 15th November, 2010, which was attended by Additional RGI, Addl. DG, CSO (Economic Statistics Division) and the Dy. DG (Economic Census). In the meeting, it was observed that the