

Quality in Official Statistics

Experience of Lebanon

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At the beginning of my career, I joined the Lebanese Ministry of Finance team in 1997 where I was appointed to the Income Tax Department as Chief Tax Controller. In 2002, I was appointed Head of the Audit and Refund Department at the VAT Directorate. And in 2005, I was appointed Head of the Legislation and Tax Policies Department at the VAT Directorate. In September 2023, I was appointed Director General of the Central Administration of Statistics. I hold a BA in Business Administration and an MBA in Auditing.

1- CAS mission according to the law

- Collect, process, produce and disseminate social and economic statistics at the national level.
- Technical supervision of statistics produced by ministries and other public administrations.
- Improving methods and harmonizing statistics among all statistical producers.
- Respecting the confidentiality of information provided by individuals, households and institutions.
- Equal access to all user's statistical releases at the same time.

2- CAS challenges

- Lack of National statistical system.
- Lack of Legislative decrees for the Law.
- CAS by law is not the responsible of conducting census of population.
- Within the Structure of CAS, there are no Quality, communication and Human resources Units.

3- Current situation of the Quality of Statistics produced by CAS and Ministries

3.1-Social statistics: GSBPM

Overarching processes

- Specify needs.
- Design.
- Build.
- Collect.
- Process.
- Analyze.
- Disseminate.
- Evaluate.

Challenges

- Surveys are not conducted on a regular basis.
- Old sampling frame.
- Lack of human resources.

3.2-Economic Statistics

a- Consumer Price Index

Current situation

- Coordination with IMF during all the phases.
- Data collection (Tablets).
- Technical and office control to compare prices with previous prices and between governorates.
- Publishing all the concepts and definitions, and the methodology of work.
- Dissemination on a monthly basis.

Challenges

- Old weights.
- Lack of human resources.
- Due to the economic crisis, Inability to collect prices from all regions as done before.

b- National Accounts

Current situation

- Coordination with IMF with written approval from the IMF on the methodology.
- Consistency in following the SNA 2008.
- Technical control to compare values and quantities.
- Office control to decide about outliers.
- Publishing all the concepts and definitions, and the methodology of work.
- Publishing all the exceptional and urgent methods especially for the late years.
- Dissemination on a yearly and quarterly basis.

Challenges

- Lack of data sources intensified in the latest period.
- Different exchange rates for USD into Lebanese pound.
- Old benchmark year 2011.
- Using only CPI as deflator.

3.3- Administrative Statistics

Current Situation

- Office control to compare figures with previous ones.
- Publishing only aggregated data in the statistical year book and time series.

Challenges

- No coordination with the ministries during the preparation, the data collection and processing.
- Lack of Human resources at CAS for follow-up with all ministries.

4- Principles of communication and dissemination

- Transparency: Clearly marked corrections and changes.
- Accessibility: Statistics and analyses are public, free and accessible to everyone (Anonymous raw data LFHLCs 2018/2019).
- Comprehensibility: Published definitions and methodology.
- Independence: All users have access to the statistics and analyses at the same time.
- Confidentiality: Protected data Privacy on individuals and establishments.

5- Expectations from the sector

- Implementation of quality of statistics tools.
- Reporting on quality measurement.
- Benefit from the experiences of participating countries.
