Global Assessment Report

National System of Official Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan

March 2013

Table of content:

PREFACE

The Global Assessment of the National System of Official Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan (the Assessment) was jointly undertaken by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Commission (Eurostat). The assessment process was initiated in response to a request by the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (TAJSTAT) to the UNECE made in July 2011.

The assessment is based on an extensive review performed during two assessment missions with the objective to describe and analyse institutional and organisational aspects of the National Statistical System including the compliance of Tajik official statistics with international and European standards, norms and recommendations. The first mission took place during 26-30 March 2012 and the second mission during 9-13 July 2012. The assessor team included Ms. Andrea Scheller, Head of the EFTA Statistical Office, Ms. Siv Irene Pedersen, statistician at Eurostat, Ms. Zeynep Orhun, statistician at UNECE, Mr. Heinrich Brüngger, consultant on behalf of EFTA and former Head of the UNECE Statistical Division, and Mr. Gabriel Gamez, UNECE Regional Adviser in Statistics (leading expert).

The missions to Dushanbe have included sessions with experts from TAJSTAT (Central Statistical Office, territorial statistical offices and the Main Computing Centre) as well as with experts from relevant ministries, the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan (NBRT) and other national and international stakeholders (see annex 2). The assessors have utilised materials available at UNECE, Eurostat and other international organisations alongside detailed methodological descriptions provided by TAJSTAT or available on its website. TAJSTAT also completed a detailed guidance questionnaire, which was made available before the first mission to Dushanbe, and covered all relevant institutional, organisational and technical aspects, including the compliance with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

The Management of TAJSTAT have been actively involved in discussions on the content of this Global Assessment. The assessment team greatly appreciates the availability and openness of communication with the Director of TAJSTAT, Ms. Mukhammadieva and her staff as well as with representatives from other partners and stakeholders. The assessors also thank Ms. Liubov Kamosko, Ms. Alice Kovarikova and Ms. Anna Viscovatih, interns at UNECE, for their important contribution to this report.

We hope that the Global Assessment report and its recommendations, addressed not only to TAJSTAT, but also to all producers of official statistics and stakeholders of the National Statistical System, will be of benefit to the further development of statistical capacities in the Republic of Tajikistan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Coherent, reliable and internationally comparable statistics are crucial for the monitoring of social and economic progress of a country. Official statistics are essential tools for evidence-based policy making, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process of economic and social reforms and enabling decision makers to formulate policies and to monitor and evaluate their deliveries. In that respect, a national legal and institutional framework securing and sustaining the application of international standards and best practices for official statistics, including the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice, is a prerequisite for building confidence and trust in official statistics.

2. The objective of the Global Assessment (GA) of the National System of Official Statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan was to provide an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the institutional, organizational and technical capacity of the country to produce official statistics and comply with international standards and recommendations. The Global Assessment does not focus exclusively on the Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (TAJSTAT) but encompasses all major producers of statistics in the country. Thus, this Global Assessment is a unique opportunity for the country to obtain a comprehensive picture of its overall (global) statistical system.

3. The Global Assessment report contains assessments and recommendations about the legal and institutional framework of the National Statistical System, the organisational structure and functioning of TAJSTAT, the organisation of primary data collection and registers, and the broad compliance of statistical output with international and European standards. The report has duly taken into consideration the increasing stress on the National Statistical System for timely, high quality and internationally comparable information under severe resource constraints and therefore proposes recommendations for improving efficiency and effectiveness of the production processes in terms of trade-off between outputs and resources used.

4. In the course of the changes which followed the achievement of independence in 1991, and the transition from a centrally planned to market oriented economy, the statistical system of Tajikistan was confronted with the necessity, but also the opportunity, for a rapid and complete transformation. Although further improvement can still be achieved, TAJSTAT has developed considerably over the last 20 years and can be considered in many respects, as a professional institution, which produces and disseminates impartial, reliable and internationally comparable statistics which meet the requirements of users in a modern society.

5. TAJSTAT, as the major producer of official statistics in the country, is committed to maintaining trust and public confidence in official statistics by keeping the production of official statistics - from the data collection to the dissemination - free from non-professional interferences. In recent years, despite scarce financial, human and technical resources, the main priority of the leaders of TAJSTAT was to comply as much as possible with international standards and best practices. This report takes

stock of the progress made during the last years by TAJSTAT in the development of statistical capacities in the Republic of Tajikistan.

Main recommendations on legal and institutional framework

6. Translate principles and concepts of official statistics already mentioned in the present Law on State Statistics (LSS), notably statistical confidentiality and professional independence into operational rules, and set-up internal mechanisms for the follow-up of their implementation:

   a) Gradually apply these principles and concepts to the overall activities of TAJSTAT regardless of data processing and compilation methods: administrative sources, statistical reporting, statistical surveys, including aggregates compiled by other agencies and transmitted to TAJSTAT for dissemination purposes;

   b) Treat data collected from all types of sources in the same way, and not as documentary evidence that cannot be edited or adjusted;

   c) Develop clear guidelines with practical examples and train all TAJSTAT staff.

7. Work on the revision and adoption of a revised version of the LSS to come into force with the next multi-year statistical programme (2015/2016):

   a) Integrate all core concepts of official statistics into the revised LSS;

   b) Prepare in parallel the necessary revision of other laws related to statistics (e.g. Law on Census; Customs Code and Law on Environment Protection) and by-laws (decrees) based on the LSS. In particular align the Statement on the Agency on Statistics Decree (SAS Decree) and the Decree on the Statistical Council to the provisions of the revised LSS;

   c) Promote and inform about the revision of the LSS among all stakeholders, and notably the Statistical Council.

8. Strictly comply with the single (one-way) flow principle of unit-level data collected for statistical purposes regardless of the data collection method: administrative sources, statistical reporting, including aggregates compiled by other agencies and transmitted to TAJSTAT for dissemination purposes.

   a) Prevent ministries and agencies, which are not part of the National Statistical System, to access unit-level data from TAJSTAT and from any other producers of official statistics;

   b) Do not share filled-in forms received from businesses with other agencies, regardless of the data collection method;

   c) Do not involve TAJSTAT in auditing activities of businesses that are carried out jointly with other ministries and agencies.

9. In order to decide which organisational units, outside TAJSTAT, are also part of the National System of official Statistics, assess their dispositions and capacities to

comply with the provisions of the LSS and internationally agreed statistical principles; this procedure also concerns the National Bank:

a) The single flow principle does not apply for the organisational units that are part of the National Statistical System and therefore, for statistical purposes, unit-level data can be exchanged among them;

b) For any data sent to TAJSTAT by entities which do not qualify for inclusion as part of the National Statistical System, TAJSTAT will solely assume the data processing, quality check and dissemination of the information in full compliance with the single flow principle and other provisions of the LSS.

10. Make the LSS fully applicable to all producers of official statistics and implement the provisions of the LSS which establish TAJSTAT's director (chief statistician) as the authority in charge of the coordination of the National Statistical System:

a) The director of TAJSTAT should make use of his authority to issue standards that are binding for all producers of official statistics;

b) Producers of statistical information which do not qualify as producers of official statistics (since they do not follow strictly the provisions of the LSS) should be informed about restrictions in the access and exchange of unit-level data with organisational units pertaining to the National Statistical System;

c) If, for institutional reasons, decrees enforcing the annual and multi-year statistical programmes are not directly applicable to the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan (NBRT), the latter would have, in any case, to observe provisions related to the coordination mechanisms and the fundamental principles of official statistics.

11. Adjust the coverage, structure and content of the annual and multi-year statistical programmes:

a) Align the coverage of both programmes and extend it to all producers of official statistics for their regular and development activities, irrespective of the source of funding;

b) Make out of the preparation of these programmes the major coordination activity of the National Statistical System and fully involve the Statistical Council in the process;

c) Prepare, submit and get approved the next multi-year statistical programme in compliance with the revised LSS;

d) Replace the provision of the LSS granting the power to TAJSTAT to approve all administrative data collection forms from other ministries and agencies by a new provision that requires TAJSTAT to be consulted prior to any modification, withdrawal or introduction of the forms that could be relevant for official statistics;

e) Approve the design of new statistical surveys (e.g. periodicity, coverage and data collection method) and dissemination standards from other producers of official statistics instead of being involved in the approval of the forms and questionnaires.

12. In its function of coordination body of the National Statistical System, TAJSTAT should become the focal point for any international organisation and bilateral partner planning and conducting technical cooperation activities in the field of statistics in Tajikistan. As such, TAJSTAT should be informed of any capacity building programmes and technical assistance projects in the field of statistics.

Main recommendations on the organisational structure and functioning of TAJSTAT

13. Review the organisational structure and the division of labour between the Central Statistical Office (CSO), the Main Computing Centre (MCC) and territorial statistical offices in order to improve the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of TAJSTAT:

a) The development of the information and communication technology, and the implementation of modern methods of data collection, will allow sub-regional statistical offices at *rayon* (district) level to send unit-level information directly to the headquarters (CSO and MCC) for data processing, quality check, storage and dissemination; the 2-layer territorial structure (oblast and rayon) could be gradually simplified;

b) In the medium-term, a full integration of the Main Computing Centre activities into the CSO would avoid duplication of tasks and lead to positive synergy effects (e.g. IT; data processing, quality check and dissemination);

c) In order to better illustrate the subordination of the MCC and territorial statistical offices to the CSO, incorporate into the existing organisational chart of the CSO all subordinated bodies and link them to TAJSTAT's director (reporting links).

14. Allocate to TAJSTAT the necessary resources for its current and development activities (adequacy of resources) and develop a comprehensive human resources and training policy for the entire TAJSTAT:

Long-term development activities, renewal of IT and communication infrastructure, and ad-hoc surveys are mainly financed by international donors. This situation is not sustainable since statistical capacity building is dependent mainly from external sources that are unpredictable in the long-run and could be discontinued without notice.

a) The share of the state budget allocated to TAJSTAT should be increased in order to better cover the costs for current and development activities foreseen in the annual and multi-year statistical programmes;

b) IT and communication infrastructure should be further developed along with the modernisation of the business architecture of the State Statistics; all territorial statistical offices should be integrated into the TAJSTAT corporate network (Local Area Network/LAN) allowing secure data transmission between territorial offices and the headquarters;

Qualified, experienced and motivated staff members are a prerequisite for the production of high-quality, timely and international comparable statistics. At present, TAJSTAT experiences a gradual ageing of its professional staff members due to a high turnover of young qualified statisticians.

a) Staff mobility within TAJSTAT should be promoted, especially among junior statisticians;

b) Existing training programmes should be complemented with non-technical courses such as project management, quality management and communication skills;

c) Professional staff members should improve their knowledge of English in order to be able to participate actively in international meetings and benefit from the large volume of materials available on statistical methodologies;

d) Increase the budget for the participation of TAJSTAT experts in international meetings, workshops, trainings and seminars related to statistics in order to enhance their professional skills, share good practices and participate in the development and adoption of international standards and guidelines;

e) The gap between salaries offered by the TAJSTAT and the business sector should be reduced in order to be able to attract highly qualified junior professionals and to retain senior statisticians.

Main recommendations on dissemination, communication and relations with major stakeholders

15. Implement the existing dissemination strategy and comply with the relevant provisions of the LSS to make available all official statistical data simultaneously to all users, including the public at large:

a) Ideally, any access to official statistical information prior official release (pre-access) for the president, government and local authorities should be discontinued or at least, a list of such authorities should be made public; anyone who has pre-access to such information should sign an embargo declaration;

b) Develop and maintain up-to-date a release calendar with actual official release dates and make it publicly available on TAJSTAT’s website; preferably, set the same time of the day for all press releases and *express info*;

c) If exceptionally, the announced release date cannot be adhered to, the reasons have to be communicated publicly so as to avoid any appearance of interference;

d) In order to allow release dates to be adhered to, the Editorial Board should discontinue checking data but focus on the editorial aspect of the communication as e.g. the relevance of explanatory text and graphs that complements the figures; quality control of the data must be concluded earlier in the process by the MCC and substantive departments;

e) Gradually make all printed statistical publications available for download, free of charge, on TAJSTAT website.

16. In order to enhance statistical literacy as well as trust and confidence of all users in statistical information, improve accessibility and clarity of the information:

a) Establish a communication and marketing department within TAJSTAT with the objective to gather under one umbrella all activities related to publication, dissemination, marketing and other interactions with users;

b) Make press releases and express information available on the website according to the pre-announced date and time in the release calendar to ensure accessibility for all potentially interested users simultaneously;

c) Make statistics more attractive and interesting for users by complementing tables with short explanatory comments and visual presentations (graphs, charts and maps);

d) Improve communication with the media, drafting effective press releases and organising press conferences when key indicators are published;

e) Create a dedicated section on the website where all corporate strategic documents can be found (*About us)* with e.g. the Law on State Statistics, the annual and multi-year statistical programmes, the data dissemination strategy, TAJSTAT's annual report and job vacancies;

f) Develop and maintain up-to-date an online dissemination database covering gradually all statistical domains that allows users to select, extract and generate tailor-made tables and figures;

g) Complement the annual statistical programme with a column informing on the statistical products related to each statistical activity (output/user oriented);

h) Only agree to disseminate statistics under TAJSTAT own label from other producers, when the methodology used for data collection, data processing and quality check are in full compliance with TAJSTAT's standards; if not, but only in exceptional cases, TAJSTAT could disseminate such information under its own label but should comment on the status of the publication.

17. Build-up, strengthen and maintain confidence and trust in the National Statistical System:

a) Make accessible methodological materials and metadata to all users and stakeholders on the TAJSTAT's website;

b) Improve communication with the media, and maintain a broad network with the business community, the civil society and other stakeholders outside the government;

c) Address institutional and legal aspects of producing and disseminating official statistics, including the principles of independence, confidentiality, impartiality and credibility in training workshops for stakeholders and users (statistical literacy).

Main recommendations on data sources and processing, quality monitoring, registers and nomenclatures

The production processes within TAJSTAT rely heavily on individual statistical domains (stovepipe approach). Each department develops for the area of its competence its own methodology, data collection method, reporting and observation forms, validation rules, quality checks and data storage.

18. Develop a comprehensive process oriented management within TAJSTAT and in that respect enhance the authority, competence and skills of the Methodological department (to be renamed Methodological and Quality department):

    a) Assign to the Methodological and Quality department supervision, coordination and advisory tasks related to data collection methodology (including design of sample surveys), revision and implementation of nomenclatures, review and management of statistical processes, editing and imputation techniques, estimation methods and quality monitoring for all statistical departments in TAJSTAT but also for the overall National Statistical System;

    b) The Methodological and Quality department should deliver upon request services to substantive departments but also suggest proposals for the improvement of the overall production processes to the TAJSTAT Board (Collegium) of TAJSTAT for consideration and eventually adoption;

    c) Nominate in each substantive department and/or division in TAJSTAT but also at producers of official statistics outside TAJSTAT a methodological and quality focal point; ideally focal points should not be TAJSTAT's deputy directors since the Methodological and Quality department reports directly to the TAJSTAT Board;

    d) Assign temporarily to the Methodological and Quality department a *change management* function; this would imply that additional human and financial resources would be provisionally allocated to this department from the state budget;

    e) Under the new configuration and functions of the Methodological and Quality department, including the network of focal points, the present Methodological Committee should be reshaped or even abolished; upon requests, recommendations would be prepared by the Methodological and Quality department in consultation with the focal points and then directly submitted to the TAJSTAT Board for endorsement.

19. Carefully review data collection methods and in particular assess if exhaustive statistical reporting could be replaced by sample surveys (statistical observations) or administrative data in order to reduce operational costs for TAJSTAT and administrative burden for respondents.

20. Align national nomenclatures to recent worldwide and European international classifications without delay and in a coordinated way in order to preserve the international comparability of national statistics.

21. Reorganise the overall production processes within TAJSTAT, meaning that unit-level observations are sent directly to the headquarters (CSO and MCC) for data processing, quality checks and data storage; the role of sub-regional offices would be to collect the information but data processing and dissemination of national (republican) and territorial aggregates would proceed centrally and simultaneously.

22. Ensure that data is, if possible, collected electronically by sub-regional statistical offices but in any case sent in electronic format to the headquarters; the objective being that no data-set coming from territorial offices is processed manually in the headquarters.

23. Assign a single identification code to each statistical unit (e.g. person, household, farm, enterprise, individual entrepreneur, and local production unit) to be mentioned in all statistical forms, regardless of the data collection method, and to process this information in order to allow cross-checking and integration of data from various sources (statistical reporting and observation, censuses, administrative data and sample surveys) and eventually improve the coherence and consistency of statistical registers.

24. Start conceptual work for the establishment of a statistical population or/and dwelling register that could directly benefit from the information collected from the next Population and Housing Census round; make an inventory of all existing data sources and surveys that could allow for a regular update of the statistical population register between 2 censuses.

25. Support and participate actively in the project of the World Bank for the introduction of Integrated Household Surveys and complement these surveys with regular ad-hoc modules on e.g. health, social protection, labour migration and informal employment.

26. Further expand the scope and improve the quality of the business statistical register by using all relevant information collected by TAJSTAT through administrative records, statistical reporting and observation and future business censuses; in that respect, next economic censuses should not only cover legal units but also individual entrepreneurs.

27. Carry out the first agricultural census once the resources (financial, human and IT) for data collection, processing and dissemination are fully ascertained:

    a) After the collection of information (planned for 2013), proceed immediately to data processing and dissemination; a census covers not only the collection of data but to the overall process, including dissemination;

    b) Consider an important objective of the agricultural census as the provision of information for the establishment of a statistical register of farms; the establishment of the statistical register has to be part of the census project and foresee the allocation of a single identification code to each unit.

28. Gradually replace existing exhaustive surveys for some types of farms with stratified sample surveys covering all types of farms; as mentioned above sampling and grossing up collected information to the universe (sample frame) should be carried out centrally.

Further recommendations on specific statistical domains

Implementation of the recommendations provided above (data sources and processing, quality monitoring, registers and nomenclatures) should have a significant impact on the consistency, accuracy and internationally comparability of statistical outputs. More detailed and technical recommendations for specific statistical products are available in chapter 5 of this report. Major crosscutting recommendations to be mentioned are as follows:

29. Conduct household budget surveys more regularly, in particular the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Living Standard Survey (LStS). In the absence of adequate resources to conduct separate household sample surveys, the alternative could be to conduct a regular programme of Integrated Household Surveys complemented by rotating modules on specific subjects, such as labour force and employment, education and health.

30. Further improve the accuracy and coverage of the vital register system, in particular for the coverage of birth and death of children below compulsory school age; the vital register system may be the main data source for the update of a statistical population register between two census rounds.

31. Produce and disseminate economic statistics according to international and European concepts:

   a) Dissemination of infra-annual (e.g. monthly and quarterly) economic and business statistics should be done on discrete bases, which means that data for one specific period of time (e.g. month) is distinct and separate from the data set of the preceding or following period of time; the cumulative approach makes it more difficult to identify and analyse changes in time series and doesn't allow for seasonal adjustment;

   b) The reference period of infra-annual indicators and indices should be set to a year;

   c) Produce and disseminate seasonally adjusted time series;

   d) Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Producer Price Index (PPI) should be calculated using geometric mean and processed at the headquarters;

   e) Gradually replace the concept of cash based recording (records revenue and expenses when respectively cash is received or disbursed) by the accrual basis recording (at the time the transaction occurs rather than when payment is made or received); national accounts, balance of payment and government finance statistics must be compiled according to the accrual concept and is therefore important that business statistics follow this principle as much as possible.

32. Use a coordinated approach to implement the 2008 System National Accounts (2008 SNA), the 6th edition of the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6) and the 2001 Manual on Government Finance Statistics (2001 GFSM):

    a) Take all measures in order to implement the Unified Chart of Accounts at republican and territorial level, and collect and process government finance data according to the provisions of the 2001 Manual on Government Finance Statistics;

    b) Simultaneously provide to users the revised data series according to the 2008 SNA and the BPM6; explanatory notes on the main conceptual changes and their impact on the data for both macro-economic statistics could be published jointly by the 2 organisations (TAJSTAT and NBRT) on their respective websites;

    c) Improve the coverage and accuracy of macro-economic statistics through a better estimation of the informal economy, remittances and other non-observed transactions; in general, quality, reliability and coverage of macro-economic statistics could only benefit from a more extensive use of statistical information collected through household surveys like the Labour Force Survey, Living Standards Survey and the Household Budget Survey;

    d) Compile on a more regular basis supply-use tables (SUTs) at constant and current prices; SUTs are ideal tools for improving the quality of National Accounts by identifying major discrepancies and taking appropriate measures for reconciling both approaches (use and supply).

33. Pay more attention and allocate adequate resources to the development of multi-domain statistics; the resolution adopted by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) stress the importance of having good statistics for measuring sustainable development, in particular environmental, energy and climate aspects.

34. Develop a concept for the production of comprehensive tourism statistics according to international guidelines; both sides, domestic production of touristic services, and purchase by resident of touristic services in the country and abroad should be covered.

1. LEGAL BASIS

1.1 Law on State Statistics (LSS)

1.1.1 Background and Summary of Content

1. The Law on State Statistics, № 588, 2010 (hereafter LSS), is a framework law from 2010, replacing a previous law on state statistics from 1997. German legal experts assisted the Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (TAJSTAT) in the formulation of the Law. When the draft LSS was discussed before the Parliament and its committees, many questions were raised, but finally only one terminological change was introduced. All other provisions were adopted as proposed.

2. The LSS is a relatively concise law (21 articles) including some of the essential provisions that should be covered by a modern statistical law. This is exemplified by articles on major definitions (articles 2 and 13), on the principles of official statistics (articles 4 and 5), the role of TAJSTAT as central producer and coordinator of the system (articles 6 to 9), the Interdepartmental Statistical Council as main advisory body (article 10), the multi-year and annual statistical programmes to be approved by the government (article 11), the two major forms of data collection and processing (*official statistical accounting* on the one hand in article 12, and *statistical observations* in article 14), the state statistical register (article 15), the basic rules on the dissemination of results (article 16) and for funding statistical activities (article 17, which includes also a paragraph on statistical services for specific users who either pay or sign a contract), the guarantee of confidentiality (article 18), and a general legal basis for sanctioning violations against reporting obligations (article 19).

3. Four items are not explicitly addressed in the LSS. The first refers to the status of TAJSTAT, where the Presidential Decree № 862, 2010, *Statement on the Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan* (further in this report referred to as SAS Decree) fills part of the gap by placing TAJSTAT under the authority of the President of the Republic. The second gap is the issue of response burden and right of information for respondents when participating in primary data collection for official statistics. The third issue is the use of microdata from official statistics for research purposes, including the access by researchers to such microdata. The fourth issue is related to the third: the provision of tailor-made statistical services to users who do not have to pay or sign a contract, notably government users at central and territorial level. All these gaps will be analysed in more depth in the respective chapters.

4. A framework law of this sort, allowing more operational provisions to be covered by lower level legislation (approved either by the President of the Republic or by the government), has the advantage of flexibility, since the by-laws can be changed more easily and more frequently. On the other hand, if the by-laws fail to specify what is meant by the definitions of concepts listed in the LSS, the system and its main actors operate in a blurred legal environment. This is the case for most principles; which lack the specifications, which have a binding character for those

operating in the system of official statistics. It is possible for dissemination, professional independence and confidentiality to identify some provisions found either in the LSS itself, or in by-laws, but they do not always treat the core aspects of the relevant principles of official statistics consistently, as this will be explained more in detail further in the relevant chapters. For example, the two essential components of confidentiality, the exclusive use, by the system of official statistics, for non-statistical purposes of all unit-level data, and the protection against disclosure to third parties (notably to a person or organisational unit outside the system of official statistics), are stated in an unambiguous way within the text.

5. An additional fifth gap of some relevance appears through a closer examination of the definition of *statistical units* in article 2: only economic units acting as producers of goods and services, in whatever legal form (i.e. including natural persons or private households), can be *statistical units* in the types of data collection mentioned in the LSS. This leaves all household sample surveys at the margin of the LSS, and notably outside the annual statistical programme (the population census is based on a specific law, and not on the LSS, see 1.2.1).

6. This framework law (LSS) has a conceptual basis that remains vague and ambiguous about key aspects of modern official statistics. In addition, the definitions, concepts and terms used, especially those listed in art. 2, are a mix between old and new concepts of official statistics. In many instances these reflect outdated, past or still valid CIS (Commonwealth of Independent State) standards. These concepts (of more than 20 years ago) are still present in some provisions of the LSS, as well as in much of the terminology used, to the detriment of the modern concept of official statistics as enshrined in the UN Fundamental Principles and the European Code of Practice. The old system was characterised by focusing the data collection almost exclusively on economic units in the form of official reporting through filled-in forms with signatures. The main use, considered at that time as statistical, was to monitor and control the fulfilment of the plan. This concept is still behind the terms of *official statistical accounting* and *state statistical reporting*, where the incoming forms have to be signed by both the *statistical unit* and the territorial statistical office, thus giving a quasi-documentary evidence character to this information. The issue is that this document cannot be edited without going back to the reporting statistical units for modification.

7. The LSS introduces a new form of collecting data, called *statistical observations*, where the use seems to be exclusively statistical in the modern sense. Data collections based on a 5% or 10% sample of the economic units in a given stratum are an example of such *statistical observations* that are carried out by TAJSTAT. For many statisticians, especially in economic statistics, and users met during the assessment, surveys with exhaustive coverage continue to entail a status of reliability and validity that cannot be matched by sample surveys.

8. To be covered by the substantive provisions of the LSS, social and demographic statistics have to be based, as with the old system, on administrative sources managed by other government agencies (vital statistics; education; health; crime). Household surveys for exclusively statistical purposes do not yet seem to be a recognised part of official statistics, although some of them, such as the Household Budget Survey, are carried out regularly and used for products such as the consumer price index mentioned in the annual programme. Furthermore, as described above,

household surveys for official statistics, and the protection of data collected in this way, are seen as being in a legal vacuum.

1.1.2 Scope of the LSS

9. The scope of the LSS is defined in article 1, paragraph 2, as follows: *Operation of the present law shall apply to all statistical units and subjects of official statistical accounting implementing their activities in the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan*. Article 2 defines the two key terms *subjects of official statistical accounting* and *statistical units* in more common terminology of official statistics.

10. Article 2 defines *subjects of official statistical accountin*g as public authorities in a broad sense that are *engaged in the formation of official statistical information*, i.e. involved in the production process of quantitative official information, but not necessarily limited to official statistics as understood in the EU Code of Practice. This institutional delineation of the scope provided by the LSS is rather broad and therefore in this report a clear distinction will be made between subjects of official statistical accounting with, on one hand, TAJSTAT (the Central Statistical Office and its subordinated bodies: territorial offices and the Main Computing Centre) and on the other hand, *other producers*.

11. The LSS defines the State Statistical Office (TAJSTAT) as the *central organ of executive power*; it is referred to in the law also as the *Authorized Agency*. Legally speaking, TAJSTAT, including its central and territorial offices, and other subordinated bodies is not only the central, but also the exclusive body of *state* statistics. All other *subjects of official statistical accounting*, with the exception of the National Bank that is not mentioned or subsumed anywhere in the LSS, are considered under *official statistics information* or *official statistical accounting*. Furthermore, the LSS uses alternately the notions of *official statistics* and *state statistics* while these 2 concepts are not equivalent. The name of the Law as *Law on State Statistics* (which is the narrower concept) seems to indicate that the LSS is meant to be a law covering primarily *state statistical activities;* in other words, activities under the responsibility of TAJSTAT, and only marginally applicable to other producers of official statistics. This might explain why other producers of official statistics including the National Bank or the Ministry of Health regularly refer to their own laws, and not to the LSS, as regulatory instruments for their official statistical activities.

12. Interestingly, the distinction between state and official statistics only seems to matter for the data collection and processing phases; there is no such distinction when results are disseminated. In many cases, other producers of official statistics do not have the necessary infrastructure and experience for the diffusion of statistical information and it was agreed that TAJSTAT would do this under its own label (TAJSTAT's publications and website). Eventually, information collected, processed and disseminated by TAJSTAT gains the *de facto* label of *state statistics*. However, it is concerning dissemination that a clarification of the difference between results of official statistics (as understood by the Code of Practice) and statistical information for own management purposes (administrative data) or for addressing ad hoc information requests would be most relevant (see 2.1.2).

13. The concentration of LSS provisions on state statistics, i.e. TAJSTAT, leaves many questions about the extent to which important provisions of the Law such as the basic principles listed in art. 5 are legally applicable to other producers. The only exception is confidentiality, where article 16, paragraph 5, requires all *subjects of statistical accounting to protect confidential data against illegal access and disclosure* (but see 1.5. for details). Article 4, which regulates independence and the use of scientifically–based methods and international standards, refers to both state statistics as well as the broader concept of *official statistical information*. It is also significant for the intended scope of the LSS that there is no article devoted to rights or obligations of other producers of official statistics. Such provisions, mainly addressing the obligations of such producers to transmit aggregate data to TAJSTAT, appear as separate paragraphs of different articles across the LSS.

14. According to article 2 LSS, the notion of *statistical units* covers entities engaged in production activities irrespective of their legal form, operating in the Republic of Tajikistan. This definition of statistical units can be seen as extremely narrow since it excludes from the scope of the LSS data collection for exclusive statistical purposes directly from natural persons and private households beyond their capacity as economic producers of goods or services. The definitions of *census* and *survey* provided in the same article of the LSS also refer exclusively to statistical units. Household surveys are only mentioned in one indent of article 8 *Rights of State Statistical Offices*, as *conducting statistical observation among the population*, but neither the LSS nor the SAS Decree specify the rights and obligations of respondents in this context, or the way in which such activities, which are outside the statistical programmes, have to be conducted. However, the term *official statistical information* in the LSS seems to allow TAJSTAT subsuming aggregated results from household surveys (through the term *other observations* at the end of the definition in art. 2). There is still a difference about the way results from *statistical reporting* and from population census on the one hand, and from household sample surveys on the other, are released. This informs users of a difference in status based on the method of data collection, rather than based on the criterion of the full respect of the fundamental principles that modern concepts of official statistics would request. It seems that this definition of *statistical units* is intended to ensure the compliance of such observation entities with *state statistical reporting* and the different forms of verification and auditing directed at such units that can be carried out by TAJSTAT on its own initiative or at the request of other agencies.

15. Furthermore, the LSS does not make a clear distinction between *statistical surveys* (data collection by a producer of official statistics for exclusive statistical purposes) and collection of administrative data, i.e. collected primarily by other administrations and agencies for non-statistical purposes. In terms of scope of a statistical law, this distinction is crucial. For statistical surveys, all phases, including notably the collection of data from primary respondents, fall under the provisions of the law of official statistics and have to be fully compliant with the principles of official statistics. Whereas the second source (administrative data collection) has to be based on a law different from a statistical (or census) law because of its mainly non-statistical purpose. In that case, the provisions of the statistical legislation, and notably the fundamental principles, become applicable exclusively to producers of official statistics as soon as they have received or collected the administrative data

from the respective administration or agency. However, some articles of the LSS are applicable to the primary collection of administrative data (if the data are ultimately used or disseminated for statistical purposes by TAJSTAT); this is the case notably for the articles on obligations for respondents and the approval of forms by TAJSTAT.

16. The LSS defines a category *administrative data* in article 2 in a more restrictive way as discussed above. According to the LSS, administrative data are *data received by the subjects of official statistical accounting while implementing the administrative functions, which are [subsequently] submitted to the organs of state statistics for production of official statistical accounting*. In other words, administrative data according to the LSS covers the information collected by other producers (article 12, paragraph 1) and the transmission of this data to state statistics (TAJSTAT) is considered as *statistical reporting*. The difference to the wider notion of administrative data in the context of modern official statistics is that the latter addresses all administrative data that are used as inputs to produce results of official statistics, be it by TAJSTAT or another producer of official statistics and to all relevant steps in the production and dissemination processes.

17. It is clearly desirable that TAJSTAT is consulted and can influence the way by which administrative data is collected, processed and stored by the public authority that is the owner of these data, especially when there are plans to substantially modify, create, or abolish such a source. However, the LSS goes much further: forms for administrative data collection, which are used by ministries also for either their own statistical purposes or for compiling *official statistical information* have to be approved by TAJSTAT across the board (art. 7, penultimate indent). Since the core function of such forms is to serve the regulatory and control purposes of the ministry in charge, and not the additional statistical use they may have, this is tantamount to assigning a basically non-statistical task to the central body of official statistics. This may create conflicts of interest with the basic principles of official statistics. The decisions about such forms should be taken by bodies or authorities which are clearly separate from the system of official statistics. The clear separation between statistical (official statistics and complementing statistical activities outside official statistics) and non-statistical activities is a basic organisational rule that is applicable to all producers of a national system of official statistics.

18. Concerning *statistical observations*, it is not entirely clear whether this definition covers collection of data for exclusive statistical purposes (all statistical observations carried out by TAJSTAT), or if it may include for other *subjects of statistical accounting* the collection of data for administrative or monitoring purposes. The latter may especially be the case for what is a subset of these statistical observations that is explicitly mentioned in article 2 of LSS as *departmental statistical observations*. In any case, the scope of the LSS covers all phases of statistical observations, as derived from article 14 LSS, but if some of these observations are combined data collections for administrative and statistical purposes, both the scope of the LSS and the distinction between statistical reporting and statistical observations becomes even less clear.

19. The LSS seems to offer another door for assigning non-statistical tasks to TAJSTAT; it is to be found in the last indent of article 7, by which TAJSTAT can *exercise other powers stipulated by the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan*. All

indents of this article are under the umbrella of the introductory clause that *the authorized agency shall, in order to implement the state policy in the field of statistics...*, so the last indent could be interpreted as being limited to statistical tasks only. However, the state policy in the field of statistics is still influenced by past experience, where statistics included the control of single economic units with respect to the fulfilments of plans. Two elements of this past are still present among TAJSTAT's activities today: certain forms of what is called auditing, and, for at least one state statistical reporting in the responsibility of TAJSTAT, the sharing of filled-in reporting forms among the sub-regional offices of TAJSTAT and sub-regional offices of the ministry of industry. Each month the verification of primary reports with the reports received by the Ministry of Energy and Industry is done for industry statistics in order to check the consistency of reported data.

20. There are three types of audits in which staff from TAJSTAT, be it from the CSO and/or from territorial offices, are regularly engaged. The first two forms are statistical also in a narrow sense: they are carried out with *statistical units* when either there is no reply within the prescribed deadline for *reporting*, or if information given when reporting is highly implausible. The LSS envisages in this last case that TAJSTAT can demand distortions to be eliminated by the statistical unit concerned, but TAJSTAT cannot edit the reporting form unilaterally. The third type of auditing is at the request of other public authorities or by the government, and it is about the verification of the first step in reporting administrative data. This type of auditing is based on other laws (Law on Accounting and Financial Reporting № 702, 2011; Law on Audit Activities of Economic Entities in the Republic of Tajikistan, № 194, 2006, but TAJSTAT reported also cases of auditing companies where the compliance with labour laws or land management laws was examined). The SAS Decree also mentions, as part of paragraph 9, that TAJSTAT, together with the Ministry of Finance, has a role to play concerning the auditing of businesses, regardless of their organisational or legal forms. The use of TAJSTAT staff in the non-statistical task of auditing companies with respect to non-statistical legislation is clearly creating a conflict of interest, and using data collected through *statistical reporting* from companies directly to TAJSTAT in this context (which seems to be the case) is in addition a violation of one aspect of the fundamental principles of confidentiality, the exclusive use of data within the statistical system for statistical purposes (see 1.5).

21. It is a positive characteristic of the statistical system of Tajikistan that TAJSTAT is not responsible for managing any administrative or public registers, and the LSS clearly mentions in art. 15 a *State Statistical Registe*r as part of TAJSTAT's responsibility. This is one example of a modern concept of official statistics enshrined in the LSS, but this is also a case where the implementation is far from being satisfactory (see chapter 4.3.2).

22. In the case of statistical reporting from (public and private) legal units across all sectors of the economy about their construction activities, the sub-regional offices share the information received from statistical units with the sub-regional offices of the ministry of industry. This an example of a continuing lack of separation between statistical and non-statistical use of data collected as *state statistical reporting*, i.e. signalling to the respondents that the use of the data is strictly statistical and not for control or regulatory purposes directed against them. Similar cases may exist in a

more informal way for other state statistical reporting exercises at this sub-regional level. Strictly legally speaking, using the present definitions of the LSS, such practice may still be within the scope of the LSS, but it is certainly not compatible with the confidentiality principle as stated in the UN Principles of Official Statistics.

1.1.3 Assessment

23. The LSS is a recent framework law that could be used to advance the transition towards a modern concept of official statistics. Its provisions could be rendered operational through complementary detailed legislation at a lower level, e.g. through statistical programmes based on clear criteria, and therefore pave the way towards a coherent system of official statistics based on full compliance with the fundamental principles. However, this potential has only been used so far to a small extent.

24. The LSS has a confusing range of partly overlapping definitions and a terminology reflecting past concepts of official statistics. On the other hand it is completely silent on important aspects for the implementation of some of the basic principles, such as confidentiality. As a result, its application is not clear for TAJSTAT activities, and even less so beyond TAJSTAT. The institutional limits of the system of official statistics are blurred. Furthermore, the gap at the legal level concerning the principles and the scope has not been translated into more operational terms, e.g. by the TAJSTAT management, that could serve as benchmark for assessing the degree of implementation. Therefore it is very difficult to assess to what extent the LSS has been implemented in practice other than through the implementation of the activities listed in the annual statistical programmes, but this criterion does not indicate the compliance with principles across the whole range of activities within the system of official statistics.

25. It is a positive sign that TAJSTAT, with two exceptions, is not involved in non-statistical activities, which could create a conflict of interest with some of the fundamental principles of official statistics. In particular, TAJSTAT is not responsible for the management of any administrative register, only for a statistical register. Therefore, the need for a clear organisational separation between official statistics and administrative activities is, as far as TAJSTAT is concerned, fairly well implemented. The exceptions are the use of TAJSTAT staff, and of reporting forms delivered to TAJSTAT on the basis of the LSS, for auditing economic units against compliance with administrative obligations outside the LSS, and the sharing of reporting forms between sub-regional TAJSTAT and ministerial offices.

26. Given the recent date of adopting the LSS, it may be rather difficult to propose a full revision at the present moment. The issue of the coverage of other producers of official statistics in a narrower sense than today as part of a system of official statistics could be arranged, as an intermediary solution while waiting for an opportunity to revise the LSS itself. This would be possible through lower-level legislation (government decrees or presidential resolutions, whatever is appropriate), and notably through the annual programmes of 2 to 3 years in the future. However, it is worth noting that the SAS Decree includes, as one of the indents of article 8, that the Agency should *make, in due course, proposals to improve legislation in the field of statistics and accounting...*, so the option of a revision of the LSS in the near future should not be excluded completely. TAJSTAT might use the global assessment report as a reason to activate this *due course* clause.

27. The first step in a strategy towards a modern system of official statistics is not at a legal, but at a conceptual level. It requires a clear and sustained commitment from the top-level management to move towards a modern system of official statistics, based on the full respect of all basic principles of official statistics, within a time frame of approximately 5 years. These conceptual steps would have operational consequences (described in more detail in 2.1.1), as well as legal consequences for lower-level legislation. They are as follows:

a) Overcome in practice the confusing distinction between state and official statistics by delimiting activities of official statistics, and results of official statistics, according to new criteria. Statistical activities are only activities of official statistics if they generate at least one regular set of results of official statistics, or contribute to the infrastructure of the system of official statistics (such as statistical registers), and if carried out by a recognised producer of the system of official statistics. Concerning results of official statistics, they have to meet the criteria of relevance for a variety of users, of being representative for a target universe, and of being based on internationally recognised (EU or UN family) statistical standards and methods. Most tables produced by government departments or public authorities on the basis of their administrative data are not in this category (most of them are management information for the agencies concerned);

b) Adapt the scope and structure of the annual programmes (see 2.2.1 and 2.2.4 for details);

c) Translate each basic principle (notably confidentiality) into more detailed specifications, following the recommendations in the other chapters of the report. This would stop the sharing of information about statistical units collected by sub-regional TAJSTAT offices with ministerial offices of the same sub-region. Once implementation in TAJSTAT has started and TAJSTAT can serve as a kind of model, these principles and the specifications should be made applicable to all other producers through lower-level legislation;

d) Stop staff from TAJSTAT from conducting and being involved in auditing types of activities; the purpose of which is to assess compliance with respect to other legislation than statistics, and, from using forms submitted by economic operators to TAJSTAT or its territorial offices in this context. This requires careful communication with those stakeholders that have so far made use of this TAJSTAT service;

e) Prepare the adaptation of the LSS to the new UN and EU concepts, terminology and definitions to enter into force to allow the next multi-year statistical programme (with coverage of the years 2017 to 2021) can be prepared on the basis of the revised law. If systematic central storage of all unit-level data in CSO were to replace the present transmission of aggregate data at an earlier date than 2016, then a revision of the LSS should take place before in order to ensure the protection of such microdata against all forms of non-statistical use (see 1.5 for more details);

f) Include, in the training programme systematic, courses for all TAJSTAT staff concerned about the meaning and application of the new concepts of official statistics and the basic principles that are their foundation;

g) Most of these changes could at least be started without prior change of the LSS. For reasons of legitimacy, it may however be desirable to either amend the SAS Decree, or to replace it with a completely new decree.

1.2 Census-related legislation

1.2.1 Law on Census of Population and Housing [LC]

28. The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on Census (2009, № 523), hereafter LC (2009) replaces the previous law from 1998. The LC decrees a census to be conducted at least once every ten years. The President decides following an amendment to the LC from March 2010, the period and timing of the census to occur *not later than 5 years before the census* (the 2009 version of the LC allocated this authority to the government). Anticipating this change of the LC, the President had already fixed the most recent population census to take place between 21 and 30 September 2010 (Decree № 685, 2009). The previous population census was carried out in the year 2000, thus respecting the 10-year maximum interval between two consecutive censuses.

29. The LC is a concise law with the major provisions about what the census is, who takes decisions for the operational steps for the various phases of each census (so that these details can vary between consecutive censuses), and from which source the activity is funded (state budget plus donations). Article 2 of the LC includes an explicit reference to the LSS, together with references to the constitution and other normative legal acts, but in general terms (*census is based on*) that it is not clear what the reference to the LSS adds in substance to the provisions contained in the LC and the by-laws based on the LC.

30. The content of the census form is listed in article 6, paragraph 1, although the government may decide to add further questions. Article 9 includes the provision that census data can only be used for statistical purposes. But the English (and Russian) translations of paragraph 2 of this article mention *solely for the purposes of the census*, which, if confirmed in the original Tajik language version, would be a circular statement. This would literally prohibit, among others, the use of census information as sampling frame for household surveys. However, the reality shows that 2000 census data was used as sampling frames in the past and that this practice will be maintained with the 2010 census data. No use of data from the 2010 census for non-statistical purposes has been made, but since the filled-in questionnaires have to be stored (in scanned form) by TAJSTAT for *at least 3 years*, a theoretical risk of a non-statistical use still exists. The LC, as with the LSS, asks for personal information to be treated as confidential information (article 9, paragraph 3), but, as will be shown in chapter 1.5 in the context of the LSS, the notion of confidentiality is not specified any further.

31. Concerning the basic principles of official statistics, article 5, paragraph 3, of the LC mentions a subset of those listed in article 5 of the LSS that are relevant in the

context of the census. As for the LSS, the principle of professional independence is not explicit at the level of the law; but article 18 of the SAS Decree, stating that any *interference of the central and local executive bodies of state authority in matters within the competence of the Agency.... is prohibited* should also be applicable to those matters where the competence of the TAJSTAT is based on the LC. Article 8 LC allocates the decision-making power about how the *summing up* of the census is done, or what kind of results have to be published, and the timing of these publications to the government and not, as foreseen in the LSS, to TAJSTAT. In the case of the population census, a core part of the decisions that should be free from governmental interference and follow the principles of professional independence, is therefore explicitly given to an authority outside the system of official statistics. This provision may open the door to infringements on the principle of professional independence (see 1.4.). The decision-making about tables to be produced and disseminated from the census should follow the same mechanisms as proposed for all results other than official statistics, i.e. very general content and approximate timeliness in the annual programmes, and details of content and way of compiling decided by CSO after consultations with many users (not only those from the government sector).

32. On the initiative of TAJSTAT, a working group for the publication of official census results, with representatives from all ministries and government committees and agencies, and from media, has been created and placed inside the system of official statistics. This seems to be the *de facto* decision-making body for identifying which type of results from the population census are to be published as results of official statistics. Such a working group is certainly a good instrument if used as forum for collecting user views and expressing information needs from various users (as is the case for the Statistical Council). However, it should be used by TAJSTAT as advisory body only, leaving the final decision-making about both content and timing of the release of census results to TAJSTAT. There is no mention of this working group in the LC, or in the lower-level legislation based on the LC.

33. The LC establishes a Census Commission through its article 5, paragraph 2, for mainly organisational issues such as ensuring participation from local authorities, from other parts of the government outside the statistical system, but also from enterprises and public associations, in the preparation and data collection phases. A government regulation further specifies the composition, mandate, and procedures of this Commission, which has mirror committees for each region and sub-region. The national commission is chaired by the Prime Minister, and is composed of heads or senior staff from ministries, agencies and local authorities.

34. Furthermore, detailed organisational specifications are contained in the Resolution № 312, 2006, of the Government on Additional Measures for the Census of the Republic of Tajikistan in 2010. There, the pilot census ahead of the full census is mentioned, whereas the post-enumeration survey is mentioned in TAJSTAT approved organisational provisions for conducting the census (28 September 2009). Based on government’s resolution the regional Hukumats (i.e. local administrations) adopt their own resolutions on the census within their respective territories.

1.2.2 Presidential Degree on Agricultural Census

35. Contrary to the population census, the agricultural census is not based on a separate law, but on the LSS. The Presidential Decree on conducting the agricultural census № 358, 2011, asks for an agricultural census to be carried out in 2013. It mentions TAJSTAT as the responsible agency, *in cooperation with* a number of ministries and state committees. It will be the first agricultural census since independence in 1991. Article 5 requests TAJSTAT to consider donor funding and submit a proposal of financing to the government, indicating that the funding of this census was not yet guaranteed.

36. It is probably because of the (in-kind) contributions of other ministries that a Presidential Decree was considered necessary, as a replacement for (or in addition to) the inclusion in the statistical programme, which is approved by the government. The other reason may be the need of donor funding for this activity.

37. Interestingly, the Presidential Decree on the agricultural census 2012 mentions article 14 LSS as legal basis. This is the article on statistical observations, as opposed to the other form of data collection, for which the term *official statistical accounting* is used. As a consequence, the use of the information collected in the agricultural census for planned non-statistical auditing activities (see 1.1.2 and 1.5) does not seem to be possible, so that implicitly the data collected in the agricultural census will be used only for statistical purposes. An explicit statement in the Presidential Decree would have been preferable, however.

38. The relevant provisions of the LSS, notably the list of basic principles and the obligation to keep data confidential, are fully applicable to the forthcoming agricultural census. Professional independence, stated in the Presidential Decree № 862, 2010, should also be applicable for the agricultural census, and TAJSTAT should make use of this independence for decisions about the tables to be prepared for publishing results (prior to such decisions, consultations with users are encouraged, but the final decision has to remain strictly within the system of official statistics), and not copy the mechanisms set up for the population census (described in 1.2.1).

39. A second Presidential Decree on complementary measures from May 2012 (№ 291) with three annexes contains detailed organisational measures for contributions of other ministries and government agencies, as well as from local governments, ahead of the agricultural census that will take place in autumn 2013, with a pilot census planned for October 2012. This Decree also establishes a commission for the agricultural census composed of 40 members, chaired by a deputy prime minister, with a similar list of tasks as for the Census Commission for the population census established through the LC.

40. The agricultural census 2013 should also be used as benchmark for setting up a centralised statistical register of all farms, whatever category they fall into. As further discussed in 1.6, article 15 LSS is the basis for registers kept by TAJSTAT for exclusively statistical purposes, but as in the case of economic units outside agriculture, such registers should not only include *subjects of statistical accounting*, but all statistical units identified through the census as belonging to the universe of agricultural holdings based on the internationally agreed Food and Agriculture

Organisation (FAO) definition. However, this key element is not addressed explicitly in any of the legal texts pertaining to the agricultural census.

1.2.3 Assessment

41. The LC was a concise and sound legal basis for conducting the 2010 population census, and most probably also for the next one. As part of the revision process of the LSS, as recommended in chapter 1.1.3, it also recommended to adapt some provisions of the LC in parallel, notably:

a) Introducing a clear reference to the revised LSS for all matters not explicitly addressed in the LC and a clear statement that the data from the population census can only be used for statistical purposes;

b) Adapting article 8 in such a way that the *summing up of the census is carried out in the manner and time frame established by TAJSTAT after consultations with users, and approved by government as part of the annual programmes according to the (revised) LSS.*

42. The Presidential Decree on the Agricultural Census is an adequate basis for the agricultural census 2013, if the Commission established in the second government decree on complementary measures that this Commission is not a decision-making body for issues that fall under the professional independence. Decisions about methodology; questionnaire; content and timing of publications should be made by TAJSTAT. It is recommended that a third Presidential Decree is prepared soon concerning the establishment of a central register of all types of farms, using the agricultural census 2013 as benchmark.

1.3 Other legislation affecting statistics

1.3.1 Law on the National Bank

43. The Law on the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan (LNBRT) № 722, 2011, is a modern law in this area that clearly shows the willingness to establish an independent National Bank according to modern international standards. It addresses statistics as part of two different chapters: in article 43 concerning banking statistics, and in article 85 concerning the balance of payments. In addition, the National Bank has the right to obtain information from all economic operators for their regulatory tasks, i.e. for prudential supervision. Articles 86 and 87 are applicable to both areas of statistics mentioned in the LNBRT and contain, among others, issues like the obligation for the National Bank to issue confidentiality rules for the data they collect and process for statistical purposes, and some general statements regarding dissemination.

44. Concerning the two explicit assignments in the area of statistics, the implication is that the National Bank is the producer of official statistics in these two areas. However, there is no explicit reference that for these two statistical activities, the National Bank would also have to observe the LSS. In terms of a partial substitute, the two chapters mention that the National Bank *shall cooperate with government authorities in the collection and publication of statistical and other data*, and, in

article 86, *in the adoption of international standards for data dissemination* (a clear reference to the IMF's SDDS and GDDS, where the coordinating role is assigned to TAJSTAT). The National Bank has also the right to obtain, for their statistical responsibilities, the necessary information from government authorities, i.e. data from TAJSTAT's data collection and production that serve as inputs into the statistical production of the National Bank. For the balance of payments, the National Bank has the explicit right to conduct statistical surveys of *individuals and entities involved in foreign economic activity*, but in reality TAJSTAT is, for the time being, carrying out such surveys on behalf of the National Bank (the SAS Decree mentions the contribution of TAJSTAT to the BoP in one of the indents of paragraph 9).

45. The missing reference to the LSS means that statistical activities of the National Bank are neither covered by the principles mentioned in art. 4 and 5 of the LSS, nor are they part of the statistical programmes. Therefore, *de facto*, the organisational separation of statistics and administrative/policy tasks within the National Bank appears to have been implemented since statistical activities are concentrated in a separate department. But this is not a sufficient condition for safeguarding the statistical independence from policy departments of the National Bank (see 2.1.2 for more details). Presently, there are no operational difficulties or duplications observed by the two different legal bases, but this may change once the National Bank wants to conduct statistical surveys on its own. Another open question is whether the reverse data flow, i.e. data from the National Bank as input to the production of TAJSTAT, should be considered as part of *statistical reporting* as defined in the LSS, without the Statistical Department of the National Bank being explicitly mentioned as a producer of the system of official statistical in Tajikistan, which it undoubtedly is.

46. The apparent difficulty in making the National Bank part of the national system of official statistics is the necessity to strictly observe the independence of the National Bank. When statistical activities of the National Bank are included in the annual programme, which is submitted to the government for approval, the approval function of the government cannot be applicable to such activities. This would have to be made clear through an additional paragraph to be inserted into article 17 of the LSS. Nevertheless, the statistical department of the National Bank would have to observe the coordination mechanisms, e.g. in the preparation of the programmes, within the statistical system, and also follow standards decided by Head of TAJSTAT in his capacity as leader of the National Statistical System.

47. In the revision of the LSS, a new article on the system of official statistics would have to be inserted, where the National Bank is explicitly mentioned as producer of official statistics. With such a formulation, the provisions in the LNBRT concerning statistics can be left unchanged provided that the confidentiality rules to be determined by the National Bank according to article 86 are equivalent to those that will become applicable for all producers of official statistics.

1.3.2 Other laws

48. Art.25 of the Customs Code of the Republic of Tajikistan (№ 12, 2004; with last amendment on 1 August 2012) requires the Customs authorities (not TAJSTAT) to

collect, develop, present and publish data of *customs* (foreign trade) statistics. *De facto*, however, most results are transmitted to TAJSTAT for publications.

49. Customs data is a case study for data collected primarily for administrative purposes that are also used for important official statistics. In view of the clear difference that the LSS should have concerning its scope for respectively administrative sources and statistical surveys, it is straightforward that the responsibility for collecting customs data is assigned to the customs authorities by the Customs Code. However, the final responsibility for data processing and dissemination of official statistics should follow the rules of the statistical legislation, i.e. the LSS, and be assigned to only one recognised producer of official statistics.

50. It is up to the customs authorities and TAJSTAT to discuss and decide who is both able and willing to assume the full responsibility of a producer of official statistics for foreign trade statistics. If this role were to be assigned to the customs authorities, this would require strictly following the provisions of the LSS. However, if they would restrict their function as provider of administrative data this would also require the transmission of raw data in electronic format with subsequent quality checks and editing carried out, from a purely statistical perspective, by TAJSTAT.

51. Article 61 of the Law on Environmental Protection (№ 760, 2011) assigns the responsibility of publishing official statistics in this area to TAJSTAT. This, also when information for which the primary data collection, mainly for monitoring purposes, is of the responsibility of other committees or agencies. This article also contains a clause by which it is the government who decides about the indicators to be published. Even if this is in line with the present provisions of the LSS, this contradicts the principle of statistical professional independence.

1.3.3 Presidential decrees and government resolutions

52. The SAS Decree (№ 862, 2010) deserves some special consideration. It is the only explicit legal basis for many important issues such as the professional independence of TAJSTAT, its status, and its subordinated structure. It lists tasks, obligations and rights of TAJSTAT. In many instances, it repeats provisions already contained in the LSS, with sometimes different terminology. One important provision of the SAS Decree is the task of TAJSTAT to *monitoring the implementation of normative legal acts*. This competence is essential for TAJSTAT's director in view of issuing, in the future, standards that are binding for the whole statistical system. The article that installs the competence of issuing such binding standards would be better incorporated into the LSS.

53. The content of other specific presidential decrees or government resolutions relevant to official statistics is mentioned in the chapters concerned.

54. As a more general issue, it is important that TAJSTAT constantly assesses forthcoming legislation at all levels and in all areas with respect to the relationship to the statistical legislation (LSS, LC and by-laws) in its present and future form. The best law is useless if conflicting provisions supersede it in other laws. The regular participation of the director of TAJSTAT in government meetings is an important way to be informed of and if necessary to react on intended changes in legislation under the responsibility of other departments or agencies, which may

have an impact on the system of official statistics and its deliveries. TAJSTAT bears this responsibility as the custodian of the legislation about official statistics.

1.3.4 Assessment

55. The LNBRT is good and modern basis for the responsibilities of official statistics assigned to the National Bank. However, they should become part of the system of official statistics, with most of the provisions of the LSS applicable to them (except those that foresee decisions by the government). This requires amendments to the LSS, but not to the LNBRT.

56. The article on statistics in the Customs Code should be amended so as to make the LSS applicable to the non-collection part of the production, and to the dissemination, of external trade statistics. This change would leave the option open about whether the customs agency or TAJSTAT will in future be the only official producer (and disseminator) of foreign trade statistics. The article on statistics in the Law on Environmental Protection is a model insofar as it clearly assigns the responsibility for official statistics to TAJSTAT, but this competence should include also the definitions of indicators to be published as results of official statistics (which is assigned to the government in this Law).

57. The use of presidential decrees vs. government resolutions as lower-lever legislation that make the LSS (and LC) more operational needs to be clarified. The competence of TAJSTAT’s director to issue standards that are applicable for all producers of official statistics, presently contained in the SAS Decree, is very important and should figure directly in the LSS and be assigned an appropriate legal form.

58. In its function as custodian of the LSS and related legislation as well as coordinator of the system of official statistics, TAJSTAT should follow-up on proposals for new or amended legislation in all domains in order to avoid conflicting provisions about official statistics in the national legislative framework. In addition, TAJSTAT also has to monitor the compliance of national legislation with international principles and standards in the field of official statistics.

1.4 Protection of independence

59. The LSS mentions the principle of independence in its article 4, but mainly in the connection of dissemination. In addition, the whole context seems to indicate that this provision is restricted to the dissemination of state statistics, i.e. dissemination by TAJSTAT at the central or territorial level. Dissemination is certainly one key aspect where independence for content, format and timing is essential. In addition to dissemination, professional independence is applicable to (almost) all decisions about the *how* statistics are produced and disseminated, as opposed to the ‘*what’ to measure* issue, which refers to relevance for various user groups, and where political priorities matter. The *how* part also covers all conceptual issues about how to define the indictors to be released, and all methods and processes to collect, process and store the data necessary as inputs to produce the indicators as results of official statistics.

60. Professional independence, in legal and in practical terms, is also a key component for the trust of users in the impartiality of the production and dissemination process. The feedback from those few users who could be contacted shows that TAJSTAT enjoys a high reputation and trust. This is also the case for statistics compiled by other producers and eventually disseminated by TAJSTAT. Many users see the fact that TAJSTAT, among a small number of agencies, is reporting to the President rather than to the government as insurance of credibility.

61. TAJSTAT's director is the responsible person for most of the production of official statistics but is at the same time the head of the whole national system of *official* statistics and therefore represents the entire system, and not only TAJSTAT, in international meetings. This task is explicitly acknowledged in the SAS Decree (paragraph 10).

62. In order to keep the trust of users and respondents into the impartiality of the system of official statistics, it is important that the chief statisticians is not perceived as a political figure. Regular participation in government meetings may entail some risks from this perspective, and the government may be tempted to give instructions to the TAJSTAT's director about issues that are protected by professional independence. There is a delicate balance to be observed by TAJSTAT's director between on the one hand using participation at government meetings to promote (and where necessary defend) the cause of official statistics. This may include lobbying for the endorsement of statistical programmes and for the allocation of the necessary resources for their implementation. Participation in government meetings could also help to get early information about forthcoming needs or changes to administrative data sources that are relevant for statistics. On the other hand being exposed to receiving instructions on methodology and dissemination (where no interference should take place), or being asked to inform the government about results of official statistics ahead of their official release. The LSS should make clearer the lines that should not be crossed, and the SAS Decree might be used to be more specific about the role of TAJSTAT director in government meetings.

63. Independence has to be further translated into institutional safeguards for TAJSTAT top management and for the heads of statistical departments of other producers. Paragraph 11 of the SAS Decree states that TAJSTAT's director is appointed and dismissed by the President of the Republic, with direct reporting to the President. However, the appointment is not preceded by a vacancy announcement based on professional requirements and a defined selection procedure. The same rules apply to the appointment of the three TAJSTAT's deputy directors, but here the President asks TAJSTAT director for proposals. The SAS Decree does not contain any term of office during which dismissal is only possible for a small number of explicitly stated reasons, as is recommended in European Code of Practice.

64. The SAS Decree includes in 18 an interpretation of the principle of professional independence. It states that *the interference of the central and local executive bodies of state authority in matters within the competence of the Agency and its departments in regions, sub-regions and cities, is prohibited*. The wording is comprehensive; it includes also possible interference from the authority to which the director of TAJSTAT is accountable, i.e. the President of the Republic. It would be preferable, though, to have this statement directly in the LSS, so that it cannot be changed unilaterally by one part of the executive branch, and to replace *within the*

competence of the agency by *the content and timing of the release of results of official statistics, and the methods and procedures to collect, process and store the data necessary in producing these results*. In the context of the present LSS, especially in view of the mandate of the Statistical Council (see chapter 2.1.3), the competence of the agency is not broad enough to ensure that professional independence is extended to all aspects of the production and dissemination process once the annual programmes (and the necessary resources) are approved by the competent authorities of the State.

65. Another aspect of professional independence is the right of a producer of official statistics, notably the TAJSTAT, to react on misuse and faulty interpretation of data by users. This is mentioned as one of the UN Fundamental Principles, and the decision about whether and when to use it should also fall under professional independence, i.e. to be decided by the statistical system without interference from outside. It is very positive that the right for TAJSTAT to make comments on misuse and faulty interpretations is explicitly mentioned in the LSS as part of article 8, but there seem to be no guidelines for the use of this provision.

66. The issue of the independence of statistical departments of other producers is discussed under 2.1.2.

Assessment:

67. The principle of professional independence is a cornerstone of a modern system of official statistics. It is not sufficient to merely mention it as a declarative statement in a law; the law has to specify for which type of decisions this principle is applicable. Furthermore, it needs to be transformed into institutional safeguards for the top management of the central statistical office, and if possible also for heads of statistical departments that act as other producers of official statistics. Article 4 LSS is not sufficient from this perspective; in addition, independence seems to be limited to issues of dissemination (and hence does not cover the methodology of collection and processing). The specification in the SAS Decree is broader, but it would be preferable to have such a statement in the LSS itself, to make clear that it is the competence of the legislative and not the executive branch to legislate on this crucial issue, and to better withstand possible provisions to the opposite in other (non-statistical) laws. Subjects of official statistical accounting (i.e. other producers of official statistics) are not required by the LSS to produce their respective statistics under the principle of independence, and this should be corrected as well.

68. It is recommended to strengthen art. 4 as part of the next revision of the LSS along with the lines suggested here. Provisions concerning the terms of office, a limited number of reasons for dismissal during the term, and the essential elements of a job profile that the director and deputy directors would have to comply with, can be added to the Presidential Decree ahead of the changing of the LSS, as well as a clear statement about the scope of professional independence in substantive terms.

69. Professional independence is not only a protection against interference, it is also an obligation for the producers of official statistics, and notably for TAJSTAT, to assume full responsibility for conceptual and methodological decisions that are covered by this principle, and to be seen by the users and the public as the conceptual leader on issues of official statistics. TAJSTAT should play a more

assertive role in this respect; both in relation to specific government users and to the Statistical Council (see 2.1.3).

70. It is also recommended for TAJSTAT to become more selective in agreeing to publishing results of other producers under its own label. In principles, the criteria to be used are the same as those to be used in future for a systematic quality control in the production processes of TAJSTAT.

71. Furthermore, it is recommended that TAJSTAT develops a policy for making use of the right to comment on misuse and faulty interpretations, especially those in the media. This requires that comments on statistical releases are gathered and analysed systematically.

1.5 Data security and statistical confidentiality

72. Confidentiality is mentioned in the LSS at several places. Article 2 (definitions) includes the following definition of *statistical* confidentiality: *the protection of statistical data, the disclosure of which is prohibited in compliance with the legislation of Tajikistan*. It was confirmed by TAJSTAT that the only issue of confidentiality that is currently implemented is the compliance with a list of state secrets based on different legislation. A special unit in the CSO is responsible for checking all tables before actual data is filled in for cells that might fall under one of the state secrets. The list of state secrets is also secret. Furthermore, users are not informed about why certain aggregates cannot be provided, or that certain aggregates exclude components that are state secrets.

73. In addition, issues of statistical confidentiality are mentioned in the list of basic principles of article 5, and in article 9 (responsibilities of TAJSTAT: *guarantee confidentiality of state and commercial secrets, statistical confidentiality concerning statistical units in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan*). Article 16, paragraph 3, is the only place where statistical confidentiality is specified to a certain extent over and above state secrets, as *data containing individual information concerning separate statistical units*. This article applies not only to all parts of TAJSTAT, but also beyond to all official statistical information, i.e. also to results released by *subjects of official statistical accounting*. Article 16, paragraph 5, requires not only TAJSTAT, but all *subjects of official statistical accounting* to guarantee protection of the confidential data against illegal access and disclosure in the procedure established by the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan, the reference to other legislation indicating that it is again state (and possibly *commercial*) secrets that are targeted here. Article 16, paragraph 4, states that *primary statistical information may be disseminated only with the consent of the statistical units which provided the information*, and article 18, paragraph 1, repeats for TAJSTAT the requirement to keep confidential primary statistical material. Data security is explicitly addressed in article 18, paragraph 2, stating that TAJSTAT *shall provide processing and store and protection of the primary statistical data in the conditions guaranteeing their prevention from plunder, loss or distortion*.

74. The principle of statistical confidentiality as part of the fundamental principles of official statistics has two components: exclusive use for statistical purposes, and no disclosure of data about single natural and legal persons. Whereas the LSS uses the

term disclosure, the first component, the exclusive use for statistical purposes of data about natural and legal persons, whatever may be their origin (statistical surveys or administrative data collections), by all parts of the statistical system is completely missing, and this is indeed a serious gap both with respect to state statistics (activities of TAJSTAT), and with respect to other producers as well.

75. As outlined before, data about *statistical units* are used by TAJSTAT for non-statistical auditing purposes and, in a few cases, shared with ministerial branch offices at sub-regional level. In addition, TAJSTAT indicated in the reply to the guidance questionnaire that they might be forced to give access to primary data for non-statistical purposes if required by the Prosecutor's General Office, the Ministry of Defence, or the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This seems to be a legal possibility only; no case of such a transmission has been reported at the central level since the LSS entered into force. The legal bases for these prerogatives of other agencies were not made available, nor the reasons why the other legal bases seem to prevail over the LSS.

76. Concerning the disclosure aspect, the almost exclusive focus on state secrets risks neglecting the real meaning of statistical confidentiality, i.e. protecting information that allows individual units to be identified either directly or indirectly, from non-statistical use and from disclosure of their data in any form. *Primary statistical information*, i.e. filled-in reporting forms received by TAJSTAT territorial offices, is the only form of such information mentioned in the LSS that is protected (against some forms of disclosure only), but similar protection does not seem to be legally required for unit-level data stored in other forms, e.g. as microdata files with or without names or addresses.

77. The only microdata file mentioned in the LSS is the State Statistical Register envisaged by article 15. For a statistical register, it is very important to ensure that the use of the data is strictly statistical (sampling frame for surveys; grossing-up of survey results to target population; direct source for statistics about the structure and the flows related to the universe covered by the statistical register), and that no disclosure takes place for other purposes. Any use for non-statistical purposes has to be strictly excluded, since the statistical register is not only kept up-to-date by using administrative registers and other administrative sources, but also on the basis of statistical surveys. No lower-level legal acts exist that specify the access and use of the state statistical register that is still in creation stage by TAJSTAT.

78. With some few exceptions, microdata files other than statistical registers about *statistical units* from statistical reporting or statistical observations do not currently exist in TAJSTAT, but this is likely to soon change. The current statistical legislation does not cover such files, especially if they deviate from the *primary statistical information* because of editing and imputations at the micro-level carried out by TAJSTAT (these modern techniques of statistical methodology are not applied in the present mode of data collection and processing of *statistical reporting*). Neither are files, or even *primary statistical material*, protected in the case of household surveys (because of the limitation to *statistical units* as defined in the LSS). Such files presently exist in a form that reduces the risk of indirect identification to zero in practice, but again, this may change in the future. Census forms from the 2010 population census were scanned and are kept in this format, but they are not organised as microdata files (the LC declares *personal information*, and

not only *primary statistical material* to be confidential). Also in the context of the forthcoming agricultural census 2013, which is based on the LSS, it would be important to regulate the protection of microdata files from this source. With the notable exception of vital statistics, the statistical reporting from a *subject of statistical accounting* to TAJSTAT does not involve unit-level data either; for this source as well, the situation is very likely to change soon.

79. Disclosure provisions for unit-level statistical information outside statistical registers should contain at the level of the law:

a) A specification about which units are to be treated as confidential from the statistical confidentiality point of view (this is also relevant for the issue of non-statistical use): natural persons, private households, legal persons of the private sector, but not government units at central, regional or sub-regional level (in some cases, such information may be covered by state secret, however). State companies are a borderline case; if they act as monopoly, they can be assimilated to government units, if they operate in a competitive market, it is preferable to treat them like private sector operators from the confidentiality point of view;

b) A specification about who is to be considered as a third party that is not eligible to receive confidential unit-level information even for purely statistical purposes. The principal borderline is between inside and outside the system of official statistics;

c) The treatment, in tables to be disseminated, of small aggregates, from which certain users with specific knowledge can derive additional information about a given statistical unit. This issue can be delegated to lower-level legislation. Some aggregates may be considered so important that they should be published without considering the small aggregate risk, or even when there is only one unit concerned (e.g. the only company in a given economic activity); this issue can be left to the level of by-laws as well;

d) The treatment of identifiers in future electronic microdata files: names and detailed addresses should not be carried over to microdata files (except for statistical registers), but only numbers by which each unit can be distinguished. These numbers may origin from statistical or administrative registers, from which the real identity can be traced back, but access to files that allow the combination of identity and content information (which e.g. is necessary for matching files from different sources for statistical purposes) should undergo a special authorisation procedure. Forms that contain names should be destroyed after a much shorter time than that which is currently prescribed in the LSS. Microdata files without any identifiers still have to be considered subject to statistical confidentiality as long as there is a risk of indirect identification of a protected unit through characteristics that occur rarely;

e) The explicit basis for transmitting confidential unit-level data from a statistical producer to a third party outside the National Statistical System for exclusively statistical or research purposes, and the conditions to be met in such cases (e.g. conditions for signing a contract). Possible receivers may be:

- Statistical offices in other countries and statistical departments in international organisations;
- Researchers in universities etc., but not in government ministries (except for a statistical department of such a ministry that is a member of the national system of official statistics). Such transmission should never include identifiers of any form.

80. The LSS is practically silent about all these issues. Paragraph 3 of article 16, quoted above, only states that the right of equal and simultaneous access is not applicable to confidential data containing individual information about separate statistical units, but it does not state that information about *statistical units* cannot be disclosed at all. This omission might be an indication that the concept of statistical confidentiality is not understood, in spite of being mentioned in the LSS, and such understanding has to precede any implementation measures or change of the LSS.

81. These rules for disclosure of confidential data to receivers outside the national system of official statistics have to be complemented by rules about the exchange of confidential data between TAJSTAT and statistical departments of other agencies that are part of the national system as proposed in this report, and about how microdata files from administrative sources that contain confidential unit-level data are imported into the system.

82. Despite the present lack of clarity (outside the issue of state secrets) and the wide range of interpretations about what confidentiality presently means, the positive aspect is that all permanent and temporary staff of TAJSTAT including its subordinated bodies have to sign, as part of their employment contract, a confidentiality pledge. Breaches of confidentiality may trigger administrative sanctions against employees, but are not included in article 19 LSS concerning liability for infringement of the LSS. Penal sanctions are only applicable in the case of *statistical units* violating their reporting obligations. The same qualification is valid for the statement in the reporting forms given to statistical units by TAJSTAT that their information is subject to confidentiality. There is indeed a serious risk of loss of credibility of this promise if the same staff member from a territorial statistical office is engaged in the task of non-statistical auditing about the same statistical unit from which he or she collects forms of statistical reporting. For state companies still used to the pre-independence approach to state statistics, this may not matter too much. It will be very difficult to convince the growing number of private sector companies that their information will not be used for administrative purposes if staff members from TAJSTAT continue to be involved in auditing type of actions through which compliance with non-statistical legislation is assessed and sanctioned, or if they share filled-in forms with ministerial offices at sub-regional level.

83. Another law has some bearing on the confidentiality issue in statistics: it is the Law on Information № 55, 2002. Article 42 of this Law states that the Republic of Tajikistan is the owner of all information resources about the Republic *regardless of content, form, time and place of creation*. A similar statement is included in article 34 that *information created by the state budget is state property*. Official statistical information falls under this clause, and the regulation of ownership may negatively affect the concept of statistical confidentiality if it is interpreted in such a way that a

transmission of confidential data from a producer of official statistics (e.g. TAJSTAT) to a government department (outside the system of official statistics) is not an exchange involving a *third party* and is therefore licit. The LSS has to introduce provisions that can withstand this interpretation, by clearly defining the border of the statistical system, listing exhaustively the exceptions where confidential data can be transmitted to a user outside the system for statistical purposes, and by strictly excluding any use of confidential data for non-statistical purposes even if it were to be by the same *owner* according to this broad legal definition.

84. Another potential conflict between the Law of information and the LSS is article 27 of the former, according to which citizens (not legal persons) have the right to access information about them and claim their correction for completeness and conformity to reality, except as provided by law. Similar provisions are to be found in many Western countries data protection laws, but microdata files that are only used for statistical purposes are exempted (with the possible exception of statistical registers), either through provision in the statistical law or in the data protection law itself. No exemption provision in either law of the Republic of Tajikistan could be found, however, that states an exemption from this right of access for statistical files with confidential unit-level data. Once microdata will be stored in electronic form centrally, this legal issue has to be addressed as well.

Assessment:

85. Apart from the issue of state secret, the important aspects of statistical confidentiality are not addressed in a coherent way. This is not so much because of any limits in the present LSS, but more so because of the lack of specifications at a lower level of legislation that could serve as guidance for staff, and help to reassure respondents about what happens to their data.

86. TAJSTAT’s territorial statistical offices should immediately stop the practice of sharing filled-in statistical forms by legal units (or individual entrepreneurs) with territorial branches of ministries and agencies outside the statistical system.

87. This rule applies also to data pertained in the statistical business register and the statistical register of agricultural holdings (to be set up on the basis of the agricultural census 2013).

88. When the LSS will be revised in the medium term (as recommended under 1.1.3), the issue of statistical confidentiality should be given a chapter of its own, completely rewritten in a systematic way and made binding not only for TAJSTAT, but for all producers that are part of the national system of official statistics.

89. When cells of tables are suppressed before release because of reasons of statistical confidentiality or state secrets, the users should be informed about the reason for the suppression. The same is applicable when released results omit certain components that are considered state secrets.

90. Based on the confidentiality provisions of the LSS, prevent ministries and agencies, which are not part of the National Statistical System, to access unit-level data from TAJSTAT and from any other producers of official statistics.

1.6 Mandate for data collection

91. The LSS contains clear mandates for data collection through *official statistical accounting/statistical reporting* (art. 12, and various parts of other articles), but only for TAJSTAT. The respondents in statistical reporting type of collections have to submit the requested data free of charge, within the deadline given to them, and using the forms established for this purpose (article 8, 1st indent, as well as article 12, 3rd paragraph). The mandate includes the right to *check the reliability of data and demand that distortions should be eliminated in the case they are revealed* (article 8, 4th indent). It also explicitly mentions the possibility to include data subject to commercial or state secrets as part of statistical reporting (article 8, 1st indent).

92. Given that the above article about the mandate for data collection through *statistical reporting* is only valid for TAJSTAT, the LSS does not provide a mandate for the primary data collection in this form by other *subjects of statistical accounting*. The LSS only regulates the transmission of such data from the *subject of statistical accounting* to TAJSTAT. Since the primary data collections in these cases are carried out to a large extent for administrative purposes, this delimitation of the scope of the law is highly welcome and should be strictly maintained (see chapter 1.1.2 on the scope of the LSS). A statistical law should never be the legal basis for a government agency collecting or using data for administrative purposes.

93. The strong mandate for TAJSTAT for data collection from businesses through *statistical reporting*, together with the prerogatives about verification and control, lead to a very high response rate for *statistical reporting*. On the other hand, these prerogatives may not be an incentive for TAJSTAT to reduce the statistical burden on respondents.

94. With some exceptions (vital statistics, some household surveys, and the state statistical register), the Main Computing Centre (MCC) receives, as TAJSTAT's subordinated and executive agent, data from either the territorial statistical offices, or from *subjects of official statistical accounting*, only in aggregated form. In this report, we will use the term *headquarters* to designate the combination of CSO and MCC. The annual statistical programmes (at republican and territorial levels) are the main tools to translate the general mandate for data collection in the LSS to actual obligations for reporting and transmission of data from respondents to TAJSTAT (CSO, MCC and territorial offices). The forms used in this context are referred to in the annual statistical programme, and are registered with the Ministry of Justice.

95. It remains to be seen whether, in the case of administrative data, this strict codification of reporting from holders of administrative data to TAJSTAT, either at national or regional/sub-regional level, can also be used for the future transmission of unit-level data that are confidential. In the case of vital statistics, sub-regional statistical offices receive copies of the primary certificates of births, deaths, marriages and divorces, and the database is only available in the CSO. In spite of a clear statement in paragraph 3 of art. 12 LSS, headquarters do not get access to (or do not receive copies of) the unit-level data kept by ministries. An example of this is the collection of forms of migration events in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

96. For administrative data collections, the most efficient way would be to assign the task of data entry to the holder of the administrative function (at central or regional/sub-regional level), and to only transmit to TAJSTAT copies of electronic files of their unit-level data (without identifiers unless it is about businesses or farms) for subsequent statistical processing under the sole responsibility of TAJSTAT. The latter would then be in a better position to check the quality of the data, as compared to today when only aggregated data is available to them, and to apply editing and imputation techniques at the micro level where necessary in order to better approximate concepts of official statistics. The official statistical information produced by TAJSTAT would then sometimes deviate from the simple aggregation performed by the holder of the administrative data for its own management purposes, but this latter statistics would not be considered as result of official statistics any more.

97. The data flow from *subjects of official statistical accounting* to TAJSTAT can take place at the central or regional/sub-regional level. Sometimes, it even happens at both levels in parallel, which creates problem of coherence and coordination (see 2.2.3). In reality flows of aggregate data also take place in the reverse direction ahead of the official publication of all results by TAJSTAT, e.g. for verification purposes, especially at regional or sub-regional level. When TAJSTAT decides to move towards receiving unit-level data from administrative sources in a much more systematic way, a strict policy that there are no flows of confidential data in the opposite direction would have to be installed, both at central and regional/sub-regional level, unless it is strictly within the limits of the newly defined system of official statistics (i.e. between CSO and a statistical department of a government agency at central level). The observation of this rule is of special importance in the context of statistical registers.

98. Moving to the transmission of unit-level data in general would not make possible any more references in the annual statistical programme to *forms of reporting* that the *subjects of statistical accounting* have to use for the transmission of their data to CSO. Some other instruments, such as bilateral transmission agreements between a holder of administrative data and TAJSTAT, would have to be developed for codifying the transmission of electronic files and the respective rights of both parties (which however cannot contain elements that would be in contradiction to a fundamental principle of official statistics such as flows of confidential data in the reverse direction).

99. Another obstacle to moving to the transmission of electronic files is the old perception that only paper forms that are properly stamped and signed have an *official* character, and only data in such a form can be used by CSO. This legacy of treating statistical forms as documents that can be used as evidence in litigation and courts still prevails for all types of *official statistical accounting*, whether through forms delivered by legal units to TAJSTAT territorial offices, or by ministries/agencies at the central level. There are examples of data transmission from a ministry to CSO both as stamped paper documents and as electronic table; because of the more official nature of the former, the data is re-entered by the MCC from the paper document rather than taken directly over as electronic table. This old legacy is, for various reasons, not compatible with modern official statistics, and

stands in the way of making full and efficient use of available data for official statistics and of using modern statistical methods.

100. As noted earlier, the response burden is not mentioned anywhere in the LSS; it appears only in the Presidential Decree about the Statistical Council (see 2.1.3). Very recently, the President of the Republic, in a message to the Parliament, has asked TAJSTAT to reduce the number of forms, and to prepare for data collection and transmission using electronic technology; this is a sign that the issue of response burden for the business community starts to be addressed.

101. For the *statistical observations* category of data collection, the LSS has also a clear and unambiguous mandate (art. 14). The differences to *statistical reporting* are the following:

a) There is no automatic response obligation, only if stipulated in a lower-level legal act (e.g. in the context of the agricultural census);

b) They can be based on full coverage or sampling;

c) They can use different forms for data collection (forms to be filled in by respondents; interviews, registration of appropriate facts);

d) They can be carried out both by TAJSTAT and by other *subjects of official statistical accounting*;

e) TAJSTAT (but strictly speaking not the other producers) can use estimates for missing observations/non-response without having to go back to the respondent in each case.

102. *Statistical observations* are much closer to the modern concept of official statistics when compared to *statistical reporting*: Concepts such as sampling or estimates that were not to be found in the old pre-independence system of official statistics are mentioned explicitly. However, the share of *statistical observations* in the annual statistical programme as compared to *statistical reporting* is still relatively low, but indicates that transition has started. In a simplified way, all data collection for purely statistical purposes, carried out for official statistics under the LSS, should become *statistical observations* and cease to be regulated by the articles applicable to statistical reporting. This would open up the possibility that also statistical reporting type of data collections could make use of the options listed above in letters a) to e) above, which is an important prerequisite for modernising the system of business statistics.

103. The LSS does not contain any provision for the rights and obligations of respondents in statistical observations. If natural persons or private households, in their capacity as producers of goods and services, are included in such surveys, the relevant provisions of the Law on Information (see below in the paragraph about household surveys) can be assumed applicable. But there are no provisions whatsoever about legal units as respondents in statistical observations, unless a specific legal act as for the agricultural census is applicable.

104. We have already observed in 1.1.1 that household surveys do not have a proper legal mandate of the same strength as statistical reporting or statistical observations. The LSS confers to TAJSTAT the right, but not the monopoly, to *conduct statistical observations among the population.* However, this is a confusing terminology, since the definition of statistical observation as mentioned in art. 2 LSS refers to statistical units, which exclude households and population. No household surveys, whether the responsibility of TAJSTAT or another producer, are to be found in the annual statistical programme, even if sometimes they are indirectly covered through some of the publications or results listed such as the CPI. Other producers, e.g. in the health area, also carry out household surveys. Respondents in such surveys have at least the right from the Law on Information (№ 55, 2002), which contains an article 27 that asks public authorities to inform respondents about the purpose and other characteristics of data collections, but it would be preferable to have the issue of response burden and rights and obligations of respondents in the various forms of statistical surveys fully covered in the LSS (and other by-laws related to the LSS).

105. The 2nd indent of article 8, by which TAJSTAT can *request data from all sources* is for the time being a sufficient legal basis also for the transmission of environmental data in aggregated or non-aggregated form (i.e. not linked to economic units, persons, or households, and not of an administrative origin) to TAJSTAT. Such data does not involve confidentiality issues (with the possible exception of state secrets). Examples are data on air, water, soil, climate etc.

106. The fact that the term *estimate* appears in the LSS in the definition article 2, but not later in the LSS, is another sign of the transition towards a modern concept of official statistics. The mandate for data collection for official statistics from any source implies that all data collected can be processed for statistical purposes based only on professional considerations, and in this context, editing, imputations, grossing up and other methods of adjustment and estimation should be available to all parts of TAJSTAT as tools whenever the approximation to the target concepts and the target coverage can be improved in this way. Even results from exhaustive reporting will contain some adjustments or estimates for non-response. Today, the *estimate* clause in the LSS is used for grossing up samples and possibly in the context of synthetic statistics like GDP, but the other tools mentioned here are not used by TAJSTAT. Due to the existing influences of the old traditions, whereby such techniques were not considered to be part of official statistics, it may be necessary to mention in the LSS the right of TAJSTAT and other producers to use such methodologies systematically in a more explicit way.

107. The mandate for data collection from all sources, and the right to apply adjustment and estimation techniques, has to be interpreted in a broad way and therefore include an additional tool that has not been used by TAJSTAT so far: the matching of unit-level files from different sources, by using identifiers that are common to the sources (e.g. the identifier from the state statistical register). Matching of sources is required for the maintenance of statistical registers, e.g., but beyond this specific application on a more or less continuous basis, TAJSTAT should have the right to carry out such matching as a regular and ad hoc tool for producing official statistics, if strict confidentiality provisions are observed and the combined unit-level data are only accessed for exclusively statistical purposes. Such types of techniques should only be used once the general confidentiality provisions in the LSS have been

strengthened, notably concerning the exclusive use for statistical purposes of all unit-level data in the statistical system, whatever their origin. Matching is also a successful technique to avoid additional surveys, or additional questions in existing surveys, and therefore effective in limiting the response burden while still keeping the possibility to produce new results. TAJSTAT should be the only authorised agency in the statistical system where such matching can be carried out.

Assessment:

108. The mandate for TAJSTAT to collect data from economic operators, and from administrative sources held by other government agencies, is sufficiently strong in the LSS (*statistical reporting*). However, it remains to be seen whether this can be implemented as easily once data from administrative sources will be communicated as electronic files of unit-level data instead of today's practice of tables with aggregates. The transfer of data from a holder of administrative data to TAJSTAT should never be *compensated* by a data flow in the reverse direction.

109. However, the rules about statistical reporting in the LSS exclude many modern methods of official statistics, like sampling, estimation, editing, imputation, and matching of files. These shortcomings are not present with the other form of data collection regulated in the LSS, the statistical observations. It is therefore recommended to redefine all data collection from statistical units for exclusively statistical purposes to become statistical observations in future statistical programmes. TAJSTAT should make use of these methods for all sources, including those from administrative origin. In a future revision of the LSS, the competence to use such methods should be included explicitly.

110. All parts of TAJSTAT should cease to treat statistical information from respondents in statistical surveys, or from holders of administrative data, as documentary evidence that has to be stamped and signed and cannot be altered in the further processing for the purposes of official statistics. This is an obstacle both to the use of modern statistical methods and to a general use of electronic forms in data transmission to TAJSTAT.

111. Reporting obligations for economic units covered by the various forms of business surveys are very strong in the case of statistical reporting, and more flexible in the case of statistical observations. The considerations of rights of respondent and response burden is too weak or completely absent, both in legal and practical terms, and should be incorporated into the LSS.

112. The LSS gives TAJSTAT the possibility to collect data through household surveys, but other LSS provisions fail to be applicable. Household surveys should be treated as one form of statistical observations to which all provisions of a revised LSS, including those on confidentiality and the rights of respondents, will be fully applicable.

2. NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

2.1 Structure of the system

2.1.1 Overview

113. The term *statistical system* appears in the LSS in article 2, where the *state statistical system* is defined as *the basic component of the public information system, which is a combination of primary, aggregated and administrative statistical data*. This definition is based on a functional rather than institutional approach and therefore does not lend itself to delimit the boundary of a system of official statistics.

114. Another item in the definition article 2 where the term *system* appears is the *uniform system of technical-economic and social-economic classification and coding*, which is referred to as "*the system that allows grouping the information about statistical units by kinds of activity, patterns of ownership, location etc*. System stands here for a series of classifications and codes that allow statistical units (notably the *statistical units* as defined in the LSS) to be classified. These classifications (examples are given in 4.3.1) are applicable to statistical output and to the statistical register of businesses, but apparently also to all administrative data collected by *subjects of statistical accounting* and to the public State Register of legal units and individual entrepreneurs. This uniform system is also referred to in article 15 about the state statistical register, and in the SAS Decree.

115. Nevertheless, the institutional components of the system, but not necessarily its exact boundaries, can be derived from the legal acts reviewed in chapter 1. Presently, the system of official statistics is composed of the following actors that are explicitly mentioned in a legal basis:

a) TAJSTAT as the combined structure of the *State Statistical office* (Central Statistical Office or CSO) and its territorial and other subordinated bodies (MCC); they act as the central producer and coordinator (article 6 LSS). Only public authorities that are part of this structure can have activities considered as *state statistics* as opposed to the wider concept of *official statist*ics (see 1.2.2). The institutional definition of state statistics, i.e. the structure of TAJSTAT as given here, can be found in paragraph 7 of the SAS Decree;

b) The *subjects of official statistical accounting* defined in article 2 LSS as *public authorities, organs of self-government settlements and villages and other government agencies engaged in the formation of official statistical information in appropriate filed of activities in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan*. These are currently what we would refer to, at least for public authorities at the central level, as *other producers of official statistics*;

c) The National Bank, following the provisions of the LNBRT (see chapter 1.3.1), but the LSS itself (and the annual programmes and other lower-level legislation based on the LSS) do never mention and do not cover the National Bank;

d) The Interdepartmental Statistical Council (or Statistical Council) as major advisory body specific to the system of official statistics, established by article 10 of the LSS;

e) The Board of TAJSTAT, consisting of 7 members and chaired by TAJSTAT's director, established by article 14 of the SAS Decree;

f) The Census Commission, established by the LC with the main objective to coordinate the activities of various public authorities involved in the population census, as another body specific to an activity of official statistics;

g) The Commission for the Agricultural Census, established by the 2nd government decree on the agricultural census with a role similar to f).

116. As for the Census Publication Commission, TAJSTAT can also create ad hoc advisory groups for certain areas or activities outside the two legally established commissions with participants from outside TAJSTAT. In addition, TAJSTAT can create internal bodies such as the Methodological Committee or the Editorial Board, described in more detail in 3.1 and 3.3.3 respectively. The role and structure of TAJSTAT and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the role of the TAJSTAT Board, will also be analysed more in detail in chapter 3, and the role of CSO as coordinator of the system in 2.2.

2.1.2 Other producers of official statistics (subjects of official statistical accounting)

117. The main issue in defining the boundaries of a system of official statistics is regarding who is the main other producers of official statistics are, who qualify to be inside rather than outside the system. It has to be repeated that the boundary is crucial to define the sphere within which unit-level data can only be processed for statistical purposes (official statistics, and a range of statistical services), but never be used or transmitted for administrative purposes. As a consequence, other producers inside this border would have to create a special organisational unit where the activities of official statistics are concentrated; only this unit would belong to the statistical system, but not the rest of the ministry/public authority to which it belongs, and from which it would be professionally independent. These statistical departments of other producers would have to follow the LSS, and notably the fundamental principles of official statistics, for all their activities of official statistics. In other words, they would have to produce and disseminate official statistics under their own responsibility in full compliance with these principles and the other provisions of the LSS, and the statistical department could not be assigned non-statistical tasks that create conflicts of interest (e.g. when the department has to take administrative decisions about statistical units, as is the case presently for the statistics department of the Customs authorities that is in charge of sanctioning violations of the Customs code).

118. This profile for a producer of official statistics in the modern sense is much more demanding than what the holders of administrative data normally do as statistical operations for their own purposes with data they collect for administrative and control purposes on the basis of their own non-statistical legislation. Holders of administrative data usually compile statistics they need for managing their administrative processes, and for reporting about their activities to higher authorities, including to government, President and Parliament. Some of these statistics will also be published, but this does not automatically qualify all these statistics as *official statistics* in a modern sense. In order to be official statistics,

results have not only to be produced and disseminated according to the fundamental principles, but also to be made representative of a target universe that is *relevan*t from a societal point of view (demographic, social, economic, environmental), rather than merely reflect a summary of actions undertaken by a specific governmental department (such as the number of cases handled or administrative actions taken). Furthermore official statistics must follow international methodology and guidelines, thus statistical output to be internationally comparable, which is not a requirement for administrative data.

119. The definition of *subjects of official statistics* given above refers to *official statistical information*. The latter definition is given in article 2 LSS as *aggregated documented information on the quantitative component of social, economic, demographic, ecological and other social processes in the Republic of Tajikistan, compiled in compliance with the programmes of statistical works and other observations*. This is quite close to a modern definition of *results of official statistics*, if *aggregated* could be interpreted as representative, *documented* as associated by metadata, and *processes* as *phenomen*a (this latter term is used in the first term defined in art. 2, *statistics*). However, the reference to the legislation of Tajikistan would have to be narrowed to become *in compliance with the statistical legislation of Tajikistan (*i.e. only the LSS, the LC and the by-laws based on these acts) but not to other legislation that may contain provisions that are in contradiction with statistical legislation.

120. Whereas the definitions given in the LSS would make possible in principle a policy of being strict in granting the status of *subject of official statistical accounting* to other government authorities and drawing a clear border of the system, this has not been the approach in practice. The annual statistical programme only includes activities in which TAJSTAT is involved in the data flow, but it does not include activities of other producers where they produce and disseminate *official statistics* (as defined by the present LSS) fully under their own responsibility (this exists in practice, e.g. in the health area).

121. The full list of other departments and agencies that are currently considered as producers of official statistics can be derived either from the multi-year programme 2012-2016, or from the reply given by TAJSTAT to the guidance questionnaire preceding the missions for the global assessment. The combined list is as follows (* indicates missing in the TAJSTAT list given in the guidance questionnaire reply; ** indicates missing in both lists, i.e. added by TAJSTAT later in the global assessment process):

a) National Bank;

b) Ministry of Finance;

c) Customs Service;

d) Ministry of Health and its Republican Centre for Medical Statistics and Information;

e) Ministry of Education;

f) Ministry of Labour and Social Protection;

g) Migrations Service;

h) Office of Vital Registration under the Ministry of Justice (*);

i) Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resource Management;

j) Committee on Environmental Protection;

k) State Committee on Land Management and Geodesy;

l) Ministry of Transport;

m) Tax Committee (*);

n) State Committee on Investment and State Property Management;

o) Ministry of Internal Affairs (**);

p) General Prosecutor's Office (**);

q) Communication Service under the Government (**).

122. About a third of the organisations listed indicate, in the multi-year programme, that they have a statistical department; however, the description does not allow judgement to be made on whether such departments are involved in activities that may create conflicts of interest with some of the fundamental principles, such as policy monitoring or use of unit-level data for administrative decisions-making. If this mix of activities were to continue, such departments could not qualify as producers for official statistics and member of the statistical system and would in future have to be considered as holders of administrative data outside the statistical system.

123. From the output point of view, it is questionable as to whether all the agencies listed above actually disseminate statistics which can qualify as results of official statistics in the modern sense, and are not only summaries of administrative activities carried out by the agencies that are compiled basically for purposes of management and accountability of the agency concerned. Results of official statistics have to address information needs of a variety of users, be compiled based on international EU or UN statistical standards, follow the fundamental principles of official statistics, and be subject to a system of quality control. It is very unlikely that many statistics published by other producers in the above currently fulfil all these criteria.

124. In our view, based on the findings during the two missions, at the maximum three other producers seem to have a reasonable chance of qualifying themselves as other producers of official statistics in full compliance with the principles:

a) The National Bank through its Statistical Department;

b) The Ministry of Health through its Republican Centre of Medical Statistics and Information;

c) The Ministry of Education.

125. If the National Bank was not willing to act as producer of one or both of the statistical areas assigned to them in the LNBRT (banking statistics, and BoP) with full respect of all fundamental principles, a transfer of the responsibility to TAJSTAT would require a change of the Law on the National Bank. Even if the National Bank continues to act as producer, they can continue to ask other parts of the system, notably TAJSTAT, to be responsible for certain data collections (surveys) that are necessary as inputs.

126. In any case, the responsibility of producing and disseminating official statistics in a specific area should be clearly assigned, through the annual statistical programme, to either TAJSTAT or another producer (not to both together). Otherwise there is a real risk that both authorities will publish different results that all claimed to be official. Concerning the ministries of health and education, TAJSTAT will have to discuss with each of them about their respective willingness and ability to act as producer of official statistics in their area. If the right for producing official statistics is granted to a specific ministry, necessary organisational measures will have to be taken in order to create a professionally independent unit within that ministry. Again, the concentration of responsibilities for official statistics with TAJSTAT does not mean that the ministries could not continue to produce and disseminate statistics for their own management purposes. The data will not have the status of official statistics, but will be considered as information for administrative purposes that could be used by TAJSTAT as primary data sources for the production of official statistics (sectoral statistics in the LSS).

127. Statistical departments of other producers can continue to carry out statistical tasks outside official statistics, in particular statistical services, analysis, forecasting, research, for the organisation of which they are part. Unlike TAJSTAT, such departments have to be limited to the central organisation in the capital; they cannot extend to territorial offices of the institution concerned, because an organisational separation of official statistics activities will not be possible in practice at local ministerial level The present definition of *subjects of statistical accounting* in article 2 of the LSS includes the possibility that not only departments and agencies at the central government level can act as producer of official statistics, but *public authorities* in general (which seems to include executives at city, oblast, or rayon levels), and also *organs of self-government settlement (the GBAO) or villages*. The revised LSS should limit this possibility to public authorities at the central level.

128. The major advantage for such departments to be part of the system is the ability to access microdata from CSO for statistical purposes according to modalities to be defined once the system will be set up in practice. Because of the risk of non-statistical use, this will not be possible for normal government agencies, including for *statistical* units that are unable or unwilling to qualify as part of the national system of official statistics. Furthermore, provisional or partial results of official statistics can be exchanged between members of the statistical system ahead of the release (under the condition that the information will not be provided to persons or institutions outside the system) much more easily.

2.1.3 Advisory bodies specific to the statistical system

129. The main advisory body is the Interdepartmental Statistical Council (Statistical Council) established by article 10 LSS. Composition and tasks of this Council are specified in the Presidential Decree № 883, 2010. The TAJSTAT's director chairs the Council, and the vice-chairman is the deputy minister of the Ministry of Economics, Development and Trade. The majority of its 22 members represent government ministries and committees, but is not identical with the list given in 2.1.2 as present producers of official statistics. The list of members includes also representatives from the National Bank, the trade union federation, the union of entrepreneurs, the Tajik National University, and an institute of demography. Furthermore, two TAJSTAT's deputy directors and the head of MCC are members. The Council reports to the President of the Republic.

130. Since its recent inception, the Council has met three times (the Decree prescribes a minimum of two meetings per year). The major outcomes of the meetings are disseminated through TAJSTAT's website. The Statistical Council takes decision by simple majority of its members; the necessary quorum for the presence of members is two thirds. The Statistical Council can invite representatives of other agencies, academic institutions, and community organisations to selected meetings.

131. According to article 1 of the Presidential Decree № 883, the main function of the Statistical Council is to *coordinate* statistical activities. Article 3 contains a short, but important list of tasks for the Statistical Council: it *reviews annually the state statistical bodies'* (TAJSTAT) *and other organisations' results* (the latter part seems to be directed to the *subjects of official statistical accounting* insofar as they are engaged in *official statistical accounting*); it *reviews state statistical accountability for the purposes of harmonization, simplification and optimization, reducing the burden on respondents* (this is the only legal provision found about the burden to respondents); it *considers and agrees to proposals about the feasibility of new statistical observations and forms of departmental reports*; and it *makes recommendations on major issues of statistical activities*. Article 4 gives the Statistical Council the right to consider the draft statistical programmes and the subsequent plans of actions, and to review material about the organisation of on-going data collections *in order to ensure control over the procedure of information collecting, identifying facts on duplication of information requested by public authorities that are contained in state statistical reporting*. Following article 5, the Statistical Council *may also consider other questions on methodology issues, collection, processing and dissemination of official statistical information*.

132. In other words, the Statistical Council combines issues of planning and priority setting, where primarily information needs of various user communities should be considered, methodological issues about the best way to collect data and define concepts for results of official statistics (including the competence to agree to new surveys), where knowledge of conceptual and methodological issues matter most, with management and coordination issues such as duplication of data collection and control of on-going activities. In practice, most of the methodological issues, including the consideration of forms and questionnaires, are treated not by the Statistical Council, but by an internal TAJSTAT body called the Methodological Committee (described more in detail in 3.1); if forms are to be used by other agencies are to be discussed, an expert is invited to the Methodological Committee.

Issues about changes in indicators to be disseminated (e.g. additional breakdowns), however, still seem to require prior discussion by the Statistical Council before they can be released.

133. When tables to be published by a producer that fulfil the quality requirements have to be submitted to the Statistical Council before they are released for the first time, there is a risk that in view of the strong presence of user ministries in the Council, considerations that conflict with aspects of impartiality or professional independence may influence the decisions. Changes in output should be discussed by the Statistical Council in the context of annual programmes, i.e. before the actual data collection and processing takes place, from the point of view of relevance and burden to respondents. Once the programme is approved, it is the responsible producer who decides whether the quality of the new results is sufficient for their release as results of official statistics. Methodological issues, including the definition of indicators, should only come up at the level of the Statistical Council in the context of discussing future programmes, or the implementation of past programmes.

134. The issue of coordination is an issue for the producers within the statistical system, and there should be regular meetings, between TAJSTAT and each producer bilaterally, and when necessary for all producers together. Bilateral meetings between TAJSTAT and the holder of a specific administrative source that is used as input to official statistics will also be more instrumental in organising the specific regular data flows. Like methodological issues, coordination issues should come up at the Statistical Council mainly when programmes are discussed. Depending on the number of producers of official statistics, it would be advisable to create different mechanisms for coordination issues that arise during the implementation of programmes (see 2.2.3).

135. The existence of a broad forum such as the present Statistical Council is an asset of the system, but its main focus should be on the interaction with various users of statistics and the way their information needs are reflected in the programmes. The main issue for the Statistical Council to discuss would be to formulate an opinion about the draft annual and multi-year programmes before they are submitted to the government for approval, and to perform a similar role for the reporting about achievements in the past year. Otherwise, the Statistical Council should limit its advisory role to strategic issues, including the issues of the respect and implementation of fundamental principles in TAJSTAT and with other producers. Another important aspect to be addressed by the Statistical Council is the balance between information needs and the burden of respondents, notably for the business community.

136. For the change in focus, the composition of the Statistical Council should show a better balance between government/public sector users and user communities outside government. Government users should represent in the first instance ministries that have a broad range of information needs, such as the ministry of finance or the strategic unit operating under the President, as opposed to specialised sectoral information needs (this latter type of users can be brought in at the level of ad hoc advisory groups operating set up by TAJSTAT). On the other hand, the number of representatives from outside the public sector should be increased by e.g. including a representative of the media, and more representatives from the business community.

137. TAJSTAT can use its possibility to set up ad hoc advisory groups with limited duration for specific projects, but the mandate and composition of such groups should clearly respect that the final decisions on issues covered by professional independence is with TAJSTAT in all cases. Especially in deciding what aggregates should be published as results of official statistics, TAJSTAT should insist much more on its prerogative in deciding about content, definitions and methods of compilation to make sure that international UN and EU standards and representativeness are respected and not compromised by requests for different concepts or aggregation methods for a particular use by a ministry. Such sectoral requests can be handled as statistical service, i.e. as additional compilation using the same data source, but its output will not have the status as results of official statistics.

2.1.4 Assessment

138. Because of the uncertainty about the implications of the LSS on other producers of official statistics, the institutional boundary of a national system of official statistics is not very clear presently. The multi-year and annual programmes do not have the same institutional coverage, and other documents give other variants. However, it is quite clear that many of those institutions currently listed, as other producers are unlikely to be able and willing to act as a true producer of official statistics in the full meaning of this term in the future.

139. Therefore, it is proposed to define the national system of official statistics in the Republic of Tajikistan as consisting of the following producers:

a) The TAJSTAT’s structure, composed of the Central Statistical Office (CSO, the present State Statistical Office) and its subsidiary bodies, as main producer and coordinator of the system;

b) The Statistical Department of the National Bank (if they are willing to act in accordance with the fundamental principles of official statistics, and observe the provisions of the LSS other than those that involve decisions by the government); this would have to explicitly written into the LSS;

c) Other organisational units producing and disseminating official statistics that are included as such in both the annual and multi-year programmes, and not only mentioned as source of data transmitted to TAJSTAT. The producers at central level, other than the National Bank, that are able and willing to act in this capacity will not be mentioned in the LSS itself, but only in the respective programmes as adopted by the government on the basis of the LSS. CSO will have to advise such producers on how best to render their activities of official statistics conform with the principles of official statistics and the mechanisms in the LSS;

d) TAJSTAT will have to take the initiative and critically examine the ability and willingness of those ministries and government departments that are presently listed as *subject of official statistical accounting* and define a transition with each of the departments concerned until the next multi-year programme for the case of such a department not willing or able to act as producer under the new requirements, and for the opposite case.

140. The main advisory body of the system of official statistics, the Statistical Council established through article 10 LSS, should be kept, but concentrate more on issues of forming an opinion about statistical programmes and their implementation, and on strategic issues from the point of view of different user communities. The composition and mandate should be adapted accordingly, which requires a corresponding change in the Presidential Decree № 833, 2010.

2.2 National statistical programming and coordination mechanism

2.2.1 The annual programme of statistical works

141. The annual programmes of statistical work are prepared by the CSO, presented to the Statistical Council's members, and then adopted by the government pursuant to article 11, paragraph 1, LSS. This article defines the minimum content of the annual statistical programme as *a list of forms of statistical accounting with instructions for submission dates*. The forms are listed as references only; the Ministry of Justice keeps a full set of them each year. This referencing system allows some flexibility by keeping the same form number, with the possibility to adapt its content in the course of the year after discussion in the Statistical Council. The annual statistical programme also includes two columns indicating the cost of the operation, and the method of data processing (PC or manual).

142. Before adoption by the government, the draft programme is circulated to all ministries, state committees and other public authorities for comments 45 days ahead of the government decision. During this consulting phase, many additional information requests are addressed to TAJSTAT. In bilateral meetings, solutions are found if these additional requests can be transformed into additional *indicators* to be incorporated into a form used in an existing statistical reporting activity, or met by advancing deadlines for reporting. In the case of other ministries reporting as *subject of official statistical accounting* to TAJSTAT, changes are more frequent, also in terms of entirely new reporting activities (but normally based on administrative data the government department concerned is already collecting). The government approves the annual programme in the form of a Government Resolution (№ 580, December 2011, in the case of the annual programme for 2012).

143. The Government Resolution about the annual statistical programme includes a paragraph 2 that the activities in the approved programme should be funded from the state budget entry for TAJSTAT made in the budget 2012; the decision-making process for this budget is a separate process; the outcome of which is presumably known when the resolution about the statistical programme is adopted by the government. This has ensured a good match between the annual programme and the overall envelope for TAJSTAT's resources. In bringing in line the draft annual programme with the expected outcome of the budgetary decision-making process, TAJSTAT has to delete certain proposals in the programme. In practice, this often means postponing the start of new or infrequent activities to a later year.

144. The national programme is converted also into annual programmes of statistical works for each territorial office (rayon, oblast, or city). Most of the items contained as reporting obligations in the national programme appear also in the regional or sub-regional programmes, if the data flow involves the territorial level concerned.

The submission dates and forms differ, however: the national programme contains the forms by which oblast (regional), city and some rayon (sub-regional) offices have to report to headquarters (MCC in most cases), whereas the sub-regional programmes e.g. indicate the forms by which *statistical units* (or in some cases rural communities) have to report to them, with the corresponding deadline. The cost column is also pertaining to the cost for the office directly concerned. Aggregated data that are transmitted to TAJSTAT's headquarters by a ministry at central level only appear in the national, but not in the regional/sub-regional programmes.

145. The national programmes contain also some activities other than data collection in the context of *official statistical accounting*, grouped into different chapters. Examples are non-exhaustive *statistical observations* for agricultural statistics (where the entry *questionnaire* replaces the precise reference to a reporting form); output-oriented activities labelled *statistical compilations* and *statistics summary of works* (only cross-sectional compilations seem to be included; the usual outputs from one single *official statistical accounting* activity are not listed separately; also to be found in this type of activity are TAJSTAT's activities that are inputs into CIS statistical activities); activities concerning statistics of prices and tariffs (the underlying data collections of prices are neither *statistical reporting* nor *statistical observations* in the legal sense); and, finally, the output tables from the population census 2010.

146. The criteria by which such TAJSTAT's activities are added to the core content of *statistical reporting* remain unclear; but even with these added categories, the total programme does not cover all TAJSTAT's activities: examples are household surveys; activities where the major part of financing is from international donors (the outputs may be included, however); statistical registers; and infrastructure activities such as training or dissemination (although the table of contents foresee a chapter entitled *maintenance of registers, classifiers information and publishing activities*, no separate activities of this type can be identified in the English version). More generally, it is not clear how activities that are carried out less frequently than annually, such as the agricultural census, are included in the annual programmes.

147. The regional/sub-regional programmes also contain publications at this level, which in certain cases precede the release of data at national level. These programmes are submitted also to local authorities and finally approved by the TAJSTAT's director. The information received about the role of the local non-statistical authority in the context of these regional programmes was somewhat ambiguous; but territorial TAJSTAT offices only report to TAJSTAT, and do not have, like territorial offices of ministries, a second reporting line to the head of the local government. It is very important therefore that the comments by local authorities on draft regional programmes are communicated to TAJSTAT's director before he approves the regional statistical programmes, and are not automatically accepted by territorial statistical offices and incorporated into the programme.

148. Is the approval of a statistical programme at national level by a political body like the government an infringement on professional independence of the statistical system? Not if the government limits itself to either balance activities with resources, which includes the setting of priorities, or to balance information needs against burden to respondents in the context of some specific activities. However, the government should not change methodological or dissemination characteristics

contained in the programme; these are protected by professional independence. Therefore, the government may change the list of activities based on priority considerations, but not the information in the columns.

149. However, the present form of the annual programme is not suited for focusing on these considerations that a national government can legitimately have when adopting the programme. It is more seen as a tool of management and control that serves the top management of TAJSTAT and helps towards enforcing compliance with reporting obligation from *statistical units* and from *subjects of official statistical accounting*. Furthermore, the splitting into national and regional/sub-regional programmes does not allow grasping the total cost of an activity (for all parts of TAJSTAT combined), which is important in the context of priority considerations, nor does the national programme allow an assessment of the response burden of the *statistical units* as the number of ultimate respondents in statistical reporting directed at businesses does not appear. The major gap in the present programme is, however, that it does not allow detecting the improvements with respect to the year before, nor the planned progress in implementing the many changes listed in the multi-year programme.

150. Another shortcoming of the present process is that it focuses too much on maintaining, possibly improving and in certain cases adding activities that are carried out each year. This allows the good matching with the state budget, but it makes investments in form of new projects, as well as major activities that are carried out less frequently than annually, dependent on the availability of other funds than the state budget. In other words, these other activities are put on a kind of implicit waiting list until additional funds become available; on top of those already allocated to the regular activities. If such funds were not available, or not to the extent expected, there would be a risk of stagnation. Therefore, it is highly recommended that a certain percentage of the state budget allocated to TAJSTAT will be explicitly allocated in each annual programme to innovation type of activities that can be implemented even without donors and that will be listed as such in the annual programmes. If the overall budget is not increased, this would be identical to reducing or even dropping existing regular activities for the benefit of a limited and manageable number of innovation activities.

151. The monitoring of the implementation of the annual programme is based on quarterly reports provided to the government. These quarterly reports are also presented to media through press conferences and made available to the Statistical Council. However, no summary reporting about performance after the relevant year has been completed is produced.

2.2.2 The multi-year programme

152. Although the *long-term programme of development of statistics for not less than 5 years* is regulated by the LSS in the same paragraph 1 of article 11 as the annual programme, and is also discussed by the Statistical Council and approved by the government, its scope and content are very much different. The present draft programme covers the years 2012 to 2016. It is the second multi-year programme; the first was developed for the years 2005 to 2010 (6 years) before the LSS came into force, and was therefore not submitted to government for adoption at that moment. The present draft programme was sent to 15 ministries for comments

towards the end of 2011, and the government has included some items from this programme in the *state programme for investment for 2012*, which is a kind of list of all activities for which the government of the Republic of Tajikistan seeks funding from donors (the partial contribution from the state budget for such activities will be included in the 2013 state budget).

153. In terms of structure and content, the two multi-year programmes are similar; the first was established by the World Bank, and the second by CSO in consultation with an expert from the World Bank. In their structure, both follow the World Bank guideline for the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). The draft for the period that has started at the beginning of 2012 contains an assessment of the National Statistical System, including a list of other producers and their activities in terms of *production of statistical and administrative data*. It reviews all subject areas of statistics, as well as the cross-sectional issues like legal setting, IT, dissemination or human resources management. The actual programme is a list of actions, grouped into goals and sub-goals and stretched over 5 years, for the entire system, i.e. TAJSTAT and other producers mentioned in the assessment part. Each item is associated with cost in each of the years. The total cost is USD 12’965’000, of which *it is expected that 25.8% will be provided from central funds of the state budget*, with the remaining USD 9’614’000 depending on foreign aid of development partners.

154. The actions listed in the present multi-year programmes are of very different nature, sometimes very detailed (seminars) and more geared towards finding donors that would subscribe to finance such (small or big) activities. It is not clear what *adopting* by the government (as required by the LSS) would exactly mean: agreeing to finance the 25.8% from the state budget? In view of the very limited capacity for funding innovative activities and investments through the regular state budget, the total of the present draft multi-year programme is conveying a degree of change that is unlikely to materialise in reality.

155. The major advantage of a multi-year programme is that it can be more output- or results-oriented and less activity- or data collection-oriented than annual programmes. Output-orientation has to be understood as the changes relevant for users that can be expected to materialise in the years covered by the programme, in terms of content, periodicity, timeliness and compliance with international standards. The data sources used as inputs for these changes are of less importance to users in the multi-year programme, but they should of course be investigated by TAJSTAT to the extent that the overall cost can be estimated. Some major activities that are cross-sectional (e.g. those directed at the infrastructure of the system), or are very expensive (like censuses or household surveys) have to be listed individually as well. The Statistical Council should discuss the draft before being submitted to the government for adoption. Once adopted by the government, such a programme can serve as benchmark for the annual statistical programmes, and at the same time for the reporting about performance after the completion of each year. Even after adoption by the government, it has to remain a living document that can be updated, mainly to adjust for the resources that will be made available in the course of the implementation period.

156. Monitoring of the implementation of the multi-year programme takes place together with the monitoring of the annual programmes, i.e. by quarterly reports to the

government that are also made available to the Statistical Council. In addition, the current state of implementation concerning the items in the multi-year programme is also presented to media and therefore made public. When necessary, the Statistical Council may discuss the implementation of certain donor-funded components of the multi-year programme.

157. For the near future, the present draft can be used by TAJSTAT to gradually carry over some activities into the forthcoming annual programmes in their new structure as recommended in 2.2.4, once the full funding has been ascertained. The problem with including items from the multi-year programme in the government list of investment for a specific year, before full funding is ascertained, is that the contribution from the state budget cannot be carried over automatically to a subsequent year if finding donor funds takes more time; the agricultural census is a good example in this respect (see 4.4.3). No item from the multi-year programme should be implemented unless covered, in an explicit or implicit way, by an entry in the respective annual programme. We also recommend introducing a summary reporting about the implementation of the previous annual programme, which should also include and highlight the implementation of items in the draft multi-year programme that have been started, continued, or finalised.

158. Both the multi-year and the annual programmes should finally pass a feasibility test as regards management, especially for TAJSTAT. It should be checked whether TAJSTAT has the absorption capacity for each specific donor-funded activity, and if after completion of the development phase, the related statistical activities can integrate the regular production process (sustainability). The whole multi-year programme should not exceed TAJSTAT's management capacity, and attention should be given to the balance between repeated on-going activities with only small changes, and projects for major revisions (in content, process or technology) or large one-off activities. If the number of projects, and their share in the use of resources, is too high, it will be difficult to ensure proper delivery for all of them while at the same continuing the existing production. On the other hand, giving priority to continuing the established regular production and embarking on new activities only when donor money becomes available, is also a dangerous strategy that is somewhat inherent in the present way annual programmes are set up. The top management has to make sure that changes occur, even if those directly concerned may oppose it, in a well-planned succession of steps by which individual projects reach one after the other their maturity in the sense that they afterwards become part of regular production, but where the overall sum of changes does not fluctuate greatly from one year to another.

2.2.3 Coordination mechanisms

159. The LSS assigns the coordination responsibility to TAJSTAT, explicitly in article 7, paragraph 1, 1st indent (*coordinate and supervise statistical activity of the subjects of official statistical reporting*). This formulation is very strong, but it would allow TAJSTAT asking other producers that want to be part of the system for changes in the way they carry out their official statistics activities. The Statistical Council (article 10) has a coordination mandate as well. The mechanisms and tools that can be used for coordination by these two actors are not addressed as part of laws or by-laws, with the notable exception of the approval of forms for *statistical reporting*,

and *unless stipulated otherwise in the legislation* also for *statistical observations*. TAJSTAT internally, the Methodological Committee, composed of the heads of statistical departments and divisions, considers changes of forms used in statistical reporting and statistical observations also from the point of view of duplication.

160. Coordination is a difficult issue in an administration with a very strong vertical culture, where horizontal contacts outside the hierarchical reporting line are not encouraged. This is valid both for internal coordination within a large organisation like TAJSTAT, but even more so between different offices/ministries/agencies. However, a system of official statistics requires that the heads of statistical departments of other producers may have to follow, for issues of official statistics that fall under professional independence, standards and decisions by the chief statistician, i.e. TAJSTAT's director who is outside their usual in-house hierarchy for all other issues. This is a difficult concept, but the term *supervision* in article 7 is certainly not exaggerated if it could be interpreted as applicable to anything that concerns the implementation of activities of official statistics by these other producers. The present problem is that TAJSTAT, because of lack of resources (and in certain areas lack of knowledge) does not really make use of the prerogatives of article 7.

161. The main existing tool of coordination in Tajikistan seems to be the approval of forms by the TAJSTAT's director, pursuing article 7, penultimate indent, with prior discussion in the Methodological Committee whenever forms are changed in substance. However, approval of forms, or questionnaires, should occur later in the process of statistical production since decisions about design of the data collection and major outputs should precede the development of related questionnaires.

162. As mentioned in chapter 1.6, the form approval requirement by TAJSTAT's director does not only concern data collections for official statistics, it includes forms used by *subjects of official accounting* for their primary data collection for administrative purposes. This instrument is certainly useful for ensuring that statisticians can use administrative sources, but this competence pertains to a non-statistical task that is difficult to reconcile with the fundamental principles. In order to maintain the coordination aspect of this instrument, it should be reformulated in the LSS as obligation for TAJSTAT to be consulted in time when such changes are envisaged by the respective authority. However, statisticians have to accept that the final decision about the way data is collected from primary respondents for administrative purposes lies with administrative or political authorities, and not with statistical authorities.

163. In a modern system of official statistics, the main tools of coordination are the multi-year and annual programmes. They are the opportunity for the coordinator of the system, i.e. TAJSTAT, to find out systematically about changing user needs (from all user groups, not only from government users), not only with respect to additional information needs, but also, and here especially for government users, for the periodicity and detail of existing statistics that may have stopped to be indispensable for such a main user. Setting up a statistical programme by TAJSTAT includes a filtering and a bundling function. The bundling aims at identifying information needs (outputs) from different user groups including the public, and the filtering aims at giving priority to results of official statistics that fulfil the criteria of relevance for a large number of users. Coordination also includes assessing whether

proposed concepts and classifications are compatible with recognised international statistical standards at UN (including IMF) and EU level (and not only with respect to CIS standards, as is currently the focus of TAJSTAT's department for methodology and classifications). Furthermore, TAJSTAT has to ensure a balance between on-going data collection activities, infrastructure activities, and projects that aim at innovating existing activities or add new activities, especially through making use of technological progress, all this within the expected overall envelope of funds from state budget and possible other sources. Finally, the consideration of response burden has to be factored in.

164. It is during this complex process that the role of TAJSTAT is very important. For those additional information needs that pass the filtering, they have to find the most efficient and least costly way for data collection, giving priority to new statistics from administrative sources as opposed to enlarging existing forms of reporting or statistical observations, or even completely new surveys. Secondly, TAJSTAT has to identify duplications and overlaps in the existing activities, and propose to reduce or even delete one of the activities that cause this overlap, irrespective of whether this is an activity of TAJSTAT or of another producer. Thirdly, areas where activities can be reduced in periodicity or degree of detail, or even dropped completely, because of diminishing relevance for the main user, have to be addressed and proposed for implementation. The second and the third tasks allow resources to become available for new activities of the first type. Fourthly, the productivity gain across the board through improved management processes and better equipment has to be factored in; after initial investments, this will also allow either gradual reallocation of resources or an improvement in quality (e.g. timeliness).

165. This task requires a high degree of *horizontal* conceptual and organisational thinking that cuts across vertical stovepipes. It is tantamount to considering the statistical system as a system between *inputs* (data collections) and *outputs* (results of official statistics) where one output is not generated only by one input, but where there is a n to m relationship between them, i.e. one data collection activity is an input into more than one category of results, and one category of results in a given area is based on more than one data collection. This approach is the opposite of a system with parallel stovepipes that are strictly separated from each other from data collection to dissemination. The traditional stovepipes are still predominant in both the way TAJSTAT is organised and operates and in the mind-set of its staff.

166. The other main instrument of coordination is standards that are applicable to the whole system of official statistics. They should be developed by TAJSTAT and decided and issued by its director after consultation with other producers, and become binding for the official statistics activities of all producers that are recognised as members of the system of official statistics, including for the statistical department of the National Bank. Examples are standards on confidentiality, data security for microdata, quality management, metadata and documentation or terminology and classifications to be used in all statistics concerned. To prepare such decisions about standards applicable to the whole system, regular multilateral meetings between the TAJSTAT's director and deputy directors on one side, and the head of statistical departments of other producers on the other side, would give an institutional underpinning to the idea of a system of official statistics. If the number of other producers after application of the criteria suggested in 2.1.2 were still to

exceed three, a coordination forum should be established in the correct legal form (no change of the LSS seems to be necessary, but this forum will be advisory, with the final decision to be taken by TAJSTAT's director).

167. More specific coordination instruments have to be added to the two general ones mentioned above. Before results of official statistics are released that use new or revised concepts, these concepts and the related introduction of new or revised terminology, have to undergo a system wide approval. This is the last filter in avoiding results about the same phenomenon, but based on slightly different concepts, being released more or less in parallel as results of official statistics. Only the more comprehensive concepts, and those based on international standards, should receive the label of *results of official statistics*, all slightly different concepts that are produced at the request of a specific user (e.g. for the monitoring purpose of a ministry) departmental statistics for management purposes. It is up to TAJSTAT's director to make decisions about the status of output based on conceptual considerations, even where it involves other producers of official statistics or holders of administrative data that continue to publish their management statistics, to make sure that the two categories of output are clearly and visibly distinct. The Methodological Committee is an adequate forum for preparing such decisions by the TAJSTAT's director.

168. The other specific coordination requirement, to be enshrined in lower-level legislation, is the obligation that all transmission of official statistics to international organisations be coordinated by TAJSTAT in order to make sure that data from official statistics that approximate the requests as closely as possible are included. Exceptions for direct transmission by another producer may be granted if identical requests are repeated in regular intervals, provided the first two or three transmissions were approved by TAJSTAT. If the request changes in content, approval by TAJSTAT would have to be obtained again. Furthermore, TAJSTAT should coordinate international relations in statistics more generally, including being involved in any donor-driven activity that affects (or makes an intensive use of) official statistics.

169. One aspect that may facilitate the coordination task is the division of work between producers of official statistics, or the degree of centralisation of statistical activities within TAJSTAT. The higher the degree of centralisation of activities of official statistics within TAJSTAT, the more the system-wide coordination becomes identical with the coordination of activities within TAJSTAT. In substantive terms, this will not reduce the efforts necessary to ensure this coordination, but it may facilitate processes and transparency. The most controversial issue concerning centralisation is whether statistical surveys, i.e. data collection for exclusively statistical purposes, should, in the context of official statistics, only be assigned to TAJSTAT, or whether other producers may also be given the responsibility for a statistical activity of this type. Since the professional design, implementation and processing of statistical surveys is a specialised task, and because a single statistical survey may be used as input for an increasing number of statistical products, efficiency and effectiveness speak in favour of centralisation; especially for a small country with transition economy like Tajikistan.

170. Based on the LNBRT, the National Bank has the competence to carry out statistical surveys. The ministry of health also carries out household surveys, even if the

present legal basis is unclear. As long as the number of producers in the system remains small, and TAJSTAT is able to coordinate projects for statistical surveys submitted by other producers at an early stage, especially when setting up the statistical programmes, the possibility for these other producers to carry out sample surveys of households or of economic units (as *statistical observations*) can be maintained. It would be efficient if these other producers could obtain the sample, according to a sampling design approved by TAJSTAT, from the same sampling frames that are used by TAJSTAT. The creation of parallel partial statistical registers should be avoided, or with other words, TAJSTAT should be the only agency in charge of statistical registers.

171. In terms of coherence of results of official statistics released, some attention should be given by TAJSTAT to the coordination issue that arises within the organisation through publications or releases about the same subject at the central and at regional/sub-regional levels. They differ in timing, and with increasing methodological complexity, the risk of substantive differences will appear as well. This issue will be addressed in more detail during the analysis of the production process.

2.2.4 Assessment

172. The development and approval by government of both annual and multi-year programmes is prescribed by the LSS; this should be kept. The LSS should not prescribe the content or format; this should be left to lower-level legislation. The prescription in article 11 LSS that the annual programme should contain a list of forms for reporting and submission dates should be dropped. On the other hand, the obligation to report on the implementation of these programmes to government after the completion of the period (year or multi-year period), and the subsequent public release of these reports, should be inserted into the LSS to increase transparency.

173. The annual programme should be activity-based, and the multi-year programme more output- or result-oriented. They should have the same scope and cover all activities within this scope, irrespective of the source of data and the method of collecting or processing data. The characteristics of each entry should however be adapted to what is essential for the government to decide, for users to be informed about, and for respondents (in the case of statistical surveys) and government agencies/departments outside the statistical system (in the case of owners of administrative data) to be aware of forthcoming reporting activities, the details of which will be communicated later by the producer of official statistics that is in charge of this activity.

174. In particular, we recommend the following adaptations of coverage, structure, and content of the programmes:

a) Make coverage of both programmes identical with the future border of the system of official statistics, i.e. cover the activities of official statistics in the responsibility of TAJSTAT, the National Bank, and a limited number other producers of official statistics that are able and willing to act in this capacity with full respect of the fundamental principles of official statistics;

b) Concerning TAJSTAT, include all activities of official statistics irrespective to what extent the work is allocated to CSO, territorial offices, or the MCC, and show the total cost of the operation. Data flows between headquarters and territorial statistical offices should not be shown separately; this is a purely TAJSTAT internal affair;

c) Both programmes should be comprehensive also in the sense that they contain those activities that are conducted regularly with only small changes, activities that undergo major changes and innovations, and investments or large-scale activities that are carried out with a beginning and an end. The annual programme should only contain those activities where funding, including funding from donor contribution, has been ascertained, whereas the multi-year programme can include items where funding from other sources than the state budget will be ascertained only after adoption of the programme by the government in due course. The total multi-year programme should not be overambitious in the sense that it would exceed the steering and management capacities of TAJSTAT;

d) Items from the multi-year programme for which funding is ascertained have to be carried over and included in the relevant format (i.e. specified as activities) in the annual programme(s) for the year(s) concerned.

175. Concerning the annual programmes, the structure and scope should be adapted, in particular by:

a) Treating all primary data collections from statistical units (i.e. from economic operators) to TAJSTAT in the same way, whether they formally are *statistical reporting* or *statistical observations*. In addition, household surveys and population censuses, as well as data collections for price statistics, have to be included in both the list of activities and list of results of products, and quality-controlled results from such surveys have to be disseminated as results of official statistics with the same status as results from statistical reporting type of collection activities;

b) Listing all regular transmissions of administrative data from the owner of these data to the producer of official statistics (in most cases TAJSTAT), also define as *statistical reporting*, in the statistical programmes as distinct from the statistical surveys in letter a), since the provisions of the LSS do not apply to the collection and transmission of administrative data;

c) Assigning responsibility for activities of official statistics through the annual statistical programme to one (and only one) producer of official statistics, either TAJSTAT or another producer that has demonstrated before the ability and willingness to produce and disseminate official statistics with full compliance of all principles;

d) Making the coverage of the annual statistical programme in terms of activities and products identical with the concepts of activities of official statistics, and trying to include there pro memoriam the statistical activities of the National Bank (but without submitting them to the government for a decision).

176. Reports on the implementation of the annual programmes at the beginning of the subsequent year should be discussed in the Statistical Council, and presented to the government and the President of the Republic, and made public on TAJSTAT's website. The quarterly reporting to the government about on-going implementation is a useful feature that can be maintained.

177. Preparing the programmes should become the main tool for TAJSTAT to carry out its coordination function, rather than the approval of forms as it is the case today. The approval function should be restricted for new or revised concepts for official statistics (whether proposed by TAJSTAT itself or by another producer), as well as for data collection methods (not forms) to be used by other producers. Nevertheless, TAJSTAT should be consulted regarding collection of administrative data if these data are further used (or could be used) in the production of official statistics.

178. The other major coordination tool should be the prerogative of TAJSTAT's director of to decide on standards that have to be observed by all producers in the national system of official statistics. In order to prepare such standards, regular meetings between the CSO top-management and heads of statistical departments of other producers of official statistics should be established.

179. TAJSTAT should set up sufficient staff resources to be able to carry out the system-wide functions as professional leader of the whole system, including the coordination of international relations and of the data transmissions to international organisations. This staff should also be used for the substantive coordination issues within TAJSTAT, notably when preparing the annual and multi-year programmes.

3. TAJSTAT

3.1 The Statistical Agency and its subordinated bodies (TAJSTAT)

3.1.1 Overview of TAJSTAT's structure

180. According to paragraph 4 of the Statement on the Agency on Statistics, approved by the Decree № 862 of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan from 22 April 2010 (hereafter the SAS Decree), the Unified System of State Statistics (hereafter TAJSTAT) consists of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) itself and its regional and functional subordinated bodies; namely:

a) The Central Statistical Office (CSO) under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan;

b) The Main Computing Centre (MCC);

c) 3 regional (oblast) statistical offices and their 51 sub-regional (rayons and towns) statistical offices;

d) The Statistical Office of Dushanbe-city and its 4 sub-regional statistical offices;

e) 13 sub-regional statistical offices of districts (rayon) of republican subordination.

181. The organisational chart of TAJSTAT (c.f. annex 3) also indicates a training centre; however this is not currently in operation due to a lack of funds.

182. TAJSTAT is the central organization, with delegated power from the government, also referred to as the Authorized Agency, who carries out statistical activities according to the multi-annual and annual statistical programmes. The territorial statistical offices and the MCC (Main Computing Centre) are subordinated bodies to the CSO.

183. Article 1 of the LSS refers to what could be considered as mission statement of TAJSTAT (central and territorial offices, and functional subordinated bodies) as defined in paragraph 4 of the SAS Decree: *This Law [LSS] establishes the legal basis and regulating mechanisms for the implementation of the unified governmental policy in the field of official statistical accounting and distribution of the state statistical data to satisfy the needs of the state and society in comprehensive, reliable, scientifically based and timely official statistical information about social, economic, demographic, ecological and other public processes in the Republic Tajikistan*.

184. Paragraph 3 of the SAS Decree states that the Agency carries out its activities for the collection and dissemination of statistical information, guided by an objective and comprehensive study of the socio-economic processes taking place in the country. Paragraph 6 of the SAS Decree notes that these activities shall be implemented in accordance with the annual statistical programme of work adopted by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. An explicit reference to the fundamental principles is missing, but some of these principles are listed in the article 5 of the LSS (Basic Principles of State Statistics).

185. The SAS Decree also describes the main objective of TAJSTAT (paragraph 8), its tasks (paragraph 9) and its rights (paragraph 10). In that respect, the SAS Decree reflects broadly the provisions of the LSS and in particular its chapter 2 on State Statistics Agency, also referred as the Authorized Agency in the Law.

186. Decree № 832 of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan from 9 March 2010 formally establishes the Statistics Agency under the President of the Republic (TAJSTAT). Furthermore, the SAS Decree, in its paragraph 11, states that TAJSTAT is headed by a Director that reports directly to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. The latter appoints and dismisses the Director and its three deputies. Neither the LSS nor any other decree makes reference to the duration of the mandate of TAJSTAT's director. In practice, it is TAJSTAT's director who submits proposals for appointment and dismissal of his deputies to the President for final approval. TAJSTAT's director is a high-level official of the Republic and as such is regularly invited to participate and report in government meetings. This is an ideal opportunity for the director to represent TAJSTAT in government meetings and participate in discussions about the annual statistical programme and the state resources allocation (human and financial resources) for its implementation but to some extend might conflict with the professional independence of TAJSTAT's director (see chapter 1.4).

187. The director of TAJSTAT is assisted by a Board or Collegium (SAS Decree, paragraph 14). The TAJSTAT Board is an advisory body consisting of the director

(chair of the Board), his 3 deputies, the director of the Main Computing Centre and two directors of regional statistical offices. The TAJSTAT Board meets weekly and is consulted by the TAJSTAT's director on important issues including the preparation of multi-year and annual statistical programmes.

188. According to paragraph 13 of the SAS Decree, the TAJSTAT's director appoints and dismisses heads of territorial statistical offices and the MCC. The independence of the CSO and its subordinated bodies from the interference of local authorities is also stated in Decree № 13 of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan from 30 November 2006: *territorial statistical offices are independent structural units working under the direction of the CSO and do not comply with local executive bodies of state authorities*. Before 2006, heads of territorial statistical offices were appointed and dismiss by local authorities.

189. TAJSTAT (the CSO and its subordinated bodies) is financed through the national budget of the Republic and monitored by the Ministry of Finance. The total annual budget for TAJSTAT, excluding population census related activities, amounted to 2.6 million USD in 2011, which corresponds to 0.04% of the GDP of Tajikistan in the same year. 11% of the total budget is allocated to the CSO, 33% to the MCC and the remaining 56% to the territorial statistical offices. The budget is based on the annual statistical programme and takes into account the inflation in the country and changes in salaries of state employees. Once the budget is adopted, the allocation of the total amount between the CSO and its subordinated bodies is no longer of the competence of TAJSTAT's director. In exceptional cases only, the Tajik Government allocates additional funds to TAJSTAT upon its request (see also chapter 2.2.1).

190. Allocation of staff members within TAJSTAT is approved by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and monitored by the Department of Civil Service under the President. In total, approximately 770 people were working for TAJSTAT on 1 January 2012 and out of them 92 work for the CSO and 120 for the MCC. In addition, 13 additional staff members working for the population census were attributed to the CSO and 35 working for household surveys to the MCC. In the territorial offices, 510 staff members (66% of the total personnel) were responsible for collecting and processing primary data from more than 230 different surveys; most of them conducted quarterly or monthly through exhaustive reporting systems (official statistical accounting). It has to be mentioned that the employees of the MCC and those working for the population census and household surveys are not civil servants (22% of the total number of employees).

191. One could observe that the territorial structure of TAJSTAT mirrors the administrative organisation of the Republic of Tajikistan. The TAJSTAT's director has rather limited managerial autonomy in the organisation of the structure of TAJSTAT and in the allocation of human and financial resources among its constituent bodies. If the Central Statistical Office (CSO) is responsible for the coordination of TAJSTAT and the guardian of the harmonisation of statistical methodology and nomenclatures throughout the system, territorial statistical offices at sub-regional level are mainly involved in primary data collection. Data is then checked, aggregated and sent to the next territorial level (region) that after performing the same operations forward them to the CSO through the MCC.

3.1.2 Central Statistical Office

192. From an institutional perspective, it is not self-evident to make a clear distinction between the Agency on Statistics (TAJSTAT) and its Central Office. In the SAS Decree, the control chart of TAJSTAT and its organisational structure mention explicitly the CSO as a separate organisational unit within TAJSTAT but from a managerial point of view, TAJSTAT's director is simultaneously heading the CSO. From a functional and geographical point of view however, this distinction is obvious since the CSO directs and supervises territorial and functional subordinated bodies and coordinates the activities of all producers of official statistics. The CSO is located in Dushanbe in the same building as the MCC (headquarters).

193. The organisation chart (see annex 4) indicates that the CSO is subdivided in 13 first level organisational units (departments), some of them further divided in 2 divisions. Deputy Directors are responsible respectively for one, two and three departments and 7 organisational units report directly to the director: 3 substantive departments and 4 horizontal service units (administrative and production-support), including the summary-economic analysis and international relations department. In general, a substantive department consists of 7 to 12 staff members, and horizontal service units of 2 to 7 employees.

194. The CSO consists of 92 civil servants (barely 14% of the TAJSTAT's total) and 105 employees including the personnel working for the population census. They are all located on the same premises in Dushanbe. In 2011, the budget of the CSO, including salaries and IT, but without population census, was roughly 270,000 USD, which corresponds to 11% of total budget of TAJSTAT or expressed in relation to the personnel: about 2,935 USD per staff member per year.

195. The involvement of the CSO in the overall statistical production process is rather limited. In a way, this could explain why only 14% of the total staff members and 11% of the budget from TAJSTAT is allocated to the central office. Staff at the CSO deals mainly with methodological issues and is in general not involved with data collection and processing. These activities are mainly performed at territorial level and in the MCC, where data are further validated, edited and delivered for tabulation and analysis to the CSO. While there are probably good reasons for the present structure and organisation of the production of statistics within TAJSTAT, the increasing national and international demand for reliable and timely statistics and the pressure from respondents to reduce the administrative and statistical burden would speak in favour of a modernisation of the statistical production including the simplification of the organisational structure of the system.

3.1.3 Territorial statistical offices

196. According to the annex to the SAS Decree, the territorial statistical system consists of:

a) 3 regional (oblast) statistical offices and their 51 sub-regional (districts and towns) statistical departments;

b) The Statistical Office of Dushanbe-city and its 4 sub-regional statistical offices;

c) 13 sub-regional (rayon) statistical offices of regions of direct republican subordination.

197. Annex 3 presents the territorial structure of TAJSTAT with the number of units and the number of staff members.

198. In most of the cases, the territorial statistical system consists of two layers. The first layer comprises regional offices under the direct subordination of the director of the CSO and second layer sub-regional statistical offices reporting to their respective regional offices. Nevertheless, in towns and districts of republican subordination, the 13 sub-regional statistical offices report directly to the headquarters (CSO and MCC).

199. Territorial statistical offices are part of TAJSTAT and are independent structural units from local government authorities. Their activities are financed through the national budget. As already mentioned earlier, appointment and dismissal from heads of territorial (regional and sub-regional) statistical offices is of the competence of the TAJSTAT's director, without prior consultation with heads of local government authorities.

200. Sub-regional statistical offices are responsible for the primary data collection, routine quality check and aggregation of the data in electronic spreadsheets, when the required hardware and software are available, otherwise manually on paper. The aggregated information is sent to the MCC via the next territorial level: regional statistical offices. The CSO is then getting the aggregated information from the MCC for tabulation and analysis. This bottom-up procedure is supervised by the MCC that is also in charge of the development of the IT infrastructure and software for aggregation process and data transmission. It is important to stress that unit-level information from legal and physical entities are in general neither transmitted to the MCC nor to the CSO. It is therefore a major task of territorial statistical offices to store micro-data and to prevent any unauthorized access to, or, losses of confidential information.

201. Sampling surveys have been introduced in recent years by TAJSTAT in order to reduce the burden on respondent and to increase the efficiency of data collection and data processing. For random sample surveys in trade and services, it is the task of the territorial statistical offices to select the observation units and to extrapolate the results to the universe. This procedure is done based on an Excel application extracting the sample units from local administrative registers. The CSO has neither a control on the sampling procedure nor the possibility to replicate the operation since until-level information is kept within the sub-regional statistical offices.

202. Based on the annual work programme approved by the government, the CSO develops for each regional office a specific programme of work. The regional statistical programme is also sent to the respective local government authorities for information. The importance of territorial statistical offices in data collection and data processing can be illustrated by the fact that, excluding population census related activities, 66% of the staff members (510) and 57% of the financial resources of the overall TAJSTAT are allocated to regional and sub-regional statistical offices.

203. Territorial statistical offices are entitled to provide specific statistical services to territorial authorities and other users at regional and sub-regional level. For these requests, statistical methodologies and nomenclatures shall be approved by the CSO. According to paragraph 7 of the SAS Decree, statistical activities that are not included in the annual statistical programme shall be carried out at the expense of the customer. Specific requests from local administration to territorial statistical offices should therefore be financed by the local budgets.

3.1.4 The Main Computing Centre (MCC)

204. The Main Computing Centre (MCC) is a subordinated body under the Central Office of the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Tajikistan (CSO). The tasks of the MCC span collection, processing and dissemination of data, including printing of publications, as well as tasks related to the organization and storage of data and information technology infrastructure.

205. The MCC is supervised by a director. It is organised in 2 directorates: Organisation of Statistical Work and IT. 120 staff members are working for the MCC and, in addition, 35 interviewers have been administratively assigned to the MCC (see also annex 5).

206. In terms of data collection, the MCC provides the primary reporting forms that are designed by the CSO to the territorial statistical offices (mainly sub-regional), enterprises and organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan. The MCC then collects the data in aggregate form from the sub-regional statistical offices and processes the information using programmes developed within the MCC. Following the processing of data, the MCC aggregates the statistics to the national level. The MCC produces output tables for the CSO based on the reporting forms, as outlined in the annual work programme. The MCC also produces other tabulations for dissemination upon request and under the supervision of the substantive departments of the CSO. The MCC has printing facilities for publications.

207. The 13 regions of republican subordination, the three oblasts (Hatlon, Soghd and GBAO) and Dushanbe City have access to the same software programmes as the MCC and submit data electronically. Although all territorial offices have computers, the remaining sub-regional offices send the data on paper. In cases where specific software programmes are not developed for the reporting forms, the data is manually entered in Excel. From more than 230 statistical forms processed by the MCC, most of them conducted quarterly or monthly through exhaustive reporting systems (official statistical accounting), only 30% are processed electronically using a specific data entry software generating standard output tables.

208. The MCC has developed programmes to check and edit the data. When the MCC encounters problems of consistency in the data, they contact the territorial statistical offices in order to cross-check the aggregated data that they have received at the MCC with the micro data collected at the territorial level. For household sample surveys, the methodology for the sample selection and the extrapolation is determined by the CSO and implemented by the MCC. For business sample surveys, sub-regional statistical offices mainly perform this procedure. The MCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the IT system of TAJSTAT and the LAN (corporate local area network), and provide IT support to all users within TAJSTAT.

3.1.5 Training Centre

209. The control chart of TAJSTAT shows the Training Centre as a subsidiary body to the Statistical Agency. If during the time of the Soviet Union, the Training Centre was operational, there are currently no financial and human resources allocated to this institution.

210. The main question to reflect on is if TAJSTAT needs to set-up a Training Centre as a subordinated body or if this Centre could be managed directly by the CSO, ideally from a human resources and training department, still to be established.

3.1.6 Assessment

211. TAJSTAT is confronted with an increasing demand from the Government, the business sector, international organisations and the civil society for timely and quality statistics for monitoring economic, social and environment policies. The main challenge for TAJSTAT will be to face this increasing demand for information with scarce financial, human and IT resources. However the division of labour between the CSO, territorial statistical offices, at regional and sub-regional level, and the MCC could be subject to further review in order to improve the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the System.

212. TAJSTAT's production operates through the various production lines from the data collection at territorial level to the dissemination. Each substantive department within TAJSTAT, and in particular within the CSO, has exclusive ownership over the production process of one or more specific statistical products that, to some extend have developed independently from each other. Primary data are collected and aggregated at sub-regional level and then sent, mainly in paper format to the MCC via the next territorial level: regional statistical offices. The MCC is also in charge of the development of the IT infrastructure and software for the tabulation and analyses of the aggregated information and for the maintenance of the statistical business register.

213. The organisation of the production of statistical information and the underlying structure of TAJSTAT can be illustrated by the allocation of human and financial resources: the territorial offices concentrate 66% of the total staff and 56% of the financial resources of the system and the MCC respectively 16% and 33%. The CSO, with the remaining resources, is responsible for the coordination of the system, methodological issues and dissemination of the statistical information.

214. TAJSTAT could benefit from a simplification of its production processes along with a reform of its territorial and functional structure:

a) The implementation of new data collection methods (sampling surveys), the development of integrated and comprehensive statistical registers and the improvement of IT infrastructure at territorial level could be an opportunity to simplify gradually the territorial structure of the State Statistics. Statistical offices at sub-regional level will continue to be involved in the collection of data since they have the advantage to be close to the respondents, but the regional level will become an obsolete mid-layer and could be gradually suppressed. The

13 sub-regional statistical offices of republican subordination are already sending there information directly to the headquarters;

b) Sub-regional statistical offices should not be responsible anymore for the aggregation of the data and will send unit-level observations (data) directly to the headquarters. This will allow the headquarters to apply quality check and validation technics to the full set of data and limit the risk of data disclosure;

c) A fundamental question is whether the MCC should be a separated subordinated body to the CSO. One could claim that core statistical functions (collection, process, quality check and validation, analyses and dissemination) should be fully in the hands of the CSO. Currently, the most important body in the overall production process is the MCC. The latter is involved in the printing and distribution of questionnaire, the aggregation, tabulation and validation of the data, and eventually the presentation to the CSO of consolidated tables for further analysis. In the longer term, a full integration of MCC activities within the CSO could lead to positive synergy effects with other horizontal services already existing in the central office and might avoid duplication of tasks, e.g. IT support; activities of planning, organisation and coordination of statistical work; marketing and information services. The main idea is not to have an MCC department within the CSO but rather to distribute the different functions in the existing CSO’s departments or in some cases to establish new departments e.g. dissemination and communication department, IT department, methodology and quality department;

d) Concerning the Training Centre, it is not clear why it is necessary to create a new functional subordinated body. The management of the Training Centre could be of the responsibility of a Human Resources and Training department within the CSO.

215. The integration of statistical activities into a more centralised structure should go along with a review of production processes, division of labour and development of IT infrastructure within the CSO (see also chapter 4).

3.2 Resource management

3.2.1 Finance

216. TAJSTAT (the Central Statistical Office, territorial statistical offices and the MCC) is funded from the national budget within the amounts allocated for the implementation of activities of the annual statistical programme, including staff salaries. The CSO reviews annually its resources to establish the budget for the next year according to the programme of work and taking into account expected income from payments for specific statistical services and additional financial resources from bilateral or multilateral donors in the framework of capacity building activities. The budget takes into account the inflation in the country and changes in salaries of state employees.

217. As shown in table 1 and 2, the budget of TAJSTAT, without the census on population, was 2.64 million USD in the year 2011 which represents roughly 0.16%

of the state budget and 0.04% of the GDP of Tajikistan for the same year (table 2). As mentioned above, the CSO receives the profit from the sales of printed publications and other specific services. In 2011, this additional income represented around 35,000 USD and was used mainly to increase the salaries of MCC employees and other unexpected expenditures.

Table 1: annual state budget for TAJSTAT including staff and administrative costs (in 1000 USD)[1]*:*

	2010				2011			
	CSO	Territorial offices	MCC	Census	CSO	Territorial offices	MCC	Census
Salary	149.4	632.1	231.4	164.9	167,3	832,4	222,1	64,1
Materials	4.3	23.2	63.1	63.0	6,0	28,0	72,0	83,0
Other current expenses	69.8	424.4	282.8	3756.1	96,2	569,2	468,8	470,0
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repair	7.4	8.4	41.4	-	9,0	38,0	22,0	-
Computer, Vehicles and equipment	-	-	49.4	630.9	-	-	108,4	336,2
Total	230.9	1088.1	668.1	4614.9	278,5	1467,6	893.3	953,3

[1] Exchange rate for table 1 and 2: 1 USD = 4.75 TJS

Table 2: expenses of TAJSTAT with regard to staff members, GDP and total state budget, without population census related activities and personnel:

	2010	2011
Total State Budget (mln of USD)	1,358.3	1833,1
Budget TAJSTAT (mln USD)	1.99	2.64
Total Personnel in TAJSTAT according to the staff list	770	770
GDP (mln. of USD)	5,200.1	6,500.0
Share in GDP	0.038%	0,041%
Share in Total state budget	0.15%	0.14%
Total Budget TAJSTAT/personnel (USD)	2,625	3,428

218. The CSO is constantly reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of TAJSTAT in order to minimise the costs for the implementation of the annual work programme. Nevertheless, the state budget can cover 70% to 80% of the actual funds required for its functioning, which corresponds to regular production activities. Therefore, strategic development activities, renewal of IT infrastructure and ad-hoc surveys (e.g. Labour Force Survey (LFS), Living Standard Survey (LStS) and agricultural census) are mainly financed by international donors. Financial contributions from multilateral and bilateral donors amounted for more than 1 million dollars for the years 2011-2012. This situation is of course hardly sustainable for TAJSTAT since financial capacity of bilateral and multilateral donors is currently affected by the economic crises and severe cuts in their budget for cooperation programmes could be expected.

219. During the coming years, TAJSTAT should not count on a significant increase of financial support from any sources and it appears that the financing of further statistical capacity development will have to be made through measures of rationalisation and streamlining of the current statistical production. A cautious assessment of activities and capacity building projects foreseen in the rather ambitious multi-year statistical programme should be conducted and priority should be given to those that meet the mid-term absorption capacity of TAJSTAT (criteria of sustainability).

3.2.2 Information and communication technologies

220. There is no IT department within the CSO. IT support (helpdesk), maintenance and development of programmes for the overall TAJSTAT is the task of 7 IT specialists working at the Main Computing Centre (MCC).

221. The number of computers, Pentium II and IV, is satisfactory within TAJSTAT since the 290 working stations used for the 2010 population and housing census were allocated to staff members in the organisation, mainly in sub-regional and regional offices. In 2012, close to 90% of staff members in the headquarters (CSO and MCC)

had his own desktop and about 80% in territorial statistical offices (regions and sub-regions). The connectivity remains an issue in TAJSTAT. In territorial offices most computers have no access to the Internet and staff members do not have their own professional email address. Furthermore, the local area network (LAN) that was developed with the support of the World Bank connects the headquarters with the regional statistical offices of Dushanbe City, Khalton, Sughd and GBAO. Sub-regional statistical offices, including districts (sub-region) of republican subordination (reporting directly to the headquarters) are for the moment not part of the LAN.

222. The programmes that the headquarters use most widely are MS Excel, MS Access and FoxPro. For household surveys conducted with external funding and expertise, programmes such as Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro) have been used. Most programmes used for data processing and quality checks have been developed and maintain by the MCC. However, the high turnover of IT specialists at the MCC and the lack of proper documentation make it extremely difficult to modify and update these programmes that are crucial in the production process of statistical information.

223. In terms of communication and dissemination, the Central Statistical Office has improved the corporate website significantly and is in the process of making many publications available electronically.

224. In any case, the major impediment for the development and proper use of IT infrastructure are the irregular but frequent power cuts that affect remote area of the country but also from time to time, mainly in winter, major cities and the capital.

3.2.3 Staff, recruitment and training

225. In 2011, 770 positions were allocated to TAJSTAT but the number of actual employees can be slightly lower since the hiring procedure for vacancies can take some time. Out of the 770 positions, 269 (35%) of were occupied by women:

a) 339 (44%) are employees with higher education;

b) 602 (79%) are civil servants;

c) Of the 602 civil servants in TAJSTAT, 92 (15%) work in the statistical Central Statistical Office (CSO), while the rest work in the territorial statistical offices;

d) Employees of the MCC (120 persons), Populations Census Department (13 persons) and employees for household surveys (35 persons) are not civil servants;

e) The Population and Census Department is an organisational unit of the CSO, while employees working for household surveys are disseminated within the MCC.

226. Employees of CSO are civil servants. They are recruited through a competition system, defined in the Law on Civil Service. There is a special Competition Committee. The Committee includes four representatives from the CSO (including

the director) and one civil servant representative. The head of the relevant department is present as an observer. The competition is held every time there is an available position. The position is advertised in a republican newspaper. Before the competition, TAJSTAT conducts preliminary conversations with the candidates, where the candidates have the possibility to withdraw. The next step is the competition, which is an interview with predetermined questions on formal and personal qualifications. Each member of the Committee gives points for each answer, and a candidate has to above a certain level to be considered.

227. The salaries in CSO are low compared to private sector and international experts, making it difficult to attract and keep the best candidates. Once in three years, each civil servant is required to pass a personnel review/appraisal. At the end of each year, heads of the structural subdivisions make performance evaluations of civil servants.

228. Voluntary staff mobility across divisions or between sub-regional/regional offices is difficult, and rarely happens. There is an involuntary rotation of all civil servants every five years. This rotation can be both within CSO and between CSO and 13 other governmental institutions, and creates a problem of continuity for CSO. Promotion is completed via reserve lists made twice a year. The leaders suggest their successors, and the decision is made based on this list. As for senior managerial staff positions, the President makes the decision. There is no announcement or competition for these posts.

229. The employees of MCC are not civil servants. Their salaries are slightly lower than for civil servants and therefore it is more difficult for the MCC to hire qualified staff, and in particular IT experts. Due to the difference in hiring system there is no mobility between MCC and TAJSTAT.

230. Currently, the training conducted within the CSO consists of a programme for new employees where the directors train the junior staff on the work of the division. It is also common for new employees to have a mentor. In summer 2012, the CSO was developing a more comprehensive training strategy. The main issue for TAJSTAT is the rather high rotation among junior staff. It is common that young experts leave the institution for better-paid jobs after a few years within TAJSTAT, or for positions with faster career development in the private business and international organisations. There is a risk that in 5 to 10 years, when the cohort of employees presently aged 50 years and more will leave TAJSTAT for retirement that the know-how of these senior employees and middle management will be lost. Whilst salary is of course a problem for young professionals, there is also a trend of negative perceptions towards official statistics and the notion that TAJSTAT is limited in what it can offer in terms of career development.

3.2.4 Assessment

231. Modernizing statistical production and the organisational structure of TAJSTAT should be considered as a priority. Indeed, increasing demand for timely and quality statistics with stagnant financial, human and information technology (IT) resources will be a challenge for the further development of the State Statistics. It is therefore important for the CSO to reconsider the structural organisation and allocation of resources among bodies of TAJSTAT in order to further streamline production

processes. Productivity gains can be generated by standardisation of business processes, along with the reallocation of adequate staff, financial and (IT) resources, both in magnitude and quality.

232. As already mentioned in chapter 3.1, the benefit of having 2 territorial layers should be carefully reconsidered. The implementation of new data collection methods and the necessary improvement of IT infrastructure at territorial level could be an opportunity to simplify gradually the territorial structure of TAJSTAT for collecting, processing, integrating and disseminating statistical information in a more efficient way.

233. Financial resources from the state budget allocated to statistics are not sufficient to finance the regular activities of TAJSTAT and all necessary investment for the development of its production capacity. As already mentioned, the financial crisis had also an impact on the budget of international organisations and bilateral partners. Therefore, one could not expect any substantial increase in statistical capacity building programmes in the next years. In 2011, only 0.15% of the state budget was allocated to statistics, which represents roughly 0.04% of the GDP of Tajikistan; one of the lowest, if not the lowest, of all CIS countries.

234. Another issue that prevents TAJSTAT's director to allocate financial resources in an efficient way is that once the budget adopted, the reallocation of financial resources among the CSO, the territorial statistical offices and the MCC during the budget year is no more possible. It looks also that over the years the allocation of resources remains rather stable. In any case at present, about 57% of the budget for TAJSTAT is allocated to the territorial offices and 34% to the MCC.

235. TAJSTAT IT infrastructure in terms of hardware is satisfactory but still needs to be developed for software and connectivity. The absence of a secure data transmission system among the territorial statistical offices and the headquarters is a major problem. For this reason, most of the aggregated data transferred to the next territorial level and to the MCC are done on paper through regular internal mail service. On top of that roughly 20% of staff members in territorial offices are not equipped with a personal computer. Therefore, the aggregation of collected statistical information is done manually and unit-level data stored locally on paper. Such a mode of operation is not only highly inefficient but also increases the risk of errors, does not allow for automated quality control and limits the possibility of statistical analyses of the full data set for subject matter specialists in the headquarters.

236. IT is a tool rather than the solution for organisational transformation. Indeed, IT can create opportunities for changes in order to support accurately the production of timely and quality statistical information. TAJSTAT could further automate production processes and integrate modern IT systems and infrastructure into its business architecture. For this purpose, it is essential to create a centralised and comprehensive technological platform that would allow statistical registers and data bases to be routinely updated. Nevertheless, future investment for the development and maintenance of information technologies and infrastructure should go along with the modernisation of the business architecture of TAJSTAT. The organisational structure of the MCC, which is the main link providing technical and software

provisions to the entire system should be reviewed and if possibly integrated into the CSO.

237. At the moment, there is no IT Department within the CSO and only 7 IT specialists are working for the MCC. Good IT specialists are rather scarce on the labour market and expensive. This again would speak in favour of integrating the MCC within the CSO, which would allow establishing one single IT unit. Furthermore, the integration of the MCC would also increase the feedback between the data collectors and the central level, support further methodological development, and help avoid duplication of tasks, thus increasing the coherence and efficiency of the system.

238. Recruitment, development and retention of qualified staff are among the main challenges of TAJSTAT. Some measures for staff training and development have been implemented but if the level of salaries for TAJSTAT's staff is comparable with equivalent positions in other ministries, it is rather low compared to the private sector and international organisations. The situation is even more difficult for employees of the MCC since they are not considered civil servants, which explains the great problems in recruiting and retaining competent IT experts. Nevertheless other measures could be implemented in order to motivate staff as, for example, participation in international meetings abroad and flexible working hour arrangements and also staff mobility should be encouraged, especially among junior statisticians.

239. TAJSTAT will definitely benefit from the human resources management and training strategy under development. The strategy should include a systematic approach to training within areas such as metadata, IT, statistical methodology, data analyses and be gradually supplemented by non-technical competences such as project management, quality management and communication skills.

240. The level of linguistic knowledge of the employees of TAJSTAT should be further developed. All staff members should have perfect spoken and written command in Russian and improve their knowledge of English in order to be able to participate actively in international meetings and benefit from the large volume of materials available on statistical methodologies. It would also allow staff from TAJSTAT to interact with the international statistical community, to benefit more extensively from international training programmes and to participate in study visits. All this having also a positive impact on the motivation of TAJSTAT's employees and contributing to the reduction of staff rotation.

3.3 Dissemination policy of TAJSTAT

3.3.1 The Law on State Statistics and the Statement about the Agency on Statistics regarding dissemination

241. The Law on State Statistics (LSS) mentions *dissemination* or *distribution* of data in several instances:

a) The first paragraph dissemination explicitly mentions dissemination as part of what is regulated by the LSS. The state policy in the field of statistics, which is to organise official statistics *on the basis of independence, scientifically based* *methodology and international standards*, is also valid for the distribution of statistical information. Dissemination is defined as *provision of all users with access to statistical information, which is not confidential*. Article 8 entitles TAJSTAT to comment on incorrect use or wrong interpretation of statistical information. Article 9 stipulates that TAJSTAT has the responsibility to make statistical information available to a wide range of users and to supply mass media with information and comments on changes in statistical data;

b) Article 16 is dedicated to how, to whom and what data shall be disseminated: Statistical information shall be published in official publications, mass media and through placement in public information and publication channels. Access to data shall be granted to all users at the same time. The date of publication and metadata shall be made public. Individual information on single statistical units is considered confidential and does not fall under this dissemination directive. Primary statistical information, which allow for the identification of individual statistical units will only be disseminated with the consent of the affected respondents. The subjects of official statistical accounting shall guarantee to protect confidential data from illegal access and disclosure.

242. The LSS does not specify any rules concerning the payment for publications. It only states in article 17 that the customer shall finance costs for *additional statistical work*, which means work that goes beyond the products listed in the annual statistical programme.

243. The Statement about the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (SAS Decree) acknowledges TAJSTAT to carry out activities for the collection and dissemination of statistical information (art. 8). The SAS Decree is more precise about the users and the payment of statistical information:

a) The SAS Decree somewhat mirrors the relevance different users should have for TAJSTAT. The first main objective of the CSO is the *Presentation of statistical information to the President of the RT, of the National Assembly of the RT, Parliament (Majlisi Oli) of the RT, the Tajik Government, ministries and departments, local executive bodies of government in consultation with the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (in accordance with the approved list one copy for free), as well as public and international organisations (for a fee)*. The sixth of the main objectives is then to ensure that all users have equal access to statistical information through the dissemination of official reports on various phenomena;

b) Analytical services that go beyond the statistical information described in the annual statistical programme shall be carried out at the expense of the customer (art 7), including orders from the local executive bodies. These services shall be provided to businesses, individuals and international organisations on the basis of contracts, agreements or as one-time requests (art. 9, paragraph 12).

3.3.2 The dissemination policy of official statistical information of TAJSTAT

244. TAJSTAT has a *Data dissemination strategy of the Statistics Agency.* The document had been drawn up for the Multi-year Statistical Programme 2005-2010 and was

reissued in 2011. It shows all the elements that one would expect to see in a modern dissemination policy. The first chapter addresses several of these:

a) TAJSTAT has the responsibility to effectively and timely prepare and disseminate high-quality statistical indicators on economic and social phenomena and processes to provide a reliable basis for decision-making to users;

b) It puts the users at the core of the reason and purpose of the existence of a public statistical system and calls for activities aimed at satisfying their needs. The definition of users includes individuals, businesses, government and administrative bodies, science and research, non-governmental organisations and international organisations;

c) Official statistics are seen as a common good of society. All users shall have equal access to public statistical information and publicly available information is free of charge;

d) A *Calendar of statistical data issues* is available on the website. It gives a precise release date and is updated regularly when changes in release dates occur;

e) TAJSTAT puts a *dissemination unit* in place in order to channel all communication with users and to oversee the corporate identity that applies to all publications and makes them easily recognisable as TAJSTAT's products;

f) TAJSTAT conducts user satisfaction surveys, plans open days for selected user groups and has procedures in place to handle special data requests of users.

245. In the following chapter the strategy expands further on six issues: including data release, publications, data processing, internal dissemination, public relations and pricing policy:

a) *Data release* describes the simultaneous access for all users, the set-up of the *Calendar of statistical data issues* (release calendar) and the publishing programme (the agency's *Annual catalogue of publications and services*), which shall be published annually with a short description and other features of each publication and information on how to access statistical data, other services offered by TAJSTAT and the pricelist of TAJSTAT's publications and services. The section also explains the release of preliminary and final data and the handling of errors;

b) *Publications* identifies a list of publications and in what form they are made available;

c) *Data processing* explains how special requests of users that go beyond the publishing programme are processed;

d) *Internal dissemination* introduces the purpose and utility of the Intranet;

e) The *public relation* chapter describes first the ways of communicating with journalists and second the set-up of user surveys;

f) Finally, *pricing policy* elaborates on the four models for charging requests for data that go beyond the free-of-charge data and publications;

g) The strategy as it has been drawn up gives good guidance and is in line with international principles on dissemination of statistical information; however, there is room for improvement in the implementation of it, as it will be described in the following sections.

3.3.3 Organisation of dissemination

246. In TAJSTAT, the Department of summary-economic analysis and international relations of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), with 7 staff, has several tasks:

a) The Department is responsible for the preparation and timely provision of summary statistical information to users at national, sectoral and regional levels. It also supervises the transmission of data to international organisations;

b) The Department prepares consolidated works like the monthly report on Social and Economic Situation of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Statistical yearbook, Tajikistan in figures, The Republic of Tajikistan and the regions, The regional yearbook, Tajikistan and CIS countries, as well as bulletin on Food Security and Poverty;

c) The Department is responsible for communication with mass media and organises press-conferences regularly;

d) It also maintains the Agency's website;

e) It undertakes all the translations into Russian and English;

f) It is further responsible for the corporate identity of the agency. In this function the Department creates guidelines and templates for all products of TAJSTAT including those prepared by the regional offices;

g) The Department's portfolio also includes the setting-up and conducting of user satisfaction surveys as well as regular analyses of numbers and types of users and requests.

247. Subject matter departments are in charge of preparing *thematical* publications that are published about the domain in their respective responsibility; they prepare the contents of the publication, press releases and are involved in responding to content-related questions from users. The director in charge approves each publication in his area before it goes to production.

248. The headquarters have a library on their premises that offers more than 2000 textbooks, manuals and statistical publications. It is however not currently open due to lack of staff at the headquarters.

249. The MCC has a unit for organisation of the statistical service which is in charge of marketing that includes the distribution of the *Annual catalogue of publications and services* free of charge to the national, regional and local governments and administrative bodies, international organisations, libraries and on order.

250. In principle the unit should be the single entry point for all orders and requests from users, even if these are sometimes also received at the CSO. Up to now, the telephone is the most commonly used means for requesting publications, information and data from TAJSTAT. The dissemination unit is in charge of following up on publication orders. It also prepares and delivers answers/data for users with specific questions, depending on the complexity in cooperation with the specialist departments.

251. The MCC is involved in the dissemination process insofar as it prints the publications with the exception of the cover pages that are produced by the CSO and printed outside TAJSTAT.

252. A specialist of the Administrative Department checks each product before it is released to prevent any disclosure of data that is classified according to the list of information considered state secrets as determined by the Law on state secrets of April 2003 and the Law on checklist of information referred to state secrets.

253. Before any publication is released the Editorial Board approves it. This Board consists of eight members of the management of CSO and MCC, including the head of Department of summary-economic analysis and international relations, and is headed by TAJSTAT's director. The Editorial Board checks the appropriateness of texts and graphs but also the correctness of data. The rechecking of data late in the production process makes it difficult to publish an exact release date beforehand. If clarification on data is deemed to be necessary the release date of a publication can be pushed back considerably.

3.3.4 Publications by territorial statistical offices

254. Regional offices have the right and obligation to publish data according to the regional Annual Statistical Programme that is derived from the State Annual Statistical Programme. It is prepared by the headquarters and presented to local authorities. The regional programme is the same for all the regions, and the publications use the same formats, layout and structure provided by the headquarters for brand recognition purposes. Territorial statistical offices are required to submit statistical information to local executive authorities. For example, seasonal information on sowing and harvesting is directly transmitted on a weekly or fortnightly basis at the same time as information is sent to the headquarters. This is highly problematic for two reasons. Firstly, data is used before having undergone a quality control by the headquarters and secondly territorial offices obtain an edge on information since equal and simultaneous access to statistical data for all users is not fully respected.

3.3.5 Products and dissemination channels

255. The CSO operates with an *Annual Catalogue of Publications and Services*. A rather simplified version of this, the *Catalogue*, which includes about 60 titles, is available on the website. The catalogue indicates the release month, the frequency of data collection, the frequency of data publication, the languages the documents are available in and their volume (number of pages), but no short description or information on data access possibilities or prices. Most publications mentioned in the catalogue appear on an annual basis, the *Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan*,

Regional Yearbook, Tajikistan and CIS countries, Tajikistan in Figures. Subject-matter/Sectoral compilations, quarterly: *Newsletter on food security and poverty*, *Tajikistan and the regions*, *Industrial production data* and *The volume of retail sales*, and such publications as *The economic performance of industrial enterprises*, *Industrial output in value terms* are disseminated monthly. Statistics on agriculture are published weekly, every ten days, fortnightly or monthly during the sowing or harvesting period. These are only available in Tajik; all others are also available in Russian and a few additionally in English.

256. A direct link to the Annual Statistical Programme can be made, when the publications are listed in the programme either under the following titles like Development and production of statistical bulletins, Statistical compilations, Release of statistical bulletins; or when in the column title of work it says something like Statistical publication on or Book on a given topic. The matching between the two documents is incomplete: not all publications mentioned in the catalogue can be related to an activity in the programme, but also not every release mentioned in the programme (e.g. Release of express information) can be found in the catalogue. It would be very helpful if the programme was more output oriented and displayed a column with the products that are supposed to be produced from every activity.

257. The *Catalogue* is available on TAJSTAT's website. The catalogue does not include information on the release of express information nor on press releases. A proper release calendar, which would include all that and include more exact release dates and times is in planning, but not realised yet. The more detailed publishing programme, the *annual catalogue of publications and services* is not available on the Internet.

258. Publications are announced in statistical releases that are sent to all media and are communicated through the website. The President and the government have early access to statistical releases.

259. Publication and dissemination of data include the following *print products*:

a) Consolidated statistical publications include annual publications such as Statistical Yearbook of RT, the Regional Statistical Yearbook, Tajikistan in Figures, Tajikistan and CIS countries; the monthly report Socio-Economic Situation of the Republic of Tajikistan as well as the quarterly bulletins on Food Security and Poverty in the Republic of Tajikistan and on The Republic of Tajikistan and Region;

b) Sectoral statistical publications include at least a dozen annual collections in all fields of statistics and several thematic publications in the field of agriculture. Also the results of surveys such as the Population Census, the Household Budget and the Labour Force Survey are published in separate volumes;

c) The print offer is completed by seven Annual Bulletins on construction, contracts, services and other fields, nine Monthly Bulletins of which two on industry and seven on agriculture; and three Quarterly Bulletins on *Output of Products in Industrial Sectors, the Volume of Retail Turnover*, and *Demographic Statistics*.

260. On the website there are over a dozen publications (not all of them in English) in electronic format available as well as another ten documents on results of surveys.

261. Some publications published under the label of TAJSTAT actually provide statistical results that are produced by other public authorities (e.g. from administrative sources) and then transmitted to TAJSTAT for dissemination (with reference to the source of the data). Before publication, the data is checked for logical and arithmetic errors, and a verification of the reporting data conducted in case such are detected. However, it seems not possible for TAJSTAT to systematically check according to which standards this information has been collected and processed. This means that the TAJSTAT stamp on a publication is not necessarily a label for *produced in full respect of statistical principles*.

262. The *website* provides information on TAJSTAT, publications and events; it offers also downloads of some of the publications, survey reports and various tables in Excel-format:

a) The *entry page* informs about events and newly released statistical information. The underlying links of the news items do not lead to a press release or the electronic version of the announced publication. Also on the entry page a direct link to the Population and Housing Census is provided and some links to recent publications that are downloadable. Furthermore the page features four key indicators: population, inflation, CPI and GDP; and shows the exchange rates for USD, euro and Russian rouble. Finally the page has a link to DevInfo (the database system endorsed by the United Nations Development Group for monitoring human development, that is a tool for organizing, storing and presenting data, e.g. Millennium development goals, in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country level);

b) A menu on the entry page shows the table of content of TAJSTAT’s website. Under *news* the same information on events and new statistical information is displayed as on the entry page but also access older news items may be accessed from this page. The *agency* page informs about the agency, its management, its organisational and control structure, international cooperation and supplies the user with some legal documents like the Law on State Statistics and the Law on the Population Census;

c) The next four pages are dedicated to dissemination: Publications, Metadata, Macroeconomic indicators, Analytical tables and Database. Publications include the Catalogue (as described above), Results of surveys, and Electronic versions of publications. Under Results of surveys several complete and downloadable reports in Word-format on surveys including chapters on needs and goals, legal framework, methodology, results, quality all in Tajik, Russian and English. Of all the print publications 12 titles are available under Electronic version of publications, and only one more recent than 2010. Most prominently present is the quarterly *Food security and poverty* report. A few more publications available in electronic format are as mentioned to be found on the entry page of the website, including eight of 2011. Many important publications like the monthly *Socio-economic status of the Republic of Tajikistan* and the *Yearbook* are not available online;

d) The contents of the *Metadata* page is discussed below under the section *Assistance in statistical literacy*;

e) *Macroeconomic indicators* offers a table with key macroeconomic figures over three years. Under the label of *Analytical tables* basic Excel-tables are downloadable that report time series of data on the *Real sector, Socio-demographic sector, Fiscal Sector, Financial sector,* and *External Sector*. The Database provides statistics in Excel-tables on the above-mentioned sectors in more detail;

f) It follows a link to the *Population Census,* which leads to a page informing about the legal bases of the census, developments concerning the census and a documentation on the Pilot Census of Population and Housing of 2010;

g) A next page provides reporting forms to the respondents encompassing forms on Industrial figures, Finance statistics, Labour Statistics, Demographics, Foreign economic activity and MTS, Trade, Social Statistics, Construction, and Agriculture;

h) The *Gallery* displays pictures of a conference; *Useful links* leads to other state agencies, and to donors and partners. *Contacts* provides TAJSTAT's contact details, however only a general phone number and email address of TAJSTAT, and no contact details of the dissemination unit, which should be contacted by users with information requests;

i) A search tool facilitates finding information on the website.

263. The website is clearly structured and downloads of different formats work well. The website is accessible in three languages: Tajik, Russian and English. The content of the English version provides close to the same information as the other two sites with the exception of the reporting forms.

264. In general the offer of electronic versions of publications is low and they are to be found at different places on the website. Important statistical reports are missing, but also press releases and express information are not accessible nor are strategic documents like the *Annual Statistical Programme 2012* or TAJSTAT's *Annual Report*, some of which are announced by a press release. Furthermore, results of special analyses that have been prepared on request are not made publicly available on the website for other users.

265. The existence of two versions of the website is a source of confusion. When one searches for Statistics Tajikistan or TAJSTAT in English, the old version of the website comes up. As soon as the migration to the new website is completed the old website should be deactivated. The links should be regularly checked, as there are some, which do not lead to the intended publication or which do not work.

3.3.6 Access to statistics

266. TAJSTAT offers four types of products which underlay different pricing policies:

a) The first level is the most common statistics listed in the *Annual Statistical Programme* of statistical works. The President of the Republic, the National Assembly, the Majlisi Oli (Parliament), the Government, state agencies, local executive bodies receive one copy of the print publications free of charge. The Government decides on this list of recipients. All other users have free access to these publications in the library and through the website as far as the information are available online. Print copies are to be paid according to the *Price list of publications and services*;

b) Standardised requests for customised processing which needs work in the specialised department only is charged according to the amount of data requested. The *Price list of publications and services* informs about the costs;

c) Specific datasets on individual request are prepared on a fee basis, which is calculated according to the hours of work required by the specialist department and the IT directorate;

d) Prices for requests for aggregate data from databases like foreign trade statistics, business entities register, household budget and labour force survey are also defined in the *Price list of publications and services.*

267. According to the dissemination strategy, the price list is part of the *Annual catalogue of publications and services* should be available on the website. However, in May 2012 it is not online and price seems to be missing in the catalogue. The pricing policy does not apply to journalists/the media. Information, which is prepared on the request of journalists/media, is free of charge, except if it requires substantial work by CSO or MCC.

268. TAJSTAT's consideration of users' needs in the production of statistics and the organisation of dissemination is discussed in chapter of this report.

3.3.7 Assistance in statistical literacy

269. TAJSTAT had adopted the General Data Dissemination Standard (GDDS) of the IMF in 2004. On TAJSTAT's English Internet page the *metadata* button links directly to the GDDS page on Tajikistan of IMF's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB). GDDS information provided by Tajikistan was last updated in 2011. It refers throughout to the old law on statistics of 1997 and the State Statistical Committee (Goskomstat) instead of the Statistics Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan TAJSTAT. As a consequence, the content of chapters *0. Prerequisites* and *1. Integrity* is outdated and this does not inspire users' trust in the actuality and accuracy of the remaining parts of the GDDS. In addition, many of the sub-sections of the methodology in the Tajik and Russian version of TAJSTAT's website the *metadata* button leads to up-to-date Word documents on metadata in the real, socio-demographic, fiscal, external and financial sector as well as one on the reliability of data. They all follow the same structure: 1) Characteristics of data including coverage, data collection and transmission, periodicity and timeliness, 2) Quality of data roughly documenting the availability and quality of data, metadata and methodology descriptions, and 3) Plans for improvements in the short and medium term.

270. Main publications start with a concise summary of the most important results. They usually also include a *sometimes more sometimes less* elaborated chapter on methodology, which explains the methods used and includes definitions, glossaries and abbreviation lists. More in-depth information on methodology is not readily available for the user, the website does not have a dedicated page on the topic and the Catalogue of publications does not include any methodological works. The three lingual *Tajikistan in figures* does not provide the chapter on methodology in English.

271. There are few cases where comments go beyond mere factual information on definitions, methods and sources, but provide interpretational guidance to users or include analytical comments on the changes over time in observed phenomena and relationships between different phenomena. The *Living Standards Survey 2007* is a positive example.

272. In cases of incorrect use or wrong interpretation of official statistics TAJSTAT is entitled to provide comments and rectify statements. In the case of errors in a product of the mass media, the Department of Summary-Economic Analysis and International Relations will be in charge of contacting them to correct the information.

3.3.8 Assessment

273. The LSS and the dissemination strategy are a good basis to organise dissemination and communication of statistical information, the most important recommendation is thus to implement it rigorously.

274. The president's, ministries' and other government authorities' access to statistical information is direct and well organised. Dissemination to other users' needs to be improved. In particular, equal and simultaneous access for all users is not fully realised. It is therefore recommended to:

a) Strictly apply the according statements the LSS and the dissemination strategy to make available all statistical data simultaneously to all users and the public at large. Any pre-access for the President and the Government and local authorities should be discontinued or at least, in a first step, be communicated publicly. Anyone who has pre-access should sign an embargo declaration;

b) The Editorial Board should focus on the appropriateness of text and graphs in a publication, the checking of data should at that stage be finished and is the task of the MCC and the subject matter departments;

c) Develop a release calendar with actual release dates. Relative proxies, i.e. 8 days after data collection, should be given only at a very early stage. Information should be regularly updated since the release dates, in some exceptional cases, are not kept. The reasons for postponing releases have to be communicated publicly so as to avoid any appearance of interference. The calendar should be a living document. Ideally, all press releases should be issued at the same time of the day;

d) As soon as the migration to the new website is completed the old website should be deactivated. The links should be regularly checked, as there are some that do not lead to the intended publication or which do not work;

e) Make all printed statistical publications available for download free of charge on one single dedicated page of TAJSTAT website. In electronic publications also add the cover pages of publications for the user to recognise the publication and get information on the year of publication etc. Make strategic documents like annual and multi-annual programmes, strategies or annual reports available on the website;

f) Make press releases and express information available on the website, at the time of their release to ensure accessibility for all potentially interested at the same time;

g) Dedicate a webpage to dissemination with information on where to find data, instructions on how to order a publication or submit a data request. Provide a downloadable version of the *catalogue of publications and services*, the *price list of publications and services*, and contact details of the dissemination unit. The webpage should also offer a dedicated area for communication with the media;

h) Consider the introduction of PC-Axis or a similar device used to present statistical information and aiming at facilitating quick and easy dissemination of statistics;

i) The Department of Summary-Economic Analysis and International Relations could be strengthened. It should be given the overall responsibility for user relations in particular with the media and be adequately equipped to actively manage these relationships (see also next chapter on main stakeholders). Related activities such as writing press releases, organisation of interviews, organisation of regular press conferences, preparation of press materials for news conferences, etc. stay under the coordination and control of this department. It should be the single entry point for requests of information and services demanded by journalists and other customers;

j) Bring the library back to life and equip it with PCs that allow access to the TAJSTAT and other statistical websites.

275. In order to facilitate better understanding of and trust in statistical information, put results in the right context and to assist in improving statistical literacy of users, it is highly recommended to:

a) Make a dedicated section on the website where all strategic documents can be found in one place. For example under *About us* with the *Law on Statistics*, *Annual Statistical Programme 2012*, the *Multi-year Statistical Programmes, Data Dissemination Strategy* and TAJSTAT's *Annual Report*;

b) Add a column to the *Annual Statistical Programme* with the products that are supposed to be the output of every activity in order to make it more user oriented;

c) Keep the level of press conferences organised on newly published data, providing explanations by TAJSTAT experts. Also add more interpretative texts to press releases, key publications and other statistical information;

d) Update GDDS more regularly to be prepared for the introduction of SDDS;

e) Publish a more complete series of metadata in Tajik and Russian. Also, include explanations about differences between results on the same topic that are produced form different sources or according to different methodologies;

f) Develop a policy for making use of the right to comment on misuse and faulty interpretations, especially those in the media. This requires that comments on statistical releases are gathered and analysed systematically;

g) Only agree to publishing results of other producers under your own label, when the criteria used for the quality control ahead of the release of results are the same as your own, or at least comment on the status of the publication;

h) Make the presentation of statistics on the website more attractive, illustrative and explanatory through using graphs, maps, and texts.

276. Recommendations concerning regional offices:

a) Put the Annual Statistical Programme and the *Regional Annual Statistical Programme* into one single publication;

b) Make statistical information available to the public at the same time as it is transmitted to local authorities. Until this measure is implemented, have the local authorities sign an embargo declaration;

c) Webpages of regional offices should be discontinued in the long run. In a first step, a common layout and structure could be developed, so that the user will recognise the webpages to be part of TAJSTAT. Regional offices should also put a link on their website which leads to the TAJSTAT's website and vice versa;

d) Establish small libraries in regional statistical offices with PCs that allow access to the TAJSTAT and other statistical websites.

3.4 Relations with main stakeholders

277. Main stakeholders are in the first instance the users of official statistics. Other important stakeholders are respondents in surveys (businesses, households), and holders of administrative data in their capacity as providers of such data to TAJSTAT.

278. Article 9 of the LSS states that it is the responsibility of TAJSTAT to provide a wide range of users with access to statistical information and in particular to provide mass media with necessary information and comments on changes in statistics.

279. In the drafting of the dissemination strategy a strong user perspective had been adopted. At several instances it states that users are the reason and purpose for the

existence of the statistical system, dissemination is about providing services to users according to their needs, and main results must be conveyed in a form that is understandable without prior knowledge. The strategy finally lists the users: individuals, business entities, legislative, executive and judicative bodies, state government and local authorities, science and research institutions, non-governmental and international organisations.

280. User relations are a central concern of TAJSTAT. The Department of Summary-Economic Analysis and International Relations is responsible for user surveys including analysis and follow up. So far two such surveys have been conducted, one in 2009 and one in 2011. They have been sent to users and were available on the website. They included questions on the use of statistics, satisfaction with offer, on the utility of the website, reliability and quality of data, and additional data needs the respondents might have. While in the first survey mainly administrative and government bodies responded, the second showed a more varied picture of respondents: still over half of respondents (58.7%) were representatives from the government, ministries and agencies; 12% from the international organizations; 10.7% of the questionnaires were received from mass media; 6.7% from research institutions; 5.3% from the Central Bank and other finance departments. More than 40 questions/suggestions were raised, which together with other results flowed into an action plan, whose implementation will be monitored by the dissemination unit. The results of the user survey have been published on the website.

3.4.1 Relations with government and administration

281. Government and administration are strongly involved in the development of the *Annual Statistical Programme*. The programme is submitted to all ministries and departments. They can bring forward their comments, suggestions and approval before the Government approves it. They are also well represented in the Statistical Council, which includes 9 representatives of 7 ministries, the Committee on Environment and the National Bank. The Council has the right to consider the annual and multi-year statistical programmes, but also issues concerning dissemination. Some ministries and other state bodies have a dual role as data users and providers of administrative data to TAJSTAT. Therefore, they are in close and frequent contact with TAJSTAT.

282. On the local level the information flow is secured through proximity. The regional statistical offices are located in the vicinity of the local authorities and regularly supply them with statistical information. The *Regional Annual Statistical Programme* is handed to the local authorities for reference and use during work.

3.4.2 Liaison with Research Institutions and Universities

283. The liaison with research institutes and universities is not institutionalised with the exception of a representative of the Tajik National University and the Institute of Demography of the Academy of Sciences in the Statistical Council.

284. With regard to access to micro-data; TAJSTAT grants access to scientific organisations and scientists registered with state administration but also other research entities upon written request, stating the purpose of the use of the statistical data. A special contract is drawn up setting the frame for the use of statistical

information. The user is held financially and criminally liable for the correct deployment of the data. Scientists and researchers were addressed in the user survey and account for close to 7% of the respondents.

3.4.3 Relations with Mass Media

285. The relations with mass media are prominently addressed in the dissemination strategy. It states that the media is a crucial partner in dissemination of official statistics, that good relations should be maintained with journalists and that the headquarters prepare all information/data requested by journalists free of charge. This strategy fosters a more user-friendly dissemination of statistical information complemented by explanatory notes and interpretational guidance. The headquarters also plans Open Days for the press and other media representatives on how to read statistics and understand methodological explanations in order facilitate correct commenting and interpreting of statistical information. Mass media are, however, not represented in the Statistical Council.

286. Press releases with texts are regularly printed in newspapers, which makes TAJSTAT one of the most visible and trusted bodies of state administration. Twice a year the TAJSTAT top-management invites journalists and other media representatives to a press conference to report on the statistical activities of TAJSTAT and recently published results. The director or his deputies also occasionally give interviews on radio and TV. Directors or other authorised staff may give statements on specific issues.

287. Media representatives showed an active general interest in statistical products. While it was stated that the media prefer using official statistical data to data from other sources for their general reliability, TAJSTAT's independence was contested, there were doubts about the objectivity of some of the data, and some concerns about costs for data supply were raised. A few months ago a critical exchange between a newspaper and TAJSTAT about the accuracy of the GDP data had taken place.

288. The media landscape consists – according to information on the *100th anniversary of Tajik press* on 10 March 2012 – of 446 newspapers and journals, of which 270 are social and private; of ten registered news agencies (9 private), 44 radio and television channels (28 private).

3.4.4 Relations with other users

289. Open Days are not only planned for journalists but also to bring statistics closer to the general public.

290. The Union of Entrepreneurs and experts has one seat in the Statistical Council. Other than that, there are no mechanisms for regular and systematic exchange with the Business Community, who was also not included in the user surveys of 2009 and 2011. The situation of Trade Unions is identical.

291. International organisations working in Tajikistan and domestic non-governmental organisations are primary and educated users of official statistics. The headquarters provide them with statistical information on demand, and the organisations working

in the field of statistics are present in TAJSTAT in seminars and conferences and as advisors.

3.4.5 Relations with respondents

292. Respondents also belong to the group of stakeholders in the sense that they are main providers of data. They consist of natural persons or group of natural persons (e.g. households), and on the other hand legal entities, their affiliates and representative offices including foreign entities located on Tajik territory and individual entrepreneurs.

293. Their relations with the statistical system are mostly formal. The participation in surveys is in many cases compulsory. TAJSTAT has the right to obtain information for statistical purposes free of charge from all respondents, even if sometimes individuals or households are rewarded with a small amount of money for participating in a survey. TAJSTAT may ask respondents to introduce corrections in their statistical reporting if it detects distortions, or, in case of non-fulfilment, may insert corrections itself. The respondents are guaranteed confidentiality of state and commercial secrets and primary data, which would allow identifying them. Individual data can in this case be disclosed only if the respondent agrees in writing. TAJSTAT shall guarantee protection of confidential data against illegal access and disclosure.

3.4.6 Assessment

294. One major task of communication and user relations is to strengthen trust in the statistical system. Unrestricted and easily accessible supply of methodological documents and of metadata with a focus on quality improves the agency’s credibility in the perception of all stakeholders. Regular exchange with user groups as it is foreseen in the Multi-year Statistical Programme will also foster mutual confidence. In trainings on statistical literacy institutional aspects like independence, impartiality, credibility, etc. should be addressed too.

295. The relations with authorities and administration are well established. Other stakeholders are less well served and could become more of a priority of TAJSTAT. The structure of the Statistical Council could be actively used as bridge to specific user groups. The chair could, for example, establish a working group on enhancing exchange with the media, which would involve journalists and other media representatives; or on improving cooperation with the business community.

296. Further intensify the exchange with press and other media as transmitters of statistical information with a broad outreach. Also the documentation of the service for the media and a monitoring of the role of media are recommended. The number of press releases, the number of circulated copies of important publications like the yearbook, the number and quality of contacts with journalists, and the number of radio/TV programmes which feature contributions from staff members of TAJSTAT should be documented.

297. It is particularly important to establish a regular exchange with representatives from the business community, both in their capacity as users of statistics and as respondents (response burden). Press releases and express information should be

available on the website, provided also in English for the benefit of an improved service for the business community and in particular potential investors in the Tajik economy.

298. Building networks with the academic world to have easier access to scientific developments in statistics, empirical economics, IT and other disciplines is essential. Co-operation with the research community, their feedback and proposals for improvement can contribute to the modernisation of the production and dissemination of statistics at TAJSTAT.

299. The users' surveys are an excellent tool that should be continued. They reveal needs of various users with their specific profiles, knowledge of and experience with statistics. The results should be systematically incorporated into the development of more targeted activities and of the annual and multi-year programme.

300. To promote the public appreciation of official statistics it is important to give support and to closely follow if and how statistics are presented in the media. It is recommended to further enhance statistical information with explanatory texts and interpretation of the data. Another recommendation is to set up a systematic procedure to analyse the use of statistics in the media and by other user groups. This will also give a basis to intervene in cases in which data is misinterpreted or incorrectly used.

301. Statistical literacy can also be improved through offering training like the planned Open Days on how to read statistics for journalists, teachers and other information brokers. Training events of this kind are already foreseen in the Multi-year Statistical Programme and should be transformed into a permanent offer.

302. Finally, in the relations with respondents the reduction of response burden needs to be addressed. This issue should be taken up in the revision of each single survey, but even more so a screening exercise across different surveys should be put in place. The exercise would on the one hand assist in avoiding unnecessary overlaps and asking the same information two or three times, on the other hand detecting potential synergies and information collected in one survey be used in several statistics. It is recommended to develop a coherent policy for response burden reduction issue and make it an integral part of the development of annual and multi-year programmes.

3.5 International cooperation

303. TAJSTAT is committed to adhere to International and European statistical standards and methodology. Paragraph 5 of the Statement on the Agency on Statistics (SAS Decree) stipulates that official statistical standards of the Republic of Tajikistan should be developed in accordance with international standards and data collection and processing methods. Available statistical information from Tajikistan is regularly sent to main international organisations and is posted on their websites.

304. The Department of summary-economic analysis and international relations comprises 7 staff members and provides organisational and technical support to the CSO for its relations with all international organisations and bilateral partners. The Department supervise the exchange of statistical information with international organisations and provide information on major socio-economic statistics and

indicators from international organisations and foreign countries for internal and external customers. The international cooperation department also plays the role of facilitator for the implementation of multilateral and bilateral capacity building programmes.

305. TAJSTAT receives technical assistance from many international and bilateral organisations such as the EU and its member states, the World Bank, the IMF, UN agencies and other bilateral donors. Cooperation activities include capacity building programmes, ad-hoc surveys, study visits and advisory services. Staff members from TAJSTAT also regularly participate in training workshop organised by the UNECE, Eurostat, EFTA, IMF and other multilateral partners.

306. Major recent and on-going technical cooperation projects are as follows:

a) Eurostat, about 400,000 USD, 2009: households surveys on remittances and on agricultural production, vital statistics and external trade;

b) TAJSTAT project *Strengthening National Statistical System*, 5.7 mln USD, 2006 – 2010, with the financial and technical support of the World Bank (grant), the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Swedish Agency for International Development (Sida), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and International Development Association (IDA);

c) The objectives of the project included improvement of the legal framework in the field of statistics, skills development, improvement of the equipment, and improving data quality to monitor the results achieved;

d) Recently, the UNFPA has been active in supporting TAJSTAT in the preparation and the conduct of the 2010 Population and Housing Census including processing, analysis and dissemination of the census results;

e) UNICEF, about 100,000 USD, 2012 - 2013: enhanced monitoring of strategies for poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through improvement of key indicators for measuring the impact of financial, food and energy crisis on vulnerable families, children and women including support to the further development of TojikInfo;

f) UNICEF in collaboration with UNDP contributed to the development and the maintenance of TojikInfo (national DevInfo), an online database system on social development with more than 130 indicators from various official sources of the Republic of Tajikistan in order to improve the availability of quality data for monitoring national and global policies, such as the National Development Strategy, the Millennium Development Goals, the Poverty Reduction Strategy at national, regional and local levels. The project also included technical and financial support, the organisation of workshops and training for users as well as the set-up of a TojikInfo resource centre at the CSO;

g) UN Women, about 25,000 USD, 2011-2012, strengthening gender-sensitive statistics in the field of social protection; including training, data collection and dissemination;

h) USAID, 705,000 USD, 2012, strengthening the technical capacity of major state institutions and agencies, including TAJSTAT, to collect, process and disseminate data on vital, demographic health statistics (DHS);

i) World Bank, 236,600 USD, 2012-2013, Improving the Household Budget Survey;

j) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2.6 million USD, 2012-2014, strengthening food safety system through improved data collection and analysis of statistical information on food safety.

307. Some of these projects are not exclusively covering activities of TAJSTAT or are devoted to very specific statistical domains. It is important that technical cooperation projects reinforce the visibility, accountability, efficiency and expertise of the state statistics keeping in mind that the CSO is, by Law, the coordination body of the overall system. The ultimate objective being to support in a sustainable way the effective design and improvement of processes which ensure that products and services are fit for their purpose and meet their specifications for the user community at large, including the civil society. It is important to mention again that the state budget is barely covering the regular activities of the State Statistics. TAJSTAT has therefore to rely on international funding and expertise to implement its development strategy and to modernise its data collection methods, production processes and IT infrastructure.

308. Experts from TAJSTAT participate in international meetings to a limited extent due to the lack of budget dedicated to international cooperation and very limited resources provided for this purpose by international donors. Another factor restricting an active participation in the international events is insufficient knowledge of English among the staff. According to paragraph 13 of the SAS Decree, it is TAJSTAT’s director that represents the interests of Tajikistan in high-level international meeting in statistics and is allowed to take decision on its behalf. As such, the director has the status of Chief Statistician of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Assessment:

309. It is important for an active and fruitful participation in meetings, seminars, training workshops and other events in the field of statistics organized by international organisations that staff members from TAJSTAT improve at least their oral and reading skills in English. This would also improve the communication between international experts and staff in the framework of technical cooperation projects and allow statisticians from Tajikistan to participate more often in study visits. It was also mentioned during the assessment missions that the ability among junior staff to draft clearly and concisely in Russian should be improved.

310. The budget for participation in meetings, seminars, and training workshops should be urgently increased.

311. Since most methodological work, strategic development and ad-hoc surveys cannot be financed through the state budget, it is a prerequisite for TAJSTAT that international organisations and bilateral donors enhance their involvement in

capacity building projects in Tajikistan. TAJSTAT should continue being proactive in fundraising among potential international and bilateral partners.

312. TAJSTAT should be the focal point for all technical cooperation projects and capacity building programmes in the field of statistics. It does not mean that TAJSTAT should be systematically the beneficiary institution in the country but this could improve the coordination at national level of technical assistance activities, avoiding gaps and overlap.

4. DATA SOURCES AND PROCESSING, QUALITY MONITORING, REGISTERS AND NOMENCLATURES

4.1 An overview

Data sources and processing:

313. According to the LSS (art. 6 and 16), the main tasks of TAJSTAT are the collection, the processing, the storage, the analysis and dissemination of official statistical information in accordance with the annual statistical programme. The CSO directs and supervises territorial and functional subordinated bodies and coordinates the activities of all producers of official statistics.

314. Article 8 and 12 of the LSS and paragraph 9 of the SAS Decree specify that TAJSTAT is entitled to obtain primary and statistical data from all kind of sources for free, including data from administrative sources and accounting reports. It is mandatory for all business entities, regardless of their legal forms and economic activities, to submit the requested accounting reports to TAJSTAT.

315. At present, roughly 20% of the statistical information processed by TAJSTAT is based on administrative sources. All other primary data from population, households, farms and enterprises collected through surveys, including statistical reports are gathered at sub-regional level. Territorial statistical offices, mainly at sub-regional level, are responsible for collecting the information and transferring aggregated data via the next territorial level (region) to the Main Computing Centre (MCC). In rural areas, TAJSTAT ensures through local government bodies the delivery and pick-up of statistical forms.

316. The LSS do not define the national system of official statistics in a precise and comprehensive way and provisions of the LSS on boundary of the National System of Official Statistics (State Statistics) are to some extent ambiguous. The distinction in the annual statistical programme (statistical programme of work) between producers of official statistics and providers of administrative data is rather blurred. Beside the Statistics Department of the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan (Balance of Payments) that was clearly identified by the assessors as part of the system of official statistics, and perhaps the Republican Centre of Medical Statistics and Information (Ministry of Health) and the statistical department of Ministry of Education, both under the condition that they strictly follow the provisions of the LSS, the following ministries and agencies have to be considered as major providers of administrative data to TAJSTAT, and not producer of official statistics:

a) Customs Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan;

b) Ministry of Finance;

c) Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Tajikistan;

d) Migration Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan;

e) Office of Vital Registration of the Ministry of Justice;

f) Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources Management;

g) Committee for Environmental Protection;

h) State Committee on Land Management and Geodesy of the Republic of Tajikistan;

i) Ministry of Transport;

j) Tax Committee under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, in charge of the registration and maintenance of the state business register according to the single window principle;

k) State Committee on Investment and State Property Management of the Republic of Tajikistan;

l) Ministry of Internal Affairs;

m) General Prosecutor Office.

317. For the transmission of collected and aggregated information, corporate local area network (LAN) operates and connects the three regional statistical offices and the statistical office of the city of Dushanbe with the headquarters. Since there is no LAN between sub-regional statistical offices of districts of republican subordination and the headquarters, only 30% of statistical information is automated at MCC and 70% of statistical information submitted is mainly performed manually, on paper. Aggregated statistical tables are delivered by mail or a courier to the next territorial level or directly to the MCC.

318. Currently, TAJSTAT collects primary data through about 234 statistical reporting forms, 53 directly for administrative data sources and only 27 through sample surveys; mainly for the Household Budget Survey as well as for trade, construction, agriculture, and transport surveys. The task of the territorial statistical offices is to select the observation units and to extrapolate the results to the universe. This procedure is done extracting the sample units from local administrative registers.

319. Primary data, from reporting forms and surveys, are to a considerable portion stored in sub-regional or regional statistical offices. This not only put at risk the proper storage of and access control to unit-level confidential information which is one of the major responsibility of TAJSTAT’s director, but also implies in term of quality

monitoring that the headquarters have neither a control on the sampling procedure neither the possibility to replicate the gross-up operation.

320. There is no administrative or statistical population register in the Republic of Tajikistan. An administrative business register was established in 1991 under TAJSTAT and covered all business/economic entities regardless of their legal forms and economic activities. In 2009, after the introduction of the *Single Windows* registration, overall responsibility over the administrative register (Unified Business Register) was given to the Tax Authorities and the MCC is maintaining a business statistical register based on on-line information from the administrative register. At the time of the global assessment missions (1st half of 2012), the MCC was working on the development of the Statistical Business register by adding information collected through surveys and administrative sources. Unfortunately, the identification code assigned to economic units in many statistical surveys and reports is not processed by territorial statistical offices, which complicates the allocation of unit level information to the correct economic unit.

321. The development of a comprehensive statistical business register would nevertheless allow TAJSTAT to use more extensively sample surveys for the compilation of economic statistics, reduce the administrative burden on respondents and improve the efficiency of data collection processes.

Quality monitoring and management:

322. The main objective of quality monitoring and management is to ensure the effective design and improvement of processes that ensure that products and services are fit for their purpose and meet their specifications.

323. The seven components identified by the UNECE when assessing the quality of data are:

a) Relevance: the degree to which statistics meet the needs of current and potential users. Relevance therefore refers to whether the statistics that are needed are produced, and whether the statistics that are produced are needed. It also covers methodological soundness, and particularly the extent to which the concepts used (definitions, classifications etc.) reflect user needs;

b) Accuracy: the closeness of statistical estimates to true values, with the proviso that absolute accuracy can be difficult to determine when data are taken from other sources rather than directly collected. Two factors should be considered: the credibility of the source, and the plausibility of the data, i.e. the extent to which they look reasonable when compared to other periods, to similar countries, and to the values the statistician would expect;

c) Timeliness: the length of time between data being made available and the event or phenomenon they describe;

d) Punctuality: punctuality refers to the time lag between the release date of data and the target date when they should have been released;

e) Accessibility: the physical conditions in which users can obtain data: where to go, how to order, delivery time, clear pricing policy, convenient marketing conditions (copyright, etc.), availability of micro or macro data, various formats (paper, files, CD-ROM, Internet…), etc.;

f) Clarity: clarity refers to whether data are accompanied by sufficient and appropriate metadata, whether illustrations such as graphs and maps add value to the presentation of the data, and whether information on data quality is available;

g) Comparability and consistency over time, among regions and countries, and for the same indicator among the different statistical domains.

324. The notion of *cost-efficiency* should also be mentioned. Whilst this is not considered to be a dimension of quality, it is a factor that must be taken into account in any analysis of quality. If a product can be produced more efficiently with the same quality, then resources released can be used to improve the quality of that product or other products. As such, quality management does not focus only on products or services but also on the means to achieve them (processes).

325. In TAJSTAT, the quality monitoring is mainly the responsibility of the heads of the substantive organisational units. Procedures and methods to monitor the quality of the stages in the statistical production process (survey planning, survey design, data collection, data processing, data analysis, and dissemination) are routinely applied. For all surveys, the field operations, the data entry, and the coding are regularly supervised. The Main Computing Centre (MCC) is responsible for the automatized processing of the primary statistical information through data entry control, control for completeness of information, arithmetical and logical control mainly with information collected in the previous reporting period (month, quarter and year). This is a major challenge for the MCC, since 70% of statistical information submitted mainly by territorial statistical offices is processed manually, on paper.

326. The activities of the Methodology and Classification Department within the CSO, is mainly restricted to the editing of new or reviewed statistical reporting forms, including instructions on how to fill them in. This work is based on proposals made by the substantive departments and divisions and then submitted to the Methodological Committee. The latter meets regularly, discusses the response rate and if necessary takes the appropriate measures to increase it, and adopts the submitted reporting forms. The Methodological Committee is composed of 23 members, mainly heads of CSO substantive departments and divisions, and is headed by the director of TAJSTAT. The Methodological and Classification Department, according to a rotating scheme, is visiting territorial statistical offices, in order to verify that forms are distributed, collected and completed according to the adopted instructions. If necessary, the data is verified directly with the reporting enterprises and organizations. At meetings of the Methodological Committee the results of these routine quality checks of the statistical data provided by the territorial statistical offices and other data providers are discussed.

327. Nevertheless, the Methodological and Classification Department is neither involved in the design, selection and extrapolation of sample surveys, nor in the choice of the best data collection methods (administrative data, survey or statistical reporting) based on a regular assessment of available data sources. Furthermore the

Department is not in charge of the implementation and coordination of new nomenclature within the National Statistical System and with major administrative data providers. As such, there is currently no specific unit that is responsible for the overall quality monitoring, management and training. The prevailing practice within TAJSTAT is that everybody strives to achieve maximal quality. The subject matter units have their own experts and have to solve their problems themselves or to refer to their supervisor (bottom-up approach). There is no proper documentation available internally and externally about the production process of each statistical product, from the data collection to dissemination. The choice of the data sources, the data collection methods and data processing is not regularly assessed in the view of quality components mentioned above. TAJSTAT has so far no plans to adhere to a more holistic quality management approach (top-down).

328. Nevertheless, it has to be mentioned that Tajikistan is adhering to the General Data Dissemination System and is in the process of applying to the Special Data Dissemination Standard of the International Monetary Fund. This process will lead to a step forward in the development of the State Statistics and the national and international recognition that the system meets some important international standards. In that respect, a general quality policy will have to be developed and implemented, and statistical products and processes regularly assessed against some important quality criteria such as coverage, periodicity, punctuality, timeliness, public access, reliability and accuracy.

General Assessment:

329. The organisational structure of TAJSTAT is very much oriented towards the single statistical domains. Each department develops its own methodology, data collection methods, reporting forms, validation rules, quality checks, and data storage for the area of its competence.

330. Some measures have been taken to improve the data collection and processing of statistical information and a Methodological Department has been recently established. But in order to further improve the efficiency of the production processes and secure the quality of statistical products and services provided by TAJSTAT, the interaction between the sub-regional, the regional, and the central level needs to be redesigned to cope with recent methodological and technological developments. In that respect, priority should be given to the development of measures streamlining the procedures of collection, aggregation and transmission of statistical information. Presently, most of the financial and human resources are allocated to the collection and aggregation of primary data when more of these resources could be dedicated to methodological work, quality improvement, analysis and dissemination.

331. It is recommended that the CSO reinforces the role of the Methodological and Classification within TAJSTAT and assigns to this department functions and responsibilities related to quality monitoring. Deepened competences in design of sample surveys, editing and imputation techniques, estimation methods, and other methodological topics should be concentrated in this department that would provide consulting and advisory services to substantive units. The department should develop, under the guidance of the TAJSTAT Board, a quality management policy and develop programmes for quality monitoring and assessment. Under the

supervision of the Quality and Methodology Department, quality reports for all statistical products and standardized documentation on production processes should be established and regularly updated by the substantive units in the CSO; including for its territorial and functional subordinated bodies. Regular quality reports should be addressed by the Quality and Methodology Department to the TAJSTAT Board and, when necessary, recommendations for improvement should be proposed.

332. The financial and human resources dedicated to data collections can efficiently be reduced by the use of administrative data and the development of more systematic sample surveys instead of the present exhaustive reporting system. In any case, priority should be given to the development of comprehensive statistical registers. Results from all sources including population and economic censuses should be systematically used to improve the accuracy and the coverage of these registers.

333. In general, the efficiency of data harvesting and processing could be improved by stimulating electronic data collection. Electronic questionnaires and tools for data editing and analysis would allow for more flexibility of operation and accuracy of data. Furthermore, tools with improved functionality for interactive control and editing as well as more involvement of the subject matter staff in tabulation and analysis using IT might be implemented and stimulated. The Quality and Methodology Department, the MCC and IT experts should work closely in order to put in place the electronic tools that would support the overall production process and quality of the final products and services delivered by TAJSTAT. A full integration of the MCC into the CSO would definitely ease this process.

4.2 Social and demographic statistics

4.2.1 Population Census

334. The Population and Housing Census was financed primarily from the state budget but also benefited from financial and/or technical assistance by UNDP, the World Bank, UNICEF and UNECE.

335. The preparations for the 2010 Population and Housing Census began in 2005. The methodology, questionnaire, preparation and timing of the census were piloted in October 2008 in one sub-region. The 2010 Population and Housing Census was conducted between 21 and 30 September 2010. The UNECE/CES Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing, in particular the criteria of usual residence and 12 months, were followed. In 2010 the following concepts and data items were introduced in the Population and Housing Census: usual residence, temporarily absent, temporarily present, housing component, information on the number of births and deaths of children below the age of five, international commuters and labour migration. The births and deaths of children below the age of five were included in an effort to complement vital registration records, which are known to have poor coverage. There were five questionnaires used in the 2010 Population and Housing Census: list of persons residing in premises/households, individual questionnaire, dwelling questionnaire, building questionnaire, questionnaire on the living conditions of the population and the cover form/sheet.

336. The population enumerated comprised persons permanently resident in Tajikistan based on the UNECE/CES Recommendations regarding the criteria of usual residence and 12 month including the temporarily absent residents. In order to improve the coverage, a control form was used to record the *temporarily present* persons and check whether they were surveyed in their principal residence conforming to the UNECE/CES guidelines.

337. After the Population and Housing Census was completed, the supervisors and the heads of census units conducted the *Post-Enumeration Survey* (PES) on 3-5 October 2012. This survey used the same census questionnaires and covered ten per cent of all premises surveyed in all enumeration areas. It was found that 1,102 persons in the areas enumerated during the *PES* were not recorded during the census (0.1 per cent of the *PES* sample).

338. In terms of data processing, the 2010 Population and Housing Census was the first census round where the questionnaires were scanned at the data entry stage. There are two separate databases for the aggregated data and for the output tables, respectively.

Assessment:

339. The 2010 Population and Housing Census has on the whole been a successful undertaking especially given the introduction of the internationally recommended usual residence concept and the housing component. It is also understood that the results of the census are used for calibrating household sample survey results as well as for producing the updated sampling frame for such surveys, which show that census data is well utilized.

340. However, currently there is no nationwide population register, assigning a unique ID number to each individual, which is indispensable to strengthen the administrative registers of the county.

341. In Tajikistan, Geographic Information System (GIS) tools are not yet used in census operations. The introduction of GIS into the census process is essential, at least at the stage of census mapping. Depending on the GIS functions to be used, TAJSTAT staff will have to be trained to acquire the necessary skills.

342. In terms of field operations, the provision of laptops/other electronic tools to enumerators will improve the efficiency in regular reporting and problem solving by enabling constant interaction with the headquarters.

343. The data checking and editing were done manually for the Population and Housing Census, as is often the case for the other household surveys in Tajikistan. The data checking and editing procedures for the census should be prepared beforehand and implemented automatically with the help of a software program in order to minimize human error. The preparation of detailed reports on the errors found during data processing and how they were corrected is recommended. There should be an institutional policy on data checking and editing to be followed in all data processing activities.

344. The Population and Housing Census methodology and operations have generally followed the international recommendations. The recommendations regarding Post-Enumeration Surveys (PES), however, were not entirely abided by. The PES should ideally be designed and implemented completely independently from the census. This means the use of a separate sample frame, different human resources and a different questionnaire, e.g. with more detailed probing questions. In Tajikistan, a nationwide Control Check was conducted which does not follow the same methodology as PES. PES is ideally designed as a one-stage stratified cluster household survey and *all* households in the selected enumeration areas are covered. This is essential in order to estimate the *coverage error*. Due to financial difficulties (design of supplementary questionnaires, payment for temporary census staff, etc.) the implementation of PES in Tajikistan was not possible.

345. It is recommended that TAJSTAT use the results and the experience of the 2010 Population and Housing Census to start preparing a methodological and operational action plan for the next census round. Some of the techniques and methodologies that have been implemented in different countries were discussed in the different UNECE meetings related to Population and Housing Census organised by the UNECE in May and June 2012, including the 60th session of the Conference of the European Statisticians.

4.2.2 Vital registration and migration

346. The vital register system records all births, deaths, marriages and divorces based on medical certificates of birth and death, and on statistical reporting forms. The variables that are collected are the date of the event (e.g. date of birth), sex, the names of the parents, the level of education of the parents, the age of the parents and the place of residence. The government agency in charge of the vital register is the Department of Civil Status (Registrar) under the Ministry of Justice. All data is registered at the village level and then sent in turn to the statistical offices at the sub-regional (rayon), and regional (oblast) levels. The sub-regions and/or regions submit the data to the MCC. The MCC is in charge of entering the data, which is then sent to the CSO and to the Republican Vital Registration Centre. Due to coverage issues with the vital register, the data is checked with that of the registry office of the Republican Centre for Health Statistics and Information of the Ministry of Health. The headquarters has direct access to the vital register database created by the MCC.

347. In Tajikistan, children are registered often when they reach compulsory school age. This means that if the child does not live long enough to go to school his birth and death often go unregistered. The main implication of this is the underestimation of under-five child mortality in the vital register of Tajikistan. In Tajikistan, two Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) were conducted in cooperation with UNICEF in 2005 and 2010. These surveys included a question on the birth and death of children below the age of one. The difference between the vital register figures and MICS results was around 12 per cent in 2005 and about five per cent in 2010. The results of the 2010 Population and Housing Census will also be used to improve the infant and child mortality figures. A Law of the Republic of Tajikistan, which requires that children be registered within three months after birth, has recently been adopted. This legal change is expected to improve the quality of the vital register.

348. Data on internal, environmental and voluntary migration is provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Employment Service). Until 2007, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was in charge of labour migration statistics. Between 2007 and 2010, the Ministry of Internal Affairs took over this task. In 2010, the Migration Service of the Republic of Tajikistan was established and is now in charge of collecting and providing information on labour migration to the headquarters and the government. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan provides data on refugees.

349. In Tajikistan, if a person moves across districts (sub-regions) he gets a certificate of departure and then is registered in his district of arrival. For village-to-city migration, the data comes from the rural jamoats. The data collection is centralized and the data collected is transmitted on paper. International Organization of Migration has a project on electronic transmission of migration data.

350. International migration statistics are based on the data received from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Passport Office and Visa Office. On the emigration cards, which are distributed at all points of departure (airports, train stations, border checks, etc.), migrants have to record gender, age and the duration of migration. If the person indicates that he is leaving for work, they are considered as a labour migrant. The criterion to be considered a temporary migrant is to be out of the country up to 12 months whereas to be a long-term migrant the person has to leave Tajikistan for over 12 months. The returning migrants fill out another card upon arrival in Tajikistan. On this card, they indicate whether they are returning from work abroad. The data from the departure and arrival cards are submitted to the CSO through statistical reporting forms on a semi-annual basis.

351. Although a range of indicators are covered on migration, e.g. nationality, age, sex, region, education level and occupation, it is not possible to have detailed characteristics of the migrant from the departure and arrival cards. For instance, in the Labour Force Survey (like in the Living Standards Surveys), which was conducted in cooperation with the World Bank in 2009, a separate questionnaire on the returning labour migrants was included. The social status of migrant workers related to their work in the receiving country was among the issues covered.

352. Migration data is used for the adjustment of population figures between two population censuses. Population size is estimated at the regional and national levels on a quarterly basis and by sex and age on an annual basis.

353. Migration data is processed in Access while for the natural movement of population specific software developed in 2001 is used.

Assessment:

354. The main area of improvement, as acknowledged and expressed by the headquarters, is the coverage of the birth and death of children below compulsory school age in the vital register. In order to complement the statistics from the vital register, it is recommended to conduct household surveys such as MICS or Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). This is, however, a short-term solution. Given that these surveys are dependent on external funding and assistance, they may not be sustainable in the medium-to-long term. If well maintained, the vital register is the

optimal source for such demographic statistics, as there is a standing legal framework to obtain complete information on birth, death, marriages and divorces. It is expected that with the recent law requiring registration of all new-borns within three months of birth, the results will improve but this is yet to be confirmed.

355. The current definition of migration in Tajikistan based on the 12-month criterion is consistent with the CES recommendation on the usual place of residence. According to this, if the person is a short-term emigrant he should be included in the resident population. If the person is a long-term immigrant, however, he should not be included in the resident population. In the case of emigration, the duration indicated on the departure card may not always correspond to the actual time spent at destination. More reliable information on duration spent in the receiving country can only be obtained from returning migrants or families of migrants currently residing abroad, through dedicated modules in household sample surveys.

356. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) receives migration data in aggregated form, which means that analysis of information at the individual level or record linking using other sources of migration data is not possible. It is recommended that the CSO be given access to the individual-level data on migration in order to allow cross-verification of different data sources and to increase analytical capacity.

357. As acknowledged by the CSO, the software used for the processing of data on natural movement of population is now outdated. It is recommended to review the data editing and processing tools and procedures used for migration data as for other topics and update when necessary.

358. During the discussions with TAJSTAT, there was no reference to the Living Standards Survey (LStS) or to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) as a source of migration data. However, in all four rounds of LStS there was a module on migration. In the 2009 questionnaire, this module had three parts. The first two parts (Part A and Part B) covered internal migration and international migration for returning migrants, i.e. individuals currently residing in the household. Part C, on the other hand, was about family members away from the household. The module had 67 questions covering a wide range of issues related to migration, e.g. destination, date and duration of and reasons for migration, occupation and income at destination, migration patterns and remittances, etc. It is recommended that the results of the LStS and the LFS be used to complement and verify the administrative sources of migration data in Tajikistan. This reiterates the importance of making individual-level migration data available to the CSO in order to make better use of the existing data sources.

4.2.3 Household Surveys

Household Budget Survey

359. The Household Budget Survey (HBS) provides the status and changes in the level and structure of income and expenditure, consumption and accumulation of the population. HBS gives information about the role of individual sources in the income formation, and allows studying the dynamics of consumer demand. The data is used in the calculation of gross domestic product and its distribution, the calculation of real income, the balance of production and use of agricultural

products, the cost of living index (consumer price index for goods and services) and in household sector accounts.

360. HBS was carried out for a sample of 925 households nationwide between 2000 and 2009, where Gorno-Badakhson Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) was not included in the survey. The sample was redesigned to cover 3,000 households in 38 districts (sub-regions) nationwide on a quarterly basis. In each sub-region, there is an enumerator and he collects information from 20 to 22 households (in one jamoat) per month and 60-66 households per quarter. Every household is visited twice a month. In the first visit, the questionnaires are distributed and the households are asked to fill out the questionnaire until the second visit. During the second visit, usually at the end of the month, the data is checked and corrected with the household head. The data is then recorded in the reporting forms, which are sent to the oblast level together with the questionnaires.

361. In each region (oblast), there is a department working on the HBS. These departments check the data and for any clarifications they liaise directly with the enumerator who may, if need be, visit the household one more time. The data entry is done at the oblast level and only the three oblasts can submit the data electronically to the headquarters. All completed reporting forms and questionnaires are sent to the MCC.

362. The data is checked and the output tables are prepared by the MCC. FoxPro and Excel are used for data processing. The program used for data checks and validations should have been updated but is currently the old one, which was designed for a sample size of 925 households.

363. The output tables prepared by the MCC are then sent to the Social and Demographic Statistics Department of the CSO. As part of data verification, special missions from the headquarters are organized to check whether the enumerator actually visited the households and to verify the questions asked.

Living Standards Survey

364. The Living Standards Survey (LStS) was held as in 1999, 2003 and as a panel survey in two waves in 2007 and in 2009. World Bank has been the prime financial and technical supporter of these surveys.

365. LStS was designed to collect data on welfare and living standards of the population at the individual, household and community level. The questionnaire of the 1999 LStS was based on the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) questionnaire for the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) countries. In the case of Tajikistan, the module on health was more detailed and there was an additional module on food security. In addition, the module on employment was not reduced and the questionnaire did not cover anthropometric measures. The sample of this survey was designed prior to the 2000 Population and Housing Census, in the absence of an up-to-date sample frame. The sample was representative of the population and comprised 2,000 households. There were two questionnaires at the household and community/population level, respectively. A poverty line was elaborated based on the survey data, which equalled the per capita monthly expenditure of 32,083 Tajik rubbles (replaced by somoni/TJS in 2000).

366. In designing the sample for the 2003 LStS, the results of the Population and Housing Census held in 2000 were used and some areas were over-sampled. The sample size was 4,156 households. Some changes were introduced to the survey questionnaire of the 2003 LStS, e.g. in sources of income of household; and consumption and expenditures, although the aggregates were computed using similar methodologies.

367. The three questionnaires (household, female and community level) of the 2007 LStS were based on the 2003 LStS with some changes. The sample size was 4,860 households. The 2007 LStS was supported jointly by the World Bank and UNICEF. In order to follow up on the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) held in 2005 with assistance from UNICEF, modules on HIV/AIDS awareness (previously in the female questionnaire) and immunizations and anthropometric measurements for children aged 0-5 years were added. The 2009 LStS is a panel survey of 1,500 households interviewed during the 2007 LStS. The households were visited in November 2007 and 2009. In the 2009 LStS questionnaire there were ten modules: migration; education; health; labour market; dwelling, utilities and durable goods; transfers and social assistance; subjective poverty and food security; expenditure on food in the last seven days; non-food and; other income.

368. Studies were conducted on poverty in Tajikistan by international experts and the poverty headcount ratio (national poverty line) along with other poverty measures is available on the World Bank website for 2003, 2007 and 2009. According to the 2007 LStS report on the TAJSTAT website, the absolute poverty line (based on the cost of basic needs) was set at 139 TJS whereas the extreme poverty line (food poverty line reflecting the cost of a typical food basket providing 2,250 calories per day per person for the reference group) was 89 TJS in 2007. In 2009 the absolute poverty line was established as 195 TJS and the extreme (or critical) poverty line was 124 TJS. For inter-temporal comparisons, USD 2.15 (PPP) is used.

369. TAJSTAT aims to conduct the Living Standards Survey every three years but this is highly dependent on external funding. TAJSTAT and the World Bank are currently working on the alternative of establishing a programme of Integrated Household Surveys. Such a survey would combine HBS and LStS (as in 2009), allowing for the use of other regular or ad-hoc specialized modules; and would be funded by the World Bank.

Labour Force Survey

370. Tajikistan conducted two Labour Force Surveys (LFS) in 2004 and 2009. For these surveys the ILO recommendations were followed. ROSSTAT, and Statistics Denmark and Moldova provided assistance respectively in 2004 and 2009. The questionnaire was tested and sent to the ILO and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare for comments. The sampling design was prepared with assistance from international experts and the sample size was 4,000 households. The questionnaires used in both years were very similar, although in 2009 questions on informal employment and subsistence farming were added.

371. According to the report Labour Market Situation in the Republic of Tajikistan, the main questionnaire of the 2009 LFS focused on topics that describe the economic activity of population and employment. The questionnaire had four large sections and nine subsections including 83 basic questions. The main sections were:

demographic information about the individual; current economic activity; searching for employment/no economic activity; and employment in household production of goods and services.

372. The survey questionnaire had an additional module covering questions for the returning migrant workers who were in the household at the time of the survey. The module included 17 questions grouped under the following topics: the reasons for return; recognition of the profession; knowledge of the language; questions about the exploitation; questions about deception; questions about forced labour; work-related intentions for the future; and the financial situation of the family.

373. CSPro was used for data entry and had built-in checks.

374. The next Labour Force Survey is planned tentatively for 2014, based on the principle of holding an LFS every five years. As in the case of the Living Standards Survey, this is subject to the availability of funds.

Assessment:

375. There is an urgent need to develop the programs to allow HBS data entry, checking and processing electronically. Jointly with the World Bank's experts, the program for data processing is adapted to allow estimating poverty level on a quarterly basis.

376. During the discussions, it was not possible to get a clear understanding of the methodology used for the consumer basket and official national poverty line in Tajikistan. It is recommended to make detailed methodological information available to users on the elaboration of the national poverty line along with the calculation of the poverty indicators for all survey rounds.

377. LFS is the recommended tool of data collection on labour force and employment. LFS should be conducted regularly, preferably on a quarterly basis in order to obtain reliable indicators on labour and employment, in particular the size of informal employment. Labour force and employment data are essential to inform economic statistics, especially for estimating the size of the non-observed economy and hence for the exhaustiveness of national accounts. If quarterly data on labour force and employment would be available, this would also improve accuracy of quarterly national accounts figures. However, currently a regular implementation of LFS does not seem feasible in Tajikistan.

378. In the absence of adequate resources to conduct separate household sample surveys (HBS, LStS and LFS), the alternative of a regular programme of Integrated Household Surveys may indeed be the solution. Such a programme will ensure regular funding and will allow the collection of core data consistently over time. In Integrated Household Surveys, there is also a possibility of adding specialized and more detailed modules periodically on particular subjects such as labour force and employment, education, health, etc. depending on the data needs. Some of these topics could be covered on an ad-hoc basis, as demand arises whereas a detailed module on labour force and employment (including informal employment) could be planned to be added at regular intervals, e.g. every three years, from the outset. This could be a way to collect the much-needed labour force and employment data in the absence of a regular LFS programme. Integrated Household Surveys may also

ensure regular collection of data on household income/consumption and living standards.

4.2.4 Classifications and nomenclatures

379. The Population and Housing Census uses:

a) Nomenclature of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE, Rev. 2) or International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC, Rev. 4);

b) Recommendation on the general principles of construction and maintenance of statistical classifiers (CIS-STAT 1993);

c) International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88).

380. The MCC codes the cause of death according to International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) in the vital register.

381. The Household Budget Survey and the Living Standards Survey use the classifications:

a) Nomenclature of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE, Rev. 2) or International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC, Rev. 4);

b) International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88);

c) International Classification by Status in Employment (ICSE-93);

d) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97).

382. The Labour Force Survey uses:

a) Nomenclature of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE, Rev. 2) or International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC, Rev. 4);

b) International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88);

c) International Classification by Status in Employment (ICSE-93);

d) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97).

Assessment:

383. In general the international standards seem to be followed in terms of the classifications used. The International Standard Classification of Occupations has an updated version ISCO-08, which should soon be available in Russian. The International Standard Classification of Education has also been revised and the new version is ISCED 2011. The use of the updated classifications could be considered

and planned for future survey rounds provided that the data processing systems are adjusted accordingly to enable the conversions across time.

4.3 Economic and business statistics

4.3.1 Main primary data sources and Business surveys

384. In accordance with the provisions of the Law on State Statistics (LSS) and the Presidential Decree on Statement about the Agency on Statistics (SAS Decree), TAJSTAT is getting primary economic data from two main sources:

a) **Administrative data**: data obtained from authorities and public administration bodies, bodies of local self-government and other legal persons collected for administrative purposes;

b) **Statistical reporting and observations**: data obtained through exhaustive and sample statistical surveys, census (polling) questionnaires and all other statistical forms necessary for carrying out statistical observations.

385. For economic statistics, including construction, transport and communication, TAJSTAT is processing data issued from 104 different sources. 13 data sets are based on administrative sources (13%) and 91 from statistical surveys. Although TAJSTAT in recent years increased the number of sample surveys, this initiative to reduce burden on respondent and increase the efficiency of data collection benefitted mainly to social statistics. Most of economic data are still gathered through exhaustive reporting systems with some exceptions for individual entrepreneur in domestic trade, transport and construction.

386. For exhaustive and sample surveys, territorial statistical offices, mainly at sub-regional level, are responsible for collecting the information and transferring aggregated data via the next territorial level (region) to the Main Computing Centre (MCC). In rural areas, TAJSTAT ensures through local government bodies the delivery and pick-up of statistical forms. The CSO is then getting the aggregated information from the MCC for tabulation and analysis. This bottom-up procedure is supervised by the MCC that is also in charge of the development of the IT infrastructure and software for aggregation process and data transmission.

387. Surprisingly, in some cases, the extraction of the sample is not performed by the CSO. Sub-regional statistical offices are requested to select randomly, depending on the economic activity, 10% or 20% of observation units (sample selection) from the respective total population (sample frame). This operation is at the discretion of the sub-regional statistical agencies, using an Excel application developed by the MCC and based, for the identification of the sample frame, on local administrative registers. It is also important to stress that unit-level information collected from exhaustive and sample surveys are in general neither transmitted to the MCC nor to the CSO. Therefore the substantive units and the Methodology Department in the CSO are not in a position to perform any quality check of the sampling frame, the selection procedure and the extrapolation process.

388. Reporting and survey forms are developed by substantive departments of the CSO and are submitted to the Methodological Committee. In some cases, questionnaires

are tested on business entities. The list of reporting forms and surveys are reviewed annually and in some cases, outdated variables are withdrawn or replaced in consultation with major stakeholders within the administration and the Methodological Committee.

389. The economic census is an important activity carried out in many countries with the aim of improving availability and quality of existing basic economic statistics and establishing or improving comprehensive statistical business registers providing a solid framework to develop sampling frames. The economic census represents one of the pillars for data collection on the number and characteristics of the economic units of a country. It is part of an integrated approach to compilation of economic statistics and for small economic activities or sub-populations, such as informal sector units; it may represent the only source of information.

390. TAJSTAT conducted an economic census in 2010. Unfortunately the census focused only on legal entities, already well covered in the business statistical register, and the results of the census were not used to crosscheck and improve the coverage or accuracy of the register. For this reason, the sampling frame for entities without legal form (individual entrepreneur) is probably still inadequate for a further development of data collection through random sample surveys.

4.3.2 Statistical Business Register

391. First of all, it is important to stress that a comprehensive statistical business register is an indispensable tools for ensuring reliability, accuracy and consistency in the compilation of major economic statistics. It serves multiple purposes, of which identification of resident economic entities in terms of territorial location, size and type of activity, relation between local units and institutional units, determination of the population universe (sample frame) for sample surveys, and studies on enterprises demography.

392. The maintenance of a statistical business register can be conceived as a system transforming data from administrative sources (administrative registers and records) into data fitted for statistical purposes. The quality of statistical register can be further improved and its coverage expanded over time by crosschecking and integrating information gathered from business census and other surveys. Gradually, coverage and accuracy of statistical registers can be much higher than these provided only by administrative records.

393. The State Register of Enterprises and Organisations (SREO) was established in 1992 based on the General Classifier of Enterprises and Organisations (OKPO). Since 1 July 2009, according to the Law *On state registration of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs*, the tax authorities are responsible for the registration of all business entities, regardless of their legal forms and economic activities on the principle of a *Single Window* and the former SREO renamed Unified State Register (USR). Information on state registration of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs are transferred on a daily bases to MCC. The latter allocates a statistical identification number within one working day based on the following classifiers:

a) OKPO: national classification of enterprises and establishments;

b) OKATO: national classification of administrative and territorial division;

c) OKOGU: national classification of state government bodies;

d) OKFS: national classification of ownership types;

e) OKOPF: national classification of legal forms;

f) OKVED: national classification of economic kind of activities;

g) KIES: classification of institutional units.

394. Public and State organisations register directly with the MCC. A statistical identification number is assigned according to the same principles as for private business entities.

395. The major strength of the Unified State Register (USR) is that it contains administrative information on all business entities, regardless of their legal forms and economic activities and could constitute a starting point for the development of a comprehensive statistical register. A replication of the register, for statistical purposes, is maintained by the MCC but unfortunately the lack of IT infrastructure and specialists prevent the MCC to further develop the register, to cross-check it with other registers and administrative data (e.g. register of tax payers) and to complement it with statistical information derived from economic censuses, accounting reports and other surveys. In that respect, TAJSTAT is missing an important opportunity to develop a comprehensive and coherent tool for the development of a more integrated and efficient approach of the production process that could benefit all economic statistics and in particular to the national accounts. One should mention nevertheless, that the MCC has started between the two assessment missions (1st half 2012) to complement the Statistical Business Register with unit level information about number of employees and turnover which could be used in the future as weighting scheme for the design of samples, selection of observation units and extrapolation of the data to the universe. So far the statistical business register is not used in sample surveys. Territorial statistical offices extract samples from local administrative registers using an Excel application developed by the MCC.

396. On 1 January 2012, about 160,000 economic entities were registered in the USR, 23,000 legal entities and 137,000 individual entrepreneurs. 30% of all local units have been identified as inactive (dormant) entities.

4.3.3 Classifications and nomenclatures

397. Most of the economic nomenclatures and classifiers used by TAJSTAT are developed by the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT) and are generally consistent with correspondent International classifications and nomenclatures. Beside the classifiers mentioned in chapter 4.3.2, important classifications for the compilation of economic statistics are the following:

a) CPA: Classification of Product by Activity;

b) COICOP: Classification of Individual consumption by Purpose, used for the calculation of the index of consumer prices and the final consumption of household in the framework of the national accounts;

c) COFOG: Classification of the Functions of Government, used for the compilation of the Government Finance Statistics (GFS) and the national accounts;

d) CIS HS: Commercial Nomenclature for Foreign Economic Activity of CIS countries.

398. International nomenclatures are implemented by TAJSTAT with a substantive time lag, which hampers the international comparability of statistical information. An example is the national classification of economic kind of activities (OKVED) that have been recently revised according to the NACE rev1 or ISIC 3 when at international level the correspondent nomenclature has been updated to NACE rev2 or ISIC 4. NACE rev2 has been developed but not introduced for the main reason that the related national product nomenclature based on the Statistical Classification of Products by Activity 2008 (CPA 2008) is still not available.

399. When new nomenclatures are adopted by the CSO, their implementations are neither well-coordinated within TAJSTAT nor with other producers of official statistics (the National Bank and the MoF) and providers of administrative data. This has of course a major impact on the coherence of economic statistics and entails some additional impediments for the compilation of macro-economic statistics such as the Balance of payments and the National Accounts.

4.3.4 Assessment

400. In TAJSTAT, production of economic statistics operates through the various production lines from the data collection at territorial level to the dissemination. Each substantive department has exclusive ownership over the production process of one or more specific statistical products from the data harvesting to the dissemination. The result of this historical development is that data collection methods, sources, and data processing of individual domains have developed independently from each other. A more integrated approach of the production of economic statistics could lead to efficiency gains, reduction of the burden on respondents and consistency of statistical products and services provided by TAJSTAT. A business model allowing the combination of various data sources in order to streamline the production process should gradually replace the model based on *one specific data source* (e.g. reporting system or survey) *feeding exclusively one statistical product*.

401. The Methodology and Classifications Department, in close cooperation with the substantive units and in particular the National Accounts Department, should review all production processes from the data collection to the dissemination. An inventory of all existing and potential data sources (administrative data, statistical reports and surveys) should be undertaken with the objective to identify the best data collection method for each statistical variable, regardless of the final statistical product they belong to.

402. Data already available within the public administration should not be recollected; access to administrative data must have priority versus data collections. The burden on respondents is to be minimized; as a consequence, sample surveys must have priority versus exhaustive data collections. In that respect, the identification of the sample frame, the sample selection and the extrapolation of the results to the total population should be performed by the CSO. The role of territorial statistical offices should be limited to the collection of the data. The unite-level information should be sent to the headquarters, ideally in electronic format, and stored centrally. No aggregation of data should be performed at territorial level.

403. The statistical business register should be improved. All relevant information collected by TAJSTAT through administrative records, Statistical reporting and observations should expand the scope and improve the quality of the register. IT tools should be developed in order to crosscheck information from the statistical register with other administrative registers and data sources. The Statistical business register should be systematically used for sample surveys. The Statistical Business Register is a fundamental tool for the production of integrated economic statistics and should be transferred within the CSO. A specific unit in charge of the Statistical Business Register should be created. All parallel business registers used by TAJSTAT departments and territorial statistical offices should be abolished.

404. The establishment and update of a business register is one of the main purposes of an economic census. In order to better capture small production entities, individual entrepreneurs and the informal economy, the next business census should cover all economic entities, regardless of the legal form and their activities. The Statistical Business Register should be updated and improved using the results of the economic census.

405. In order to preserve the international comparability of official statistics from Tajikistan, updated and revised international nomenclatures and classification should be implemented without delays. To maintain consistency of economic statistics, this implementation should be well coordinated throughout TAJSTAT and with providers of administrative data.

4.4 Agricultural statistics

4.4.1 Main data sources

406. More than 70% of the population of Tajikistan live in rural areas, and agriculture is the only economic activity for many households in such regions. Agriculture contributes 23.8% to the GDP of Tajikistan (2011 (according to the preliminary data)). This is an illustration of the importance of this area in the portfolio of statistical activities. 31 forms of *statistical reporting* are used to collect data on a monthly, semi-annual and annual basis, to which have to be added the *statistical observations* on a sampling basis that are to be found in the annual statistical programme. Some data collections cover only the relevant part of the territory of the Republic (e.g. on cotton).

407. 15 persons are involved in agricultural statistics at headquarters (7 for CSO, 8 in the MCC); each regional statistical office has 5, and each sub-regional office 1 person allocated to agricultural statistics.

408. Coverage and periodicity of data collection depends mainly on the type of farms. There are four types that are relevant from this point of view:

a) Collective state enterprise farms (about 800). They are included as legal entities and covered in monthly, semi-annual and annual data collection on an exhaustive basis. Reports are submitted to the sub-regional statistical offices and follow the same line of production, as is the case for legal entities in other sectors of the economy. In addition, there are a few additional reporting obligations for this category of farms to the ministry of agriculture, to which they are accountable. This data is not used for official statistics;

b) Agricultural activities that take place on state-owned land other than type a (sometimes referred to as *farms with other ministries*). This category is covered only on an annual basis with 12 indicators, by reports received from the ministries that own the land;

c) Over 58000 *dekhan farms*. These are individual entrepreneurs that are registered with the Committee on Land Management. There seem to be some benefits from registering, but on the other hand also some more reporting obligations and probably more controls and auditing compared to category d below. Dekhan farms are completely free in deciding what to produce, and they do not receive any subsidies. They are covered on an exhaustive basis by semi-annual reporting to TAJSTAT, and on a 10% sampling basis in monthly data collections;

d) Approximately 1 million household farms. They are covered, mostly on an annual basis, by involving the local rural communities, the so-called jam oat. These communities are asked to make a selection of household farms from the household book (which has to be kept on the basis of some other non-statistical legislation) in such a way that a certain percentage of cultivated area (sub-divided by area that is irrigated or not) is covered. Data on livestock are taken directly from the household book. However, household farms outside rural communities, e.g. active on a territory that is part of a city or urban type of municipality where no household books exist, are omitted completely. As a replacement, a sample survey of urban households engaged in production of agricultural products (Survey of small holdings in the capitals of the oblasts (regions) and the city of Dushanbe) was conducted only once in 2010.

409. Agricultural statistics is one of the areas of economic statistics where non-exhaustive surveys play an important role in the regular production process for the farm types c) and d) above. The quality of the results depends on the quality of the universe from which the respondents are selected (further analysed in 4.4.2 below), and on the quality and homogeneity of the processing and grossing-up methodologies. For sample surveys addressed to units of the types c) and d), headquarters does not receive the unit-level data. At sub-regional level, aggregated data are shared with the branch office of the ministry of agriculture ahead of the release of the results at national level.

410. In the case of dekhan farms, sub-regional statistical offices are asked to produce the grossed-up results, but without any precise methodological guidelines from CSO other than to stratify between irrigated and non-irrigated areas. Given that dekhan farms are covered on an exhaustive basis semi-annually; benchmark results from the last exhaustive survey are likely to be used by the rayons (sub-regions) in the grossing-up of the sample results to the target universe. The Agency has developed in 2005 special instructions to collect data from the entities subject to complete enumeration (exhaustive survey), as well as for sample survey (households), which includes sampling techniques and grossing up of sample data to the population (universe). Instructions are updated annually in order to take into account changes and additions of indicators in reporting forms. However, to what extent these methods are used in practice in all rayons cannot be assessed from the CSO due to the lack of access to unit level data.

411. The methodological guiding from the CSO about the grossing-up method is better documented in the case of the sample surveys directed at household farms (type d). The responsible person of each jamoat is trained in seminars on how to proceed. However, these persons have to submit to the sub-regional statistical offices the estimated total for the whole jamoat, so that it cannot be seen which household farms were selected and whether the recommended grossing-up method was applied correctly. This matters more in this case, since annual benchmark data on an exhaustive basis from other sources, including the household book does not exist for many indicators.

4.4.2 Farm Registers

412. Farms of the type a) are included in the statistical and public registers of statistical units in a comprehensive way, and in the lists of territorial statistical offices received from various ministries or committees at this level.

413. For the dekhan farms, there are two lists in parallel, as is the case for registered individual entrepreneurs in other economic sectors. The first one is managed centrally by the CSO as part of the state statistical register, but does not contain any variables that would be useful for stratification. The main source is the Committee on Land Management at central level. The other lists are kept by each sub-regional statistical office on the basis of lists received from the territorial branches of the offices of Land Management and of the Tax Committee, and updated by identifying farms that have stopped providing statistical reports (no activity) and with information received from the territorial offices of the ministry of agriculture. These other lists are used in practice for carrying out the exhaustive statistical reporting and selecting the type C units in sample surveys. As variables, they contain the number of persons working on the farm (subdivided into men and women), surface and livestock.

414. No agricultural census has been carried out since independence. This explains why there is no list of household farms (type above), which could be used as sampling frame.

4.4.3 Agricultural Census 2013

415. The first agricultural census is planned to take place in autumn 2013 (an exact date has not yet been fixed). The state budget for 2013 provides for resources for this purpose of the equivalent of 1 million USD. The total cost is estimated at 3.7 million USD; for the difference, donor funds will have to be organised, but they have not been ascertained for the full amount so far. A pilot census took place in October 2012. The legal basis for the agricultural is discussed in 1.2.2.

416. If the necessary funding does not come forth in time, there is risk that the available resources will only cover the cost of data collection, but not that of processing and dissemination. TAJSTAT is determined to carry out the data collection in any case in 2013, for not losing the appropriation in the state budget for 2013 earmarked for the agricultural census. However, if no equipment can be financed for entering data and processing, no results would become available (or only with a considerable time-lag), nor could a central farm register covering all types of farms be set up as soon as possible after the census date. A partial financial support is provided by the German Agency (GIZ), the UN Food and Agriculture program (UN FAO), the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TICA) to procure computers, copiers, multi-functional digital printing machine, program for data entry and producing output tables, and provide training. The issue on provision of mountain regions with vehicles, purchase of furniture and other expenses, remains unresolved.

417. Apart from the issue of financing, the use of the agricultural census as benchmark for a new farm register that contain a number of key variables that would have to be updated regularly has not been given any conceptual consideration in TAJSTAT so far. It is very important to design the data processing phase in such a way that the aggregation for census tables and the use of the unit-level data for the purpose of the statistical farm register can be carried out almost simultaneously. For the purposes of the farm register, names would also have to be entered electronically, which is different to the usual way of entering data from statistical reporting or statistical observations forms. If this part of the processing were to be delayed, or to be carried out only after the processing for census tables, the workload for immediate updating of the unit-level information to adjust for the changes since the census date would increase considerably. Sources for the regular updating of the farm register should be identified in time so as to be able to keep the register up-to-date as well as possible in the inter-census period.

418. An agricultural census will also allow revising backwards some important aggregates, and produce important new results concerning food security. It will also allow better matching with statistics obtained from consumers of agricultural products, i.e. through household surveys such as the household budget survey.

4.4.4 Statistical output

419. The publication and dissemination of agricultural statistics is an important part of the overall publication activity, both at the central and the territorial level. Local governments, and territorial offices of the ministry of agriculture, are eager to receive the results as early as possible, and TAJSTAT manages to have broad range of agricultural statistics on crops, livestock, availability and status of agricultural machinery and equipment, sales of products etc. Where possible, a synthesis of the

various types of farms across different surveys is carried out so as to give to the user a comprehensive picture of agriculture.

4.4.5 Assessment

420. Compared to other sectors of the economy, agriculture is well covered by official statistics. It is especially important to highlight the fact that the most important farm type d), which belongs to the non-observed economy, is systematically included in sample surveys, which is not the case at all for other sectors of the economy. TAJSTAT is encouraged to go further in substituting also part of the annual and semi-annual exhaustive surveys through stratified sample surveys for the dekhan farms, limiting the exhaustive collection on an annual basis to indicators that are used as benchmark statistics for grossing-up the samples. However, sampling and grossing-up should be in future based on clear methodological rules and carried out centrally, using a centrally managed list of dekhan farms, rather than in the present decentralised way without clear methodological guidelines. This makes it very difficult to assess the quality of the overall results that are produced as a synthesis of the four types of farms, and which are also the results used in the GDP calculation concerning agriculture. A central processing will also facilitate documentation (metadata) and quality control.

421. The group of dekhan farms is not a target group that is relevant in terms of results of official statistics; it is an administrative category that is distinguished for purely operational reasons of data collection. Therefore, a statistical register of farms that covers all four types of farms, i.e. the real target universe, has to be set up from which to select units in a sample survey. The setting up of a statistical farm register from scratch is only possible if an agricultural census is carried out that can be used as valid description of the target universe of farms at the time of the census date. Once this is the case, also the most important category of household farms can benefit from a centralised process of designing a sample, selecting the reporting units, and grossing-up from the sample to the universe. Reporting would then take place directly from such farms to sub-regional statistical offices.

422. The plan for an agricultural census to be carried out in 2013, and the subsequent creating and maintenance of a farm register covering all types of farms, is therefore a key component of making agricultural statistics in Tajikistan more accurate, more efficient, and more relevant. If funds cannot be found for ensuring processing for both census results and the setting up of a centralised farm register, the collection should be postponed until the funding will be fully ascertained.

423. The issue of coherence between results released at the central and at the regional/sub-regional level of TAJSTAT, was already mentioned as a possible issue in more general terms in 2.2.3. The risk of discrepancy is higher under the present organisational set-up in agricultural statistics, because of the need of aggregating across the different types of farms. Once the sampling, editing, and grossing-up will be carried out centrally, national and regional results will be produced simultaneously, which should also allow a simultaneous release to all users, including to local governments and other administrations at the regional/sub-regional level.

424. Another important project, helped by international funding, is the introduction of modern IT technology for the keeping of the household books of the jamoats. This will open up new possibilities to collect some agricultural (and other) statistics from this administrative source to a higher extent than today, thus reducing the response burden in statistical surveys. It may also be used as a source for updating the future farm register by type of farms.

425. As in the case of business statistics in other areas, TAJSTAT staff is involved in auditing exercises of three types. As outlined in 1.1.2, the third type of audit that is carried out in conjunction with local offices of the Committee on Land Management and is decided by the government. Whereas the first two types of audits are limited to check accuracy of information in statistical reporting, or to the follow-up of non-response, the third type involves a non-statistical control task that creates a conflict of interest with the fundamental principles of official statistics. Participation of TAJSTAT staff in such types of auditing should therefore be terminated and no new commitments for involvement of TAJSTAT in joint auditing exercises to be accepted.

5. STATISTICAL DOMAINS

5.1 Social and demographic statistics

5.1.1 Demographic statistics

426. Demographic statistics is under the Department of Demography, Employment of the Population and Social Statistics of the CSO. These statistics cover population data (by sex, age and regions); vital register data (records on births, deaths, marriages and divorces) and internal and international migration data (by nationality, sex, region, education level, occupation, etc.).

427. Demographic statistics are collected monthly and submitted 25 days after the reporting period and annually on 26 April. Migration data is collected quarterly and submitted 25 days after the reporting period and annually on 10 March.

428. The data on demographic statistics are published quarterly in the monthly report Socio-economic Situation in Tajikistan and annually in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan* and in the *Demographic Yearbook*. Yearly analytical tables covering life expectancy at birth, infant mortality, birth rate, death rate, fertility rate and population (by rural and urban areas) are posted on TAJSTAT’s website. The population size is estimated quarterly at the national and regional levels and annually by sex and age (by rural and urban areas). Inter-censal estimates are calculated based on the vital register and migration data. It was revealed that prior to calibration using the 2010 Population and Housing Census results; there was under-coverage by 35-40 thousand individuals mainly in the below-10 age group in the vital register. Following the calibration, there is now a break in series but the headquarters is planning to adjust the estimates backwards.

429. Demographic statistics are submitted regularly to the Government, ministries, departments, agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations

and departments of statistics and are used for the development of sectoral and agency programmes in National Development Strategy (NDS), Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The subject matter departments of the CSO in computing indicators also use the data.

Assessment:

430. The vital register needs to be improved in terms of its coverage of births and under-five deaths. The data from the vital register should be complemented by data from sample surveys in order to enhance the reliability.

431. It is recommended to utilize the migration data collected through the Living Standards Survey and the Labour Force Survey in order to verify and/or complement the migration data from administrative sources. An additional way of verifying migration data is to compare immigration and emigration data with receiving and sending countries in order to have better estimates of migration inflows and outflows. The quality of this exercise would certainly depend on the quality of the migration statistics of the countries concerned and on the use of comparable definitions/methodologies by all parties.

5.1.2 Living standards statistics

432. The data for living standards statistics is collected through the quarterly Household Budget Survey (HBS) and the Living Standards Surveys (LStS) (conducted in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2009). HBS collects detailed data on calorie intake and the consumption of food per capita. Since 2009, HBS data is collected quarterly and submitted 50 days after the reporting period. LStS collects data on a wide range of issues including household income and consumption, migration, education, labour market and food security. TAJSTAT has plans to conduct the LStS every three years. Alternatively, both HBS and LStS could be included in an Integrated Household Survey, which was experimented in 2009.

433. Budget and poverty statistics are published in the Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan, a compilation of *Key Indicators on Household Budget Survey*, a quarterly newsletter, *Food Security and Poverty in the Republic of Tajikistan* and other statistical publications. The data are also available on the TAJSTAT website.

434. The living standards data is submitted to the Government, ministries, departments, agencies, international organizations, and are used in NDS, PRS and various economic and statistical calculations, e.g. the calculation of gross domestic product and its distribution, the calculation of real income, the balance of production and use of agricultural products, and the cost of living index (consumer price index for goods and services).

Assessment:

435. To date there have been four Living Standard Surveys held in Tajikistan with support from the World Bank (and UNICEF in 2007). The collection of data on living standards is not yet regular, although TAJSTAT aims to administer this survey every three years depending on the availability of funding. Collection of such

data has to be incorporated in the on-going survey programme of TAJSTAT. An alternative is the establishment of a programme of Integrated Household Surveys in collaboration with the World Bank. Such a programme would combine HBS and LStS and possibly cover other specialized topics.

436. In terms of the analysis of data, although experts have computed poverty lines, the methodology for the consumer basket and the national poverty line is not widely available. It is recommended that the details of the poverty line and other poverty measures be disseminated with sufficient metadata and that sub-national poverty lines be elaborated in order to assess better the living conditions in the different regions of the country. In addition, inequality measures are currently not available in Tajikistan. These measures are essential for enhancing the poverty profile for the country and to provide inputs for policymakers.

437. The LStS is a rich source of information covering a range of issues such as migration, education, health and employment. In the discussion regarding these statistical domains, LStS was not cited as a source of data. It is recommended that the results of this survey be used for verification and enhancing other data sources in the relevant domains.

5.1.3 Labour market statistics

438. The verification and publication of labour market data is the responsibility of the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The components of labour market data and the providers are as follows:

a) Data on the number of registered unemployed, ecological migration, and on voluntary migration (Employment Service from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare);

b) Data on labour migration (Migration Service under the Government);

c) Information about refugees (Ministry of Internal Affairs);

d) Data on initial vocational institutions (Ministry of Education);

e) Data on complete enumeration of all enterprises and organizations (legal entities) irrespective of ownership;

f) Labour Force Surveys 2004 and 2009.

439. Labour market data when collected monthly is submitted 12-31 days after the reporting period. The quarterly data is submitted 35 days after the reporting period, and annually on 25 March. There are 12 statistical reporting forms used for collecting labour market data (1 monthly, 2 quarterly, 9 annual). The reported data provide information on the number of wage and salary workers by category of staff, hours worked, administrative leave, movement of labour and job creation.

440. Currently the regular unemployment estimates cover only the registered unemployed persons and the employed persons refer to those who are employed in legal entities. The primary statistical reporting forms are the forms submitted by enterprises and

organizations, regardless of business size and ownership form. The data on part of the self-employed (from the State Committee on Land Management and Geodesy for dekhan farms (individual persons)) is available through the statistical reporting forms. The data on private entrepreneurs (natural persons or legal entities) come from tax authorities. In-kind income data is collected once a year. Gross wages reported by enterprises are published on a cumulative basis.

441. The Population and Housing Census and household sample surveys give a more holistic view of the employed population, as they are not restricted to formal paid employees in formal sector enterprises. For instance, the 2009 Labour Force Survey included questions on informal employment as well. The level of unemployment computed using LFS data in 2009 was five times the number of registered unemployed persons.

442. Data on employment and unemployment are published in the monthly report *Socio-economic Situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, yearly in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan*, and in the annual collection of labour market and other statistical compilations. Data is also made available on the website.

443. The data on employment and unemployment are submitted to the Government, ministries, departments, agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, departments of statistics and are used for the development of sectoral and agency programmes, in the NDS, the PRS and the MDGs. The data is also used by the subject matter departments of the CSO for the calculation of sectoral indicators (in particular for national accounts).

***Assessment*:**

444. Reliable employment and unemployment indicators covering all status in employment and both formal and informal employment can be computed only using data collected through sample household surveys. It is essential for Tajikistan to have the Labour Force Surveys incorporated in the regular survey programme. In the absence of adequate resources, a second best solution may be to have a regular and detailed labour and employment module as part of Integrated Household Surveys.

445. Currently, all data on wages and salaries come from the administrative records compiled through statistical reporting forms. This means that income from informal employment is not regularly covered in the labour market statistics of Tajikistan. Information on income from employment (which gives the employed person's perspective as opposed to wage inquiries focusing on the compensation of employees) can be collected through household surveys; labour force surveys being the preferred data collection tool. Reliable data sources on wages and income from employment are also necessary in order to compute key economic statistics, e.g. national account indicators.

446. All Living Standards Surveys had a module on labour market or employment. The survey questionnaires, although with differences, approximate the ILO definition for the economically active and inactive populations and their components. In the 2007 and the 2009 LStS, there were also questions regarding informal employment. The data collected through the LStS should be crosschecked and compared with the

results from the LFS to the extent methodologies permit, as they provide more data points.

5.1.4 Education statistics

447. The responsibility for producing and disseminating education statistics is shared between the Ministry of Education and TAJSTAT. The Ministry of Education has recently introduced the Education Management Information System (EMIS), supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), covering data collection and processing on general education institutions only. The Ministry of Education collects the education data on preschool, general and special education institutions (for children with disabilities), including private educational institutions using reporting forms that are checked and approved by TAJSTAT. The latter collects data on secondary and higher vocational education and on post-graduate education. The MCC is in charge of data verification and aggregation and TAJSTAT publishes the data annually. Since 2010, the Ministry of Education has been publishing their data tables with some descriptive text.

448. The data published by TAJSTAT covers the number of students, boarding schools, as well as schools for children with disabilities (by age, sex and class), the number of teachers by gender, students passing to the next level of education, repeaters, information on logistical support to school, the contingent of students in primary, secondary and higher vocational education. The indicators are disaggregated by sex, age and region. In addition to publishing the level data by type of institution and enrolment at different levels of education, TAJSTAT calculates and publishes a variety of indicators: enrolment/coverage ratio by level of education, gender parity index, indices of enrolment/admission, contingent and graduation of students by level of education in relation to the population. The data provided in the publications refers to the last five years and is disseminated annually in the second quarter of the year. The Ministry of Education, on the other hand, publishes their data in August-September.

449. The annual analytical report on education statistics is released by TAJSTAT three months after the reporting period. Education data are published annually in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan*, *Education in the Republic of Tajikistan and in Women and Men in the Republic of Tajikistan*. The data is available on the website and in other publications of TAJSTAT. The main users of statistics are the Government, ministries, agencies, international organizations, including the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS-STAT) as well as the general public. Education data is also used for assessing labour supply in Tajikistan.

***Assessment*:**

450. Currently, there is a need to review and revise the statistical reporting forms, given the programme to reform the system of primary vocational education, in order to increase the relevance of indicators and to enhance compliance with international standards. There is also a need to improve the application of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) for comparability with other countries and to improve the quality of statistical information. Qualitative data on children

with disabilities at all levels of education, as well as reliable data on children without parental care is needed.

451. TAJSTAT has been producing education statistics for a long period of time and in general they are more detailed than those published by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education with support from the ADB has become more active in education data collection and dissemination, which may create a risk of duplication of work or even contradictions in the data published by TAJSTAT and the Ministry of Education. Ideally, the data should be collected and published by TAJSTAT based on the administrative and/or other data sources compiled by the Ministry of Education and by any other relevant institutions. This is essential to ensure the coherence of time series and international comparability.

452. Living Standards Surveys in Tajikistan are an additional source of education data, as they all had a specific module on education covering, for instance, questions on education level as well as private spending on education. This information should be used to complement and verify education data collected through the statistical reporting forms.

5.1.5 Public health statistics

453. The agency responsible for the collection of public health data is the Republican Centre of Health Statistics and Information of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Centre collects about two thirds of the data whereas the Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides the remaining one third, mainly on population, birth, causes of general death and hospital death. Hospital deaths are recorded in the hospital and in the vital register. The CSO also collects information on road accidents from the State Traffic Inspectorate or the Ministry of Internal Affairs (if the accident qualifies as crime) and on cases of poisoning.

454. Data on public expenditure on health is only available from the state budget. It is possible to obtain information on the private clinics and/or private doctors based on their annual reporting.

455. Data on private expenditure on health was collected through the Living Standards Surveys. Other ad-hoc specialized surveys that provide health data are the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) (2000 and 2005), Infant and Child Mortality Survey (2010) and the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS 2012). The Centre publishes monthly reports on the incidence of infectious and parasitic diseases. The CSO publishes health data in its monthly report on *Socio-Economic Situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, while the Centre publishes the *Statistical Yearbook Public Health and Healthcare in the Republic of Tajikistan* on an annual basis. There is also health-related information in TAJSTAT's *Women and Men in the Republic of Tajikistan*, in the *Statistical Yearbook* and in *Healthcare in the Republic of Tajikistan*. The data are used for the development of sectoral and agency programmes, in the NDS, the PRS and the MDGs.

***Assessment*:**

456. Similar to the case of education statistics, publication of health data by the Republican Centre and by TAJSTAT can cause duplication of work and/or

inconsistencies in the data provided. It is important to have consolidated national figures compiled according to the international standards in order to ensure international comparability and coherent time series.

457. The regular conduct of household sample surveys is extremely important to ensure availability of health data. This is especially the case when it comes to assessing health status and health-related practices of the population, access to healthcare and private expenditure on healthcare. In all previous LStS rounds a module on health was included covering such issues. The LStS data collected to date should be fully utilized in order compute the required indicators and complement health data from other sources.

5.1.6 Social protection statistics

458. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is responsible for collecting social protection data on a quarterly and annual basis, which is then processed and disseminated by TAJSTAT quarterly and annually. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection uses different reporting forms for boarding houses, retirement homes, etc.

459. Social protection data covers population receiving government-guaranteed pensions, allowances, benefits and services of social protection (e.g. nursing homes for the elderly and children with disabilities, social services provided at home, etc.). There are five types of benefits in Tajikistan: unemployment benefit (for which data is collected through the labour reporting form), pensions, funeral, benefits for children whose mothers work, pregnancy, maternity, child care, and needs-based compensation to families with children aged 7-15. The data on social insurance is available only at the national level. The remaining data is available on regions of the republic disaggregated by the kind of pension (for old age, invalidity, loss of breadwinner and for those who have never worked).

460. Social protection data are published annually in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan* and in *Women and Men in the Republic of Tajikistan*, *Tajikistan in Figures*, the *Regional Yearbook*, and in the *Bulletin on Food Security and Poverty in the Republic of Tajikistan*. The data is available on the website and in other publications of TAJSTAT as well.

461. The data are submitted to the Government, ministries, departments, agencies, international organizations, including CIS-STAT. Social protection statistics are used for the development of sectoral and agency programmes, in the NDS, the PRS and the MDGs.

***Assessment*:**

462. As in the case of other social statistics, the Living Standards Survey is an important source of information that is underutilized for obtaining social protection information in Tajikistan. In the module on transfers and social assistance, questions on access to social assistance and the actual disbursements are covered. In analysing these results, sub-national disaggregation of social protection indicators would be useful for more targeted policymaking.

463. In Tajikistan, social statistics seem to be generally underused in informing other statistical domains, such as government finance statistics. For instance, social protection data is directly linked to the government expenditures on different social benefits and would constitute an important input for government finance statistics.

5.2 Macroeconomic statistics

5.2.1 National accounts

464. The National Accounts Division of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) compiles the national accounts of the Republic of Tajikistan. 7 staff members (5 at the time of the Global Assessment) are working for the national accounts, none of them in the MCC or in the territorial offices. With the support of the UNECE, TAJSTAT is in the process to plan the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA); though, the previous system of 1993 (SNA 93) is still not fully implemented. TAJSTAT is compiling annual national accounts and monthly GDP estimates at current and constant prices based on the cumulative method. Monthly GDP are produced for the exclusive use of the government and are not published. TAJSTAT, with the support of the IMF, is working on the development of quarterly discrete GDP estimates at current and constant prices. Compilation of quarterly GDP is still at initial phase and figures published so far refer to annual data subdivided into 4 quarters. It is planned in the medium term to stop with the compilation of monthly GDP and to publish quarterly data instead at national and regional level.

465. Supply-Use Tables (SUTs) were compiled once, on an experimental base, in 2008 and only at current prices. There was a significant discrepancy between the supply and the use sides, which casts serious doubt on the quality of basic statistical information used for the compilation of national accounts and on final GDP estimates. SUTs at constant prices have not been established so far. It has to be mentioned that the quality of the quarterly Household Budget Survey, does not allow TAJSTAT to estimate monthly and quarterly GDP from the expenditure side and therefore infra-annual national accounts are compiled only from one side: the production side. This probably also explains why discrepancies are so important between use and supply in the SUT. Another issue is that the estimation of the non-observed economy, which according to some independent assessments could amount for 30% of the GDP, is still not solved. The fact that the Labour Force Survey (LFS) was conducted only in 2004 and 2009 does not allow TAJSTAT to use information on non-registered labour to adapt total employment figures, related revenues and expenditures. It is nevertheless important to mention that for agriculture regular surveys are conducted and provide a rather good coverage of better of small producers and the informal sector.

466. For annual national accounts, TAJSTAT has reach milestone 4 of the SNA 93 as defined by the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts. Mainly GDP, Gross National Income (GNI), and institutional sectors accounts up to the capital accounts are compiled and published. Financial accounts, other changes in assets accounts and balance sheets are not compiled (milestones 5 and 6).

467. Major primary data sources for the calculation of GDP are as follows:

a) Sectoral production statistics based on monthly, quarterly and annual enterprise reports and surveys: covering production, intermediary consumption, taxes, subsidies and inventories;

b) Banking statistics from the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan;

c) Labour statistics based on monthly and quarterly labour reports: covering number of employees and wages;

d) Finance statistics based on statistical reports on financial statements of enterprises which cover all activities regardless of the legal forms of the economic entities with some exceptions for individual entrepreneur in domestic trade, transport and construction;

e) Household budget survey including the annual survey on purchase of transport, medical, cultural, educational and public services and a student survey for educational expenditure;

f) Balance of Payments statistics (BoP) from the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan (see chapter 5.2.4);

g) Government Finance Statistics (GFS) from the Ministry of Finance (see chapter 5.2.3).

468. Unfortunately, most sources on government and enterprise transactions are recorded on a cash basis and major infra-annual primary statistics are compiled on cumulative basis. Definitions and nomenclatures of major data sources are broadly consistent with the requirements of national accounts but some collected data from enterprises report and administrative sources are still based on obsolete national nomenclatures that are not harmonised with current international standards. Furthermore, most of the sub-annual statistical information used for the compilation of the quarterly GDP is cumulative, which creates a major problem for the production of discrete quarterly national accounts.

469. National accounts are compiled using Excel tables. Monthly and quarterly GDP estimations are revised based on the annual national accounts figures. Monthly GDP estimates are published 8-10 days after the reporting month and quarterly accounts 40 days after the reporting period. Preliminary annual accounts figures are made available 3 months after the end of the reference year and revised after 12 months. Final annual national accounts, including sector accounts, are published 15 months after the reference year. Preliminary and revised data are identified in publications through footnotes on the Internet however the status of the data is not clearly indicated.

470. Quarterly GDP figures are published in TAJSTAT monthly reports and uploaded on the website. Annual accounts are presented in the statistical publication *System of National Accounts* and in the *Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan* and *Tajikistan in Figures*. These publications are not available on the website but the following information could be found on the electronic databases: annual GDP figures at current prices, up to 2011 and quarterly GDP figures at constant and current prices,

up to 2010. Quarterly GDP is not available at constant prices and is only compiled on cumulative basis.

Assessment:

471. In Tajikistan, the quality of national accounts would benefit from a more integrated production of economic statistics. The fact that each basic economic statistics is established from standalone data sources in each department of TAJSTAT separately hampers the quality of national accounts figures. Enhancing coverage and consistency of basic economic statistics produced in TAJSTAT is a prerequisite for the improvement of the national accounts.

472. In order to improve the quality of national accounts data, TAJSTAT should compile annual Supply-Use tables (SUT) at currant and constant prices. Final annual national accounts, including sector accounts, published 15 months after the reference year, should be systematically build on balanced SUT. Quarterly accounts at current as well as at constant prices should rely on the production and expenditure sides.

473. TAJSTAT should work further on the estimation of the non-observed economy. TAJSTAT is currently implementing the modular approach developed by Eurostat and other techniques recommended by international organisations. In that respect, the statistical business register should be improved. All relevant information collected by TAJSTAT through administrative records, statistical reports and surveys should expand the scope and improve the quality of the register. In order to better capture small production entities, individual entrepreneurs and the informal economy, the next business census should cover all economic entities, regardless of the legal form and their activities. The statistical business register should be updated and improved using the results of the economic census.

474. Another issue related to the coverage of the informal economy is the lack of statistical information on wages and salaries collected directly through household surveys. This would allow the National Accounts division to confront these data with information obtained from the report on labour submitted by enterprises. In general, quality, reliability and coverage of national accounts could only benefit from a more extensive use of statistical data collected from integrated household budget and labour force surveys.

475. In order to improve the international comparability and the consistency of national accounts data, revised international nomenclatures and classifications should be implemented for all basic economic statistics without delays. Furthermore, economic statistics should be compiled according to the accrual principle and on a discrete basis. These improvements should be well coordinated throughout the National Statistical System, and with providers of administrative data.

476. It is proposed to establish an inter-departmental working group under the Statistical Council, in charge of the implementation of the SNA 2008 and methodological revision of related economic statistics. Economic and business statistics departments in TAJSTAT, the structural unit in charge of the GFS in the Ministry of Finance and the department in charge of the compilation of the BoP in the National Bank should be invited to participate in the work of this group under the coordination of the National Accounts Department.

477. In parallel with the implementation of the 2008 SNA, TAJSTAT should improve its calculation of financial services and transactions, and work on the compilation of financial accounts by institutional sectors (milestone 5). It is also suggested to gradually publish discrete quarterly accounts data based on international sound methodology. If it is necessary to continue with the estimation of monthly GDP and to develop regional quarterly accounts is left to the discretion of TAJSTAT. Nevertheless, this should not hamper the accuracy, timeliness and punctuality of annual and quarterly national accounts data. The compilation of regional annual accounts could be sufficient for economic policy purposes and in any case, if monthly GDP estimates continue to be calculated, they should be published on the TAJSTAT website as official statistics. Furthermore, the concept of accrual basis recording should be generalised and TAJSTAT should continue to work on estimations of discrete (non-cumulative) seasonally adjusted aggregates at constant prices according to international methodology.

5.2.2 External trade statistics

478. The External Trade Statistics (ETS) is compiled by the Department of Trade and Services Statistics at the CSO according to the methodological provisions of the *Statistical Commission of the United Nations International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions*, UN, New York, 2000. TAJSTAT is gradually implementing the 2010 version of the manual developed by the United Nations. This revision was required by major changes in related statistical framework like the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA 2008) and the 6th Edition of the IMF’s Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual (BPM6).

479. The compilation of the ETS is largely based on administrative data (see also chapter 1.3.2 on the Customs Code of the Republic of Tajikistan). Data sources are the customs declarations that are processed and aggregated by the State Customs Service. The latter send, 10 days after the end of the month, value and volume data at the 2nd digit level of the 2003 Commercial Nomenclature for Foreign Economic Activity of CIS countries (CIS HS) to the CSO. This information is complemented with statistical reports from enterprises and in particular from TajikGas on import of and gas by pipeline and from electricity companies for exports and imports of electricity. According to the international methodology, imports are valued at CIF prices and imports at FOB prices. Estimates on non-declared imports and exports (e.g. smuggling) are not included in the ETS compiled by TAJSTAT.

480. ETS statistics are compiled monthly, quarterly and annually and disseminated within 12 days after the end of the reference period in 1,000 US dollars on a cumulative basis. This means that TAJSTAT disseminates the ETS already 2 days after the transmission of the data from the Customs Service.

481. The Trade Statistics Division at the CSO also conducted a one-off survey to assess the share of insurance and freight values in imports of goods by commodity and transport mean. This information allows to value imports at FOB prices and is used by the National Bank of Republic of Tajikistan for the compilation of the Balance of Payments.

482. In order to assess the quality of ETS, the CSO conducts on an ad-hoc basis international data comparisons for major trading partners of the Republic of

Tajikistan. It is common and somehow expected that mirror exercises reveal asymmetries in recorded flows of goods between partner countries. In ETS, differences between *mirror* figures can be generated by the application of the international methodology itself. The latter specifies for example that exports should be valued in FOB (‘free on board’) terms, whereas imports should be expressed in CIF (‘cost, insurance and freight’) value. Other sources of asymmetries are due to differences in the methodologies adopted by the partner countries. Nevertheless, for exports as well as for imports, asymmetries with major partner-countries are in some cases important, and in particular with China, but rather small with CIS partner countries. It is difficult for TAJSTAT to analyse the reasons of these discrepancies since these exercises are mostly conducted unilaterally, without the participation of statistical agencies or customs services from the partner countries.

483. ETS data are published in the TAJSTAT monthly report *Socio-economic Situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, in separate thematic reports on exports and imports of agricultural products and cotton fibre, and in the annual publication *Foreign Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan*. These publications are available electronically upon request and aggregated data are available from the databases uploaded on TAJSTAT website. Statistical data are forwarded monthly to Eurostat and CIS-STAT, and annually to the UN Statistical Division.

Assessment:

484. It is recommended to conclude the implementation of ETS according to the 2010 International Merchandise Trade Statistics concepts and definitions developed by the United Nations and to harmonise national nomenclatures with the latest version of the international classifications.

485. Disaggregated data, in particular by countries and commodities, should be made available to all users on TAJSTAT’s website.

486. The cooperation with the State Customs Service should be further developed and data at a lower level of the HS sent to the CSO for processing and further quality check with information collected from business reports and other statistical sources. Furthermore, a method for the estimation of non-observed international trade in goods should be developed jointly with the National Bank. The Household Budget Survey could be a valuable source for this exercise.

487. On a regular basis, external trade mirror exercises should be conducted with major partners; if necessary, corrective measures, jointly with the Customs Service, should be implemented in order to gradually reduce the gaps.

488. External trade statistics and related volume and price indices should be available on a discrete basis and compared to data/indices from the previous month and the same month of the previous year. Seasonally adjusted data should be compiled and disseminated.

5.2.3 Government Finance Statistics (GFS)

489. The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is responsible for the compilation of the government finance statistics (GFS). 4 experts in a specific unit within the Department of State

and Republican budget are dealing with the GFS. The GFS are compiled under the general provisions of the Law on Public Finance №723 (September 28, 2011) and annual state budget laws and grant the MoF the right to collect data from other agencies to compile GFS. These laws and resolutions do not mention specifically the Law on State Statistics (LSS).

490. The MoF provides the GFS data to TAJSTAT for publication and for compilation of the national accounts. TAJSTAT determines the format and degree of detail of the GFS data disseminated through its publications, but it may not change the data. Footnotes in TAJSTAT publications mention that the MoF provides the GFS data. In some cases, after a routine quality check, TAJSTAT take contact with the unit in charge of the compilation of the GFS in the MoF to discuss some outliers or inconsistency that have been identified. In parallel, the MoF also disseminates data on GFS including expenditure data on health and education that are not made available to TAJSTAT and provides on request detailed GFS information to individual users.

491. Compilation of the GFS for Tajikistan is broadly consistent with the recommendations of the 1986 Manual on Government Finance Statistics (GFSM 1986). There is a project supported by the World Bank to migrate to the methodology provided by the 2001 Manual on Government Finance Statistics (GFSM 2001) by 2013. Currently, the main issue is the implementation of a Unified Chart of Accounts (UCOA) into a unified automated treasury system for all general government units that could lead to some additional delay in the implementation of the GFSM 2001 and the 2008 SNA.

492. The general government sector in Tajikistan comprises the republican (central) budget, local budgets, and a social security fund (the Social Protection Fund-SPF). *Special funds* of budget agencies, which are controlled by Ministry of Finance are subaccounts of the single treasury account but are not included in the budget process and therefore detailed information not available in the GFS.

493. Economic flows are recorded on a cash basis, in accordance with GFSM 1986 but not with the GFSM 2001 and the 2008 SNA. All receipts and payments (covering revenue, expenditure, lending minus repayments, and financing) are recorded when reported as being credited (revenue, borrowing) or debited (expenditure, lending, amortization) to the single treasury account in the central bank, or, in the case of the SPF, its account in the National Savings Bank. Changes in the single treasury account in the central bank are reported daily.

494. Central and general government transaction aggregates are disseminated monthly, quarterly, and annually. However, the monthly and quarterly data are cumulative, rather than discrete. Central and general government debt statistics are not disseminated in detail or on a regular basis. Cumulative monthly GFS are published in TAJSTAT monthly bulletin *Socio-economic Situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, usually about 40 days after the reference period. Annual (cumulative monthly) central and general government preliminary data are disseminated within two months after the end of the reference period. The MoF also disseminates GFS directly through the press, and provides detailed GFS to individual users upon request. The government has internal access to statistics prior to their release to the public, but no information concerning this access is made public. Central and

general government debt statistics are not disseminated in detail or on a regular basis.

Assessment:

495. It is recommended that the MoF takes all appropriate measures in order to implement the Unified Chart of Accounts and collect government finance data according to the recommendations of the 2001 GFSM. The delineation of the general government (sectorisation), classifications and in particular the COFOG, and the scope and coverage of the data should be consistent with internationally agreed definitions and methodology provided by the latest editions of the Balance of Payment Manual and the System of National Accounts. Any further delay in the implementation of the 2001 GFSM would jeopardise the efforts from TAJSTAT to migrate to the 2008 SNA. In the future, detailed long time series of discrete GFS data should be made available to all users, ideally complemented by seasonally adjusted time series.

496. Alongside with these methodological considerations, it has to be mentioned that for the GFS it is not clear who is the official provider of the statistics. The GFS are compiled by the MoF and sent to TAJSTAT mainly for routine consistency check and publication. TAJSTAT and the MoF publish information more or less simultaneously, and users can get additional detailed information, which is not made available to TAJSTAT, directly from the MoF. It is not an internationally agreed practice for a producer of official statistics to mention in a footnote who is the provider and ultimately the responsible organisation for the data published. The way data is collected, processed and disseminated is of the responsibility of the producer of official statistics and should be mentioned in the metadata. In any case the production and dissemination of the GFS should comply with the provisions of the LSS and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. In general no access to the data should be granted prior to official release. If such a practice exists, the list of the users having access to the information prior official release should be made public.

5.2.4 Balance of payments

497. Further to paragraph 9 of the Statement on the Agency on Statistics (SAS Decree № 862 from 22 April 2010) stating that TAJSTAT jointly with the National Bank of Tajikistan compiles the balance of payments, based on data received from ministries, agencies and other bodies, art. 6 of the Law on the National Bank (LNBRT) of Tajikistan (№ 722, 2011), assigns the responsibility for compiling the Balance of Payments statistics (BoP) of the Republic of Tajikistan to the National Bank (NBRT). Thus, the structural unit at the NBRT in charge of the production of the BoP is to be considered as a producer of official statistics (see chapter 1.3.1 on the LNBRT).

498. The Balance of Payments Statistics Unit (BOPSU) of the NBRT has compiled the BoP since January 1997. The NBRT is responsible for establishing the statistical methodology, reporting forms, data collection, verification, processing, compilation, and dissemination of balance of payments data. 15 staff members are working at the BOPSU. To promote data sharing and coordination among institutions and agencies

that contribute to the production of the BoP, the Interagency Commission for Coordinating Balance of Payments, Preparation and Compilation has been established. The Commission is chaired by the NBRT and includes representatives from TAJSTAT, the MoF, the External Aid Coordination Centre, the Customs Service, the Ministry of Economy and Trade, and the Head of the Foreign Exchange Control Unit.

499. The BoP is compiled from a large number of statistical information provided by TAJSTAT, data collected through the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) and other sources of administrative information.

500. The ITRS is the primary data collection system used for compiling balance of payments statistics. It is based on detailed monthly transactions reported following the standard components of the BPM5 both in national currency and U.S. dollars. Introduced in 1999, the ITRS covers reporting from 13 operating financial institutions in application of the Law on Currency Regulation. ITRS data is mostly used to record current account data in the categories of services, income, and nongovernmental transfers. In the financial account, ITRS data is used to identify portfolio and other investment.

501. TAJSTAT is also a major provider of statistical information for the compilation of the BoP. The results of at least 10 different reporting forms and surveys pertaining to the activity of enterprises and individuals engaged in transactions with non-resident entities are conducted by TAJSTAT. Statistical information is then provided to the NBRT in aggregated format on foreign direct investments, transportation services, foreign visitors in Tajikistan, humanitarian aid, foreign currency circulation, communication services, construction services, joint-venture enterprises, enterprise debt and migrant workers. Furthermore, TAJSTAT provides the NBRT with the external trade statistics (exports and imports of goods and services). Imports are then converted into FOB prices by the NBRT, which also estimates non-recorded imports and exports of goods (shuttle trade and smuggling).

502. Among the administrative data sources, the MOF contributes with data on government external debt, position in IMF borrowings, and government income and expenses with non-resident entities. Other departments of the NBRT provide information for the calculation of international reserves and foreign currency liquidity for the monetary authorities and government. They also provide balance statements in foreign currency for the NBRT and all licensed commercial banks.

503. The overall concepts, definitions, classification and scope of the BoP are broadly in line with the provisions of the fifth edition of the IMF Balance of Payments Manual (BPM5). In some cases, nevertheless, the guidelines of the BPM5 are not strictly followed:

a) If TAJSTAT is strictly following the concept of residence as mentioned in the BPM5 and SNA93, data reported directly from financial institutions to the NBRT follows the concept of ownership. Thus, resident entities are considered to be all legal entities having their headquarters in Tajikistan including their branches and representation offices established abroad;

b) Salaries from Tajik workers who commute seasonally between Tajikistan and neighbouring countries are not recorded. For Tajik workers resident abroad, only remittances transiting through the international banking system are recorded. This is definitely an issue, since it is estimated that remittances account for up to 50% of GDP;

c) Whereas the BPM5 and the SNA93 classify public enterprises and general government in two different sectors, data from the MoF about debt of general government and debt of public enterprises are not classified distinctly;

d) In general data are recorded according to the accrual principle but some information from the MoF (Government Finance Statistics) and reports from financial institutions are following the cash principle.

504. Complete balance of payments statistics is disseminated quarterly. The NBRT releases data four months after the end of the reference quarter. Quarterly publication may include revisions but the NBRT does not release advance notice of revisions in its quarterly publications and does not implement a regular cycle of revisions. Studies and analyses of revisions are limited to internal users and used as working documents reserved to balance of payments compilers. The result of studies may be shared with TAJSTAT and with NBRT authorities when there is a need to seek external support or a complementary view on the appropriate action that they entail. It seems that preliminary data is sent to a limited number of users inside the NBRT and among the government but a list of those who are entitled to receive preliminary data is not accessible to the public.

505. Tables, charts, accompany the quarterly data presenting the balance of payments and additional breakdowns are published in the quarterly publication *The Balance of Payments of the Republic of Tajikistan* and *NBRT News*. BoP statistics are uploaded on the website of the NBRT and can be downloaded on Excel spread sheets. No metadata is made available to the public. At the occasion of the publication of the annual balance of payments statistics, the comments supporting tables provide some methodological information explaining the definitions and classifications used by balance of payments compilers.

Assessment:

506. Data on the balance of payments and international investment position is compiled and disseminated on a quarterly basis following the methodology recommended in the BPM5. However, deficiencies remain with respect to data on remittances, trade, services, and foreign direct investment. While progress has been made in several areas, further improvements are needed in the international transactions reporting system, data sampling methods and data validation. The National Bank should further cooperate with TAJSTAT in order to enhance consistency, accuracy and coverage of major economic statistics. According to some studies, remittances could amount 20% of the GDP of Tajikistan and therefore the NBRT and TAJSTAT should urgently explore the possibility to use more extensively information provided by the Household Budget Survey for the estimation of this important sources of revenue (see also assessment of chapter 5.2.1 on National accounts).

507. Since expenditures from non-resident units in Tajikistan and resident units abroad is an important component of the BoP, the NBRT should support TAJSTAT in its efforts to develop comprehensive tourism statistics according to international recommendations and good practices.

508. Gradually, all data sets for the compilation of the BoP should be available on discrete basis and according to the accrual principle. The concept of residence should be consistent throughout all economic statistics and follow the BPM and SNA principles.

509. The estimation method for *non-recorded* external trade should be shared between the NBRT and TAJSTAT; they should co-develop a replicable and documented methodology. Ideally, the imputation of non-observed trade in the ETS should be done by TAJSTAT and published.

510. It is crucial that in the framework of the implementation of the 6th edition of the IMF Balance of Payments Manual (BPM6) and the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA), the NBRT and TAJSTAT work in a coordinated way. It is important for users to get at the same time the new data series for these two important macro-economic statistics. Explanatory notes on the main conceptual changes for the BPM6 and the 2008 SNA could be published jointly by the two partner organisations on their respective websites.

511. Seasonal adjusted series of the balance of payments statistics should be produced and disseminated.

5.2.5 Price statistics

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

512. Six employees in CSO work with price statistics (CPI/PPI/PPP), four in MCC, and three at sub-regional and one on regional level.

513. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is compiled by Department of Prices and Tariffs in TAJSTAT in accordance with COICOP, ISIC3/NACE rev 1 and the ILOs methodology. The transfer to ILOs recommendation is recent (2008).

514. Price information is collected from cities and regions with more than 50,000 inhabitants for the sub-regions with oblast subordination. There are no prices collected from the sub-regions with direct republican subordination. Prices are collected on a monthly basis from 600 retailers, and include 1,600 products and services divided by food, non-food and services. This list is revised annually, taking into account new and outdated commodities. Of the 1600 products and services, 369 are chosen for the main list, which are used for calculating CPI. The three highest and the three lowest observations in each price group in each rayon are cut. Weights on which products and services are most used are calculated from household surveys, and these weights are used to decide which products/services are included in the main list. If a product included in the main list become permanently unavailable, a similar product from the larger list replaces it. The main list is decided on central level. Seasonal items are only collected in season, during off-season the

product are either dropped or carried forward. There is no data collection in rayons (sub-region) with republic subordination.

515. The regional statistical offices collect prices. The weights of the CPI are calculated from expenditure data from the annual household survey (2010 household survey data used to weigh 2012 CPI), and changed annually. The territorial statistical offices calculate weighted arithmetic mean, and these aggregates are sent to MCC. MCC gather the different aggregated reports, and send them to CSO.

516. National and oblast (regional) data on CPI is disseminated on the 12th the following month. CPI is disseminated on a cumulative level, using a chain method, which is a CIS standard. December one year before counting year (December 2010 for 2012) is always the reference month. Some metadata is disseminated on the website, especially on data collection.

Producer Price Index (PPI)

517. The Producer Price Index (PPI) is compiled by the Department of Prices and Tariffs in CSO in accordance with COICOP and NACE rev 1/ISIC3.

518. PPI is collected for over 200 products from 370 enterprises within 25 activities. The statistical unit is enterprise, not product. The enterprises are selected by type of main activity, identified by the enterprise based on volume and cost of monthly production of goods. The products are chosen according to share of that activity within the enterprise. Changes in price are calculated for each observation. The weights are calculated by Division of Industrial statistics in TAJSTAT based on annual production. The PPI is collected in all sub-regions (rayons).

519. Prices are collected on the lowest level (usually rayon), and aggregates are delivered to MCC, who then send the collected aggregates to the central office. PPI is calculated and disseminated at republican level at cumulative level. There are plans to calculate and disseminate on oblast level.

Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)

520. Tajikistan is part of the ICP programme, and Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is calculated every five years. It is not calculated by TAJSTAT, but by a special group for CIS countries. TAJSTAT’s role is to collect investment, production and consumer prices for 2000 items, mainly from Dushanbe. The data is then delivered to CIS statistical office.

Assessment:

521. The concepts and definitions used in the CPI and PPI are consistent with international with international standards. They have consistent data back to 2004 and 2011, respectively. The implementation of the ISIC3/NACE rev 1 was quite late; it was only implemented in 2011. To maintain international comparability, the update of the economic classification to ISIC4/NACE rev 2 will be necessary.

522. Cumulative CPI and PPI are disseminated. A transition to discrete CPI and PPI should be conducted, with a period of both cumulative and discrete to provide for an

easier transition for users. The reference period should be set to a year (e.g. EU has used 2005=100 since 2006). There is no seasonal adjustment for CPI or PPI since a prerequisite for introducing such adjustments depends on the availability of discrete price statistics with a fix reference year. The cumulative approach also makes it more difficult to identify changes.

523. The CPI covers all areas with more than 50,000 inhabitants. This should be extended to smaller areas. It should also be extended to include rayons under republican subordination. The structure of the territorial statistical offices could be used. There are also requests for regional PPI, and this should be developed.

524. The aggregates are already done in the territorial statistical offices, and then sent to the headquarters. This creates issues concerning quality checks and consistency of the data, since no one see the full set of data. The only quality checks done centrally are consistency with previous years. The territorial offices should send the micro data to CSO, and statisticians in the central office should do the quality checks and calculations.

525. Weighted arithmetic average is used for calculating the CPI. While this is still used some places, it is highly recommended to use geometric average for these calculations.

526. The price statistics are produced on annual, quarterly, monthly and weekly basis. It is not necessary to produce weekly price statistics, and the government is the only user that receives this. However, if price statistics are produced on a weekly basis, these statistics have to be made available to all users.

527. While there is metadata on CPI on the Russian website, the English version directs the user to the IMF website. The metadata (Russian version) for the PPI is less complete. Some information on classifications is lacking from both the CPI and the PPI metadata. Neither is there sufficient information on the methodology of the calculation of CPI/PPI, and information on limitation on users' access to statistics, e.g. the weekly CPI, is not there. There should be a systematic approach to metadata, and extensive metadata should be disseminated for all price statistics.

528. As of now, there is no data on the housing marked. A project on owned housing in CPI is planned for 2013.

5.3 Business statistics

5.3.1 Short-term business statistics (STS)

529. The responsibility of producing short-term statistics (STS) belongs to several of CSO's departments. Five people work with STS in CSO, five in MCC, 1-2 at sub-regional level and four at regional level. The SBS and the STS within one statistical area belongs to the same divisions.

530. Data collection is done through a statistical reporting system based on a questionnaire developed by TAJSTAT and decided by the Statistical Council (which also includes representatives from CSO). Sub-regional offices collect the data. Some of the indicators are calculated by the enterprises themselves. The data delivered to

the central office is usually aggregated. This process is described in greater detail in 5.3.2. Structural Business Statistics (SBS). Manufacturing data is the only exception. The micro data is sent to the regional statistical office (oblasts), and is aggregated on oblast level for own use. This includes dissemination of the data on oblast level. The micro data is then sent to CSO and it is the local units who report to the local office.

531. Individual entrepreneurs from listings provided by the local tax authorities and legal entities from the business register are used as sampling frame.

532. The short term statistics include the following indicators:

a) Operational gross domestic product, million TJS, frequency quarterly;

b) The volume of industrial products, including electricity, gas and water supply, million TJS, frequency monthly and annually;

c) Freight - total (including from Ministry of Transport, agencies and private entrepreneurs), million tons, frequency monthly and annually;

d) Turnover, million per km, frequency monthly and annually;

e) Passengers - total (including from private entrepreneurs) million, frequency monthly and annually;

f) Passenger turnover, million passengers and km, frequency monthly and annually;

g) From all sources of financing of capital investments made, million TJS, frequency monthly and quarterly:

- Fixed assets, million TJS (at current prices);
- Homes, m^2;
- Schools, academic locations;
- Clinics, visits per shift.

h) The total volume of retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and household goods for personal use, million TJS, frequency monthly, quarterly and annually;

i) The volume of services provided by hotels and restaurants, million TJS, frequency monthly and annually;

j) Paid services across all sales channels, million TJS, frequency monthly and annually.

533. The data is collected using NACE rev 1/ISIC3. There have been some challenges relating to the implementation of NACE rev 1/ISIC3 concerning methodology for calculating the index of industrial production, methodology for weighing value added. This is being examined. The implementation of NACE rev 1/ISIC3 came as late as 2011.

534. STS is published in TAJSTAT's monthly *Socio-economic situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, TAJSTAT's website, the annual *Industry of Tajikistan*, *Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan*, *Tajikistan in Figures* and *Regions of the Republic of Tajikistan*. Metadata on STS is missing from the website.

Assessment:

535. The short-term statistics are extensive, and follow the international classifications (ISIC3/NACE rev 1). To maintain international comparability, it is necessary to update the economic activity classification to NACE rev 2/ISIC4.

536. The same people who produce structural business statistics produce the STS. This is positive. The production of different activities within STS should be gathered in the same department to better benefit from each other's experiences.

537. The Statistical Business Register (SBR) should be strengthened and integrated into CSO. The SBR should be used as a sampling frame for STS; this would increase efficiency and improve the quality of the statistics.

538. Many of the indicators are calculated either by the enterprises themselves or by the interviewers. Additionally, the data is aggregated at oblast level. The indicators should be calculated by statisticians, reducing the possibilities for error while increasing the possibilities for efficient quality control. MCC/CSO should also receive micro data to facilitate quality control and increasing the possibilities for using this statistics for other statistics, including quality control for other statistics and STS.

5.3.2 Structural business statistics (SBS)

539. The responsibility of producing structural business statistics lies within several of CSO's departments. Two people work with SBS in CSO, two in MCC and two at each sub-regional level.

540. Data collection is based on a statistical reporting system based on a questionnaire developed by TAJSTAT and decided by the Statistical Council (which also includes representatives from CSO). The territorial statistical offices collect the data. Individual entrepreneurs from listings from the local tax authorities and legal entities from the business register are used as sampling frame. An economic census of the legal entities was conducted in 2010, but there has not been a full economic census for all economic entities.

541. There are different questionnaires for legal units and individual entrepreneurs. The questionnaires include, in addition to economic information, indicators for the enterprises or interviewers (depending on size) to calculate. The remaining indicators are calculated, and the sub-regional offices aggregate the data. The aggregated data are delivered to regions (oblasts), and then to MCC before it gets to the CSO. The data are collected using ISIC3/NACE rev 1 classification of industries, implemented as late as 2011.

542. There is no data on informal sector in either of the included activity. There is no clear idea about how large the informal sector within each activity is.

543. Metadata is not presented in a systematic way on the website for any of the industries.

544. **Construction**: The construction enterprises receive two identical questionnaires from the local statistical office. One of the questionnaires is collected by the local statistical office (rayon). Local authorities under the Ministry of Industry collect the other questionnaire. The data from the questionnaires goes through the respective levels. For TAJSTAT, this means that the sub-regional office sends it to the regional (oblast) statistical offices, which send it to MCC, and sends it to CSO. The Ministry of Industry visits TAJSTAT on a monthly basis, and the micro data is checked together by TAJSTAT and the Ministry of Industry. The data is in large part on the investment side of construction. The enterprises calculate some of the indicators themselves, and the territorial statistical offices aggregate the data. Arithmetic and logical checks are done in the territorial statistical offices and in the headquarters.

545. **Manufacturing**: The Division of Industrial statistics under Department of Statistics of the Industry and Investments in Buildings in CSO is responsible for producing manufacturing statistics. Data is collected from all legal entities. Individual entrepreneurs are covered annually. Data flow follows the same pattern as for SBS statistics in general, and the data is subjected to arithmetic and logic quality control.

546. **Trade and services**: The Department of Statistics of the Trade and Services in CSO is responsible for producing trade and services statistics. Data on legal entities are collected via the normal reporting system. There are surveys on individual entrepreneurs on trade twice a year and on services quarterly and annually. In these surveys, trade enterprises are divided into large, medium and small enterprises. The survey covers both bazars and other trade enterprises. Concerning bazars, size is determined by number of individual sellers, and information on the sellers comes from the administration of the bazars. Bazars with 100 or more sellers are all included, 10 per cent of the bazars with less than 100 are included in the survey. If a region has one bazar, this bazar is always included even if it is a small bazar. The statistical unit is sellers at the bazar. Based on information from the bazar administration, a 10 per cent sample is made covering different types of products sold. The interviewers make the final choice of which sellers to be included in the survey. The principle is the same for traders outside of bazars. The sampling frame for these is the certification list from the tax authorities. Both sampling frames are updated before every survey. Turnover (from the bazar administration or from tax authority) is used for calculating weights for the surveys. The data from legal entities is collected through the statistical reporting forms and completed by the enterprise, which also calculate some indicators. For individual entrepreneurs, the interviewers calculate these indicators. Services follow the same system. Data flow follows the same pattern as for SBS statistics in general, and the data is subjected to arithmetic and logic quality control.

547. **Mining and Quarrying**: The Division of Industrial statistics under Department of Statistics of the Industry and Investments in Buildings in CSO is responsible for producing mining and quarrying statistics. The industry only has legal entities, and enterprises need license as well as being partially owned by the government. Data flow follows the same pattern as for SBS statistics in general (see 540), and the data is subjected to arithmetic and logic quality control. Statistics on gold and precious stones are not published because it is deemed a state secret.

548. SBS is published in TAJSTAT’s monthly *Socio-economic situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, TAJSTAT’s website, the annual *Industry of Tajikistan*, *Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan*, *Tajikistan in Figures* and *Regions of the Republic of Tajikistan*.

Assessment:

549. The structural business statistics is extensive, and is following international classifications (ISIC3/NACE rev 1) as of 2011. To maintain international comparability, it is necessary to update the economic activity classification to NACE rev 2/ISIC4.

550. The production of structural business statistics is produced by the same people who produce short-term statistics. This is positive. The production of different industries within SBS should be gathered in the same department to better benefit from each other’s experiences.

551. The Statistical Business Register (SBR) should be strengthened and integrated into CSO. The SBR should be used as a sampling frame for SBS; this would increase efficiency and improve the quality of the statistics.

552. In some cases indicators are calculated either by the enterprises themselves or by the interviewers. Additionally, the data is aggregated at regional level. The indicators should be calculated by statisticians, reducing the possibilities for error while increasing the possibilities for efficient quality control.

553. MCC/CSO should also receive micro data instead of aggregated data to facilitate quality control and increasing the possibilities for using this micro-data for the compilation and quality control of other statistics, including SBR.

554. In construction statistics, the local offices deliver questionnaires that are collected by the Ministry of Industry. Ministry of Industry also review micro data together with TAJSTAT. TAJSTAT should not deliver questionnaires meant for other institutions. TAJSTAT should not allow access to micro data to Governmental institutions. Both of these practices could hurt TAJSTAT’s independence.

555. A full economic census on all economic entities, not only legal entities, should be conducted. The result of this would be an important input to the Statistical Business Register (SBR).

556. There is no control over how large the informal sector, or the informal economy, is in the different industries. The informal sector in a country can contribute extensively to the country's economy. It is therefore important to assess this sector. This could be done through household surveys or special surveys. Existing information from household surveys should also be used in business statistics.

557. Within construction, the emphasis is now on the investment side. Although there is some information on production in finance statistics, this is not used in the structural business statistics. There should be an increased emphasis on the production side.

558. There is no systematic dissemination of metadata on the website. It is important that this is rectified. Metadata is vital as a tool for the users to understand statistics and to provide transparency in the process of statistical production.

5.4 Multi-domain statistics

5.4.1 Environment statistics

559. Environment statistics is a section of the Department of Statistics on agriculture and preservation of the environment (CSO) with one staff on environment statistics. In addition one specialist in the MCC works on the topic.

560. The data is collected according to the LSS and several other Laws that deal with the protection of the environment (like on nature protection, on protection of the atmospheric air, protection and use of fauna, ground water code). The Law on Environmental Protection comprises an article on statistics. It states that state statistics in this field is under the control of TAJSTAT and that reporting obligations are with TAJSTAT. TAJSTAT reports on the following topics:

a) Air: Air pollutant emissions from mobile and stationary sources;

b) Climate change: Greenhouse gases and ozone-depleting substances (two reports so far of the meteorological centre for reporting to the Kyoto protocol);

c) Water: Water resources surface and ground (Hydro-geological centre); discharge of polluting substances in surface water (Committee on Environmental Protection), water use and (Ministry of Irrigation and Water Management), water treatment in urban areas (drinking and sewage water);

d) Soil: Use of soil, extraction of natural resources (mining, oil, natural gas);

e) Waste: volume of waste; in 2009 pilot survey on communal and household waste was conducted;

f) Forestry: Use and protection of forest resources (Committee of Environment Protection);

g) Natural and man-made disasters on national and regional level (Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence);

h) Investments for environmental protection.

561. Four reporting forms, those on air, waste, disasters and investments, are distributed by the 3 regional offices and Dushanbe City office and collected data is sent to the MCC. All other data is collected by the respective ministries and their services in charge of the topics and do not undergo further analysis before they are published by TAJSTAT. Data collection is with few exceptions organised as a mandatory full-coverage survey of all enterprises (legal units), organisations and establishments concerned by the mentioned environmental matters.

562. Main users of this data are the government, ministries and departments. Data is transmitted to international organisations and the statistical service of the CIS. Environment statistics are published annually in compilations *Regions and the Republic of Tajikistan*, the *Statistical Yearbook* and an annual statistical book on *Environmental protection*. This report also includes data on health (diseases, causes of death, mortality) and transport (turnover of freight and person transport) Annual reports issued are *Emergency situations in the Republic of Tajikistan* and *Air protection in the Republic of Tajikistan.*

563. The Multi-year Statistical Programme aims at further harmonising national statistics with European standards. With regard to water, it is planned to develop and implement reporting on water use and to conduct a survey with all water consumers. Reporting on waste shall be enhanced with reports on toxic waste.

Assessment:

564. Dedicate a webpage to environment statistics and publish and regularly update environmental data.

565. Improvement plans concerning water and waste are welcomed. Further efforts are recommended in the area of monitoring air, water and soil quality, to complement data on emissions.

566. It is recommended to have an active exchange with ministries on how they collect data, to what purpose, statistical or other, which statistical and international standards they use etc., as this data is finally published by TAJSTAT and thus needs to comply with the quality standards of official statistics.

5.4.2 Statistics on information and communication technologies (ICT)

567. The Communication Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan is responsible for the collection and compilation of ICT statistics, because the data is firstly used for administrative purposes. The Department of statistics of trade and services of CSO prepares the data for dissemination. A total of 4 staff from both institutions work on ICT statistics plus one specialist in the MCC.

568. The data is collected according to the LSS and the Laws on Informatisation and on Information. Two forms that are prepared by TAJSTAT are used for data collection: one survey is annual on the availability and use of ICT with legal units using ICT, the other one quarterly in the form of a full coverage survey of licensed state and private communication service enterprises.

569. The Communication Service delivers data through the approved statistical reporting forms to TAJSTAT. ICT statistics are published in the annual compilation *Transport and Communications of the RT*, *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Tajikistan,* as well as in quarterly and yearly reports on *the Development of communication in Tajikistan*. These publications are available in Tajik and Russian, but not in English, neither of the publications is available in electronic format on TAJSTAT’s website.

570. Additional information on ICT can be drawn from the household budget survey, which comprises questions on numbers of mobile phones and computers in

households. This data is part of the publications on the household budget survey. On the website a table on *Provision of population with home telephone sets, 1998-2010* is available.

571. The Multi-year Statistical Programme foresees to improve the coverage of the data collection with economic entities and households.

Assessment:

572. TAJSTAT reports incomplete coverage of economic entities as they include legal units only; TAJSTAT's plans of improvements in coverage are supported. It is also recommended to expand the data collection to households. Data should be collected according to international standards and guidelines.

5.4.3 Energy statistics

573. The Department of industry and construction investment is responsible for the compilation of energy statistics that cover production, transmission and distribution services of hydroelectric and thermoelectric energy, trade and consumption of electricity, as well as fuel trade and consumption. 5 staff members of the CSO work on energy statistics, 5 at the MCC and 1-2 at regional level.

574. Statistical information on electricity production is obtained through monthly reporting by state-controlled Open Joint Stock Holding Company *Barki Tojik*, which is the major electricity producer and distributer in the Republic of Tajikistan plus another bigger electricity producer, the Open Joint Stock Company *Pamir Energy*. Reporting forms are submitted to the MCC for testing and processing to aggregate tables, which are transmitted to the agency. 2 middle-sized and 9 smaller electricity producers report to the regional offices. Data on oil imports and distribution is collected with oil distribution companies.

575. Energy consumption data is known from all legal units who report on their energy consumption broken down in energy carriers (electricity, oil, coal etc.). For the business sector it is possible to compare production, consumption and thus losses. The missing link for a proper energy balance is the consumption by small businesses and households.

576. Energy statistics data are published in the monthly report *Socio-economic situation of the Republic of Tajikistan*, and in the annual compilations *Industry of Tajikistan*, *Statistical yearbook*, *Tajikistan in figures*, *Regions of the Republic of Tajikistan* and *Material and Technical (Logistic) Support of Tajikistan*. On the website electricity production, electricity export and electricity import data is shown under macro-economic indicators.

577. TAJSTAT produces annual electricity balance statistics, which provide information on the resources, production, distribution and consumption of electricity. Due to budget restraints however it is not possible to produce annual fuel and energy balance figures since 1990. Main users of energy statistics are the government, the ministry of energy and industry as well as international organisations.

578. The electricity balance figures have proved useful to identify important losses of electricity in the distribution process.

Assessment:

579. According to the Multi-year Statistical Programme it is foreseen to add questions to the household budget survey on household's access to energy. Before further expanding on surveys it would be useful to explore whether the ministry of energy and industry and other national administrations have administrative information which could simplify and decrease the cost of compiling energy statistics. For data on energy consumption in transport the questionnaire on transport statistics could be adapted with questions on fuel consumption.

580. The goal of producing annual energy balance sheets should be kept up; it is essential for the preparation of the national energy budget.

5.4.4 Transport statistics

581. The Department of Statistics of the Trade and Services in CSO is responsible for producing transport statistics. One employee in CSO, one employee in MCC and one employee at regional level and one at sub-regional level work with transport statistics.

582. Sub-regional offices collect the data. MCC extracts a list of all transport enterprises. This list is sent to the sub-regional offices. The sub-regional offices do the sampling. The classification used for economic activity is ISIC3/NACE rev 1 as of 2011. The CIS standard OKON was used until 2010, and the time series are being recalculated using ISIC3/NACE rev1.

583. Data on legal entities are collected via the normal reporting system (See 5.3.2. Structural Business Statistics). There are quarterly surveys on individual entrepreneurs in transport. The sample frame is information provided by transport associations and tax authorities. There is a full count of the individual entrepreneurs in transport associations, and sample survey for individual entrepreneurs outside the associations (20 per cent for passenger transport and 10 per cent for cargo). The survey is conducted over a week, and replacements are made from a reserve list. Additionally, data is collected from administrative sources. The data is extrapolated for vehicles by the sub-regional statistical offices, before it is sent to the regional statistical offices. The latter aggregate the data before it is sent to the MCC.

584. Transport by rail and air are all done by legal entities, while transport by bus is done by legal entities, individual entrepreneurs and public ownership. Data on buses are received by TAJSTAT from Ministry of Transport. There are both privately and publicly owned bus enterprises. There are three national airlines; Tajik Air, which is state-owned, and Somon Air and East Air, which are privately owned. There is one public railway enterprise. A survey passenger transport covering mini buses and taxis collects data on number of passengers, distance (number of kilometres) and turnover and income. A survey on cargo transport, covering only trucks, collects data on turnover, distance (km), tonnes per km, type of goods, capacity, income and mode of transport.

585. Data on availability and conditions of vehicles, infrastructure and traffic accidents are collected from State Traffic Inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Mode of transport is included in import and export.

586. There is a substantial informal sector within transport, but there is currently no overview on the extent. It is expected to be mainly in small-scale passenger and cargo transport. There are plans to conduct a survey of owners of cars to assess the extent of the informal sector within the industry.

Assessment

587. Transport statistics follow international classifications (ISIC3/NACE rev 1), but this classification was only implemented in 2011. To maintain international comparability, it is necessary to update the economic activity classification to NACE rev 2/ISIC4.

588. A large part of the data collection within transport is done through the statistical reporting system.

589. TAJSTAT is actively using administrative registers in the production of transport statistics. This should also be done in the continuation.

590. TAJSTAT should include all airlines transporting passengers or cargo to/from or within Tajikistan in the transport statistics, including the foreign airlines.

591. The SBR is not used as a sampling frame for transport statistics. This should be rectified, and a strengthened statistical business register should be used as sampling frame.

592. There are already plans for providing statistics on informal transport through a planned survey on owners of cars. This should also be investigated through a household budget survey or a special survey on the whole informal sector.

593. There is no metadata on the website on transport statistics. There should be a systematic approach to develop and disseminate metadata.

5.4.5 Tourism statistics

594. The Department of Statistics of the Trade and Services in CSO is responsible for producing tourism statistics. One person in CSO and one person in MCC are working on tourism statistics.

595. The data is collected from travel companies, enterprises providing tourist services and from the Committee of Sport, Travel and Tourism (ministry level). Sub-regional offices collect the data. The classification used for economic activity is ISIC3/NACE rev 1 as of 2011.

596. Border crossings at airports and formal border posts Tajikistan are registered through immigration forms. Department of demography and social statistics and the Ministry of Internal Affairs use these forms. Three questionnaires cover hotel guests. One is for foreigners, and is sent from the hotels. The second is for domestic guests

and are sent from the travel agencies. The third is for all guests, and is collected by the Statistical Agency. All foreigners have to register if they stay for more than three days (Ovire security form). This is done by the hotels. The information from this form is not used.

597. Domestic tourism is only covered if it is arranged through travel agencies.

598. TAJSTAT identifies incomplete information on the development of the market of tourism as the greatest statistical problem within tourism statistics.

Assessment

599. Tourism statistics follow international classifications (ISIC3/NACE rev 1). To maintain international comparability, it is necessary to update the economic activity classification to NACE rev 2/ISIC4.

600. Tourism statistics need to be strengthened. A strategy for this should be developed in accordance with WTO's recommendations. Estimations of domestic tourism, expenses of tourist abroad and export of tourism services should be included. Several potential sources should be utilized by TAJSTAT to improve tourism statistics. For example, TAJSTAT should include all information available from the hotels.

601. Informal sector within tourism should be mapped. The household budget survey has information on domestic tourism. This should be used in tourism statistics. Additionally, special surveys could be conducted.

602. There is no metadata on the website on tourism statistics. There should be a systematic approach to develop and disseminate metadata.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABD	Asian Development Bank
BoP	Balance of Payments Statistics
BPM5	5th edition Balance of Payments Manual
BPM6	6th edition of the Balance of Payments Manual
CIF	Cost, Insurance and Freight
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CIS HS	Commercial Nomenclature for Foreign Economic Activity of CIS countries
CIS-STAT	Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
COFOG	Classification of the Functions of Government
COICOP	Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose
CPA	Classification of Product by Activity
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSO	Central [Statistical] Office
CSPro	Census and Survey Processing System
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic Health Statistics
DSBB	Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETS	External Trade Statistics
EU	European Union
Eurostat	Statistical Office of the European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FOB	Free On Board
GA	Global Assessment
GBAO	Gorno-Badakhson oblast
GDDS	General Data Dissemination Standard
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFS	Government Finance Statistics (from the Ministry of Finance)
GFSM	Manual Government Finance Statistics
GIS	Geographic Information System
GNI	Gross National Income
HBS	Household Budget Survey
ICD	International Classification of Diseases
ICSE	International Classification by Status in Employment
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDA	International Development Association
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupation

ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities
IT	Information Technology
ITRS	International Transactions Reporting System
KIES	Classification of Institutional Units
LAN	Local Area Network (TAJSTAT’s corporate network)
LC	Law on Census of Population and Housing
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LNBRT	Law on the National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Survey
LSS	Law on State Statistics
LStS	Living Standard Survey
MCC	Main Computing Centre
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NACE	Nomenclature of Economic Activities in the European Community
NBRT	National Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan
NDS	National Development Strategy
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
OKATO	National Classification of Administrative and Territorial Division
OKFS	National Classification of Ownership Types
OKOGU	National Classification of State Government Bodies
OKOPF	National Classification of Legal Forms
OKPO	National Classification of Enterprises and Establishments
OKVED	National Classification of Economic Kind of Activities
PES	Post-Enumeration Surveys
PPI	Producer Price Index
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
ROSSTAT	Russian State Statistical Service
RT	Republic of Tajikistan
SAS Decree	Statement on the Agency on Statistics Decree
SBR	Statistical Business Register
SBS	Structural Business Statistics
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard
Sida	Swedish Agency for International Development
SNA	System of National Accounts
SPF	Social Protection Fund
SREO	State Register of Enterprises and Organisations
SUTs	Supply-Use Tables
TAJSTAT	Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
TJS	Somoni, National Currency of Tajikistan
UCOA	Unified Chart of Accounts
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

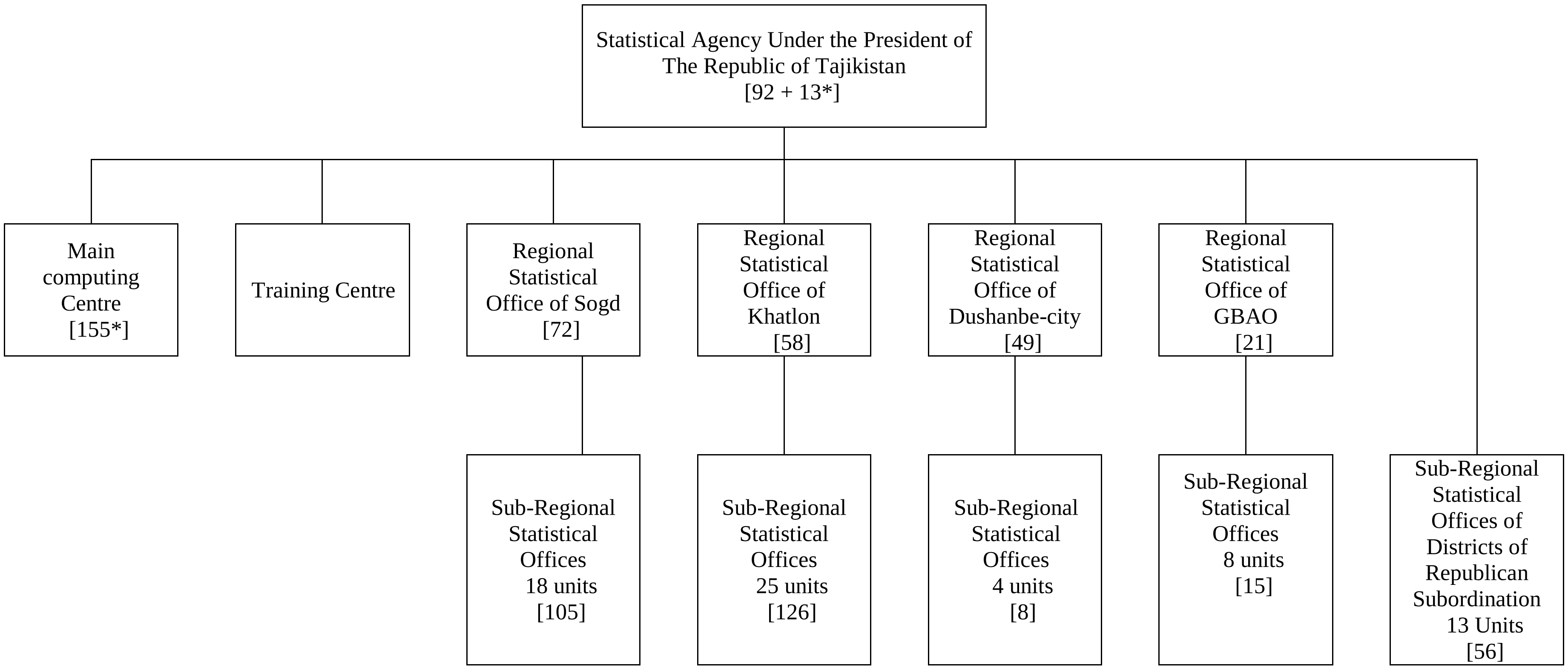
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USR	Unified State Register
WTO	World Trade Organisation

ANNEX 2: PEOPLE MET DURING THE ASSESSMENT

Name of participants	Organisation
Mukhammadieva Bakhtya	Director of Statistical Agency
Shodmon Shokirov	First Deputy Director of Statistical Agency
Asoev Asvat	Deputy Director of Statistical Agency
Norov Kiyomuddin	Deputy Director of Statistical Agency
Gukasova Tatiana	Department summary-economic analysis and international relations
Mamadnazarov Mamayur	Personnel department
Nakatov Khakim	Department of industry statistics and investment in construction sector
Ivannikova Svetlana	Department of industry statistics and investment in construction sector
Abdulloev Mutalib.	Department of agriculture statistics and environmental statistics
Kosimov Khurshed	Department of agriculture statistics and environmental statistics
Minakova Sabzina	Department of SNA and finance statistics
Pulatova Nurinisso	Department of SNA and finance statistics
Norbekova Gulandom	Department of prices and tariffs
Kulov Abduvali	Department of demography statistics, employment and household surveys. social statistics
Budnikova Elena	Department of demography statistics, employment and household surveys. social statistics
Ismoilova Zebo	Department of Population Census
Kurbanov Tabarali	Department of trade and service
Zhdanova Lubov	Department of trade and service
Asmatbekov Fisdavs	Department of trade and service
Tokhirov Eshonjon	Department static methodology and classifications
Boimatov Qahor	Head of Main Computing Centre (MCC)

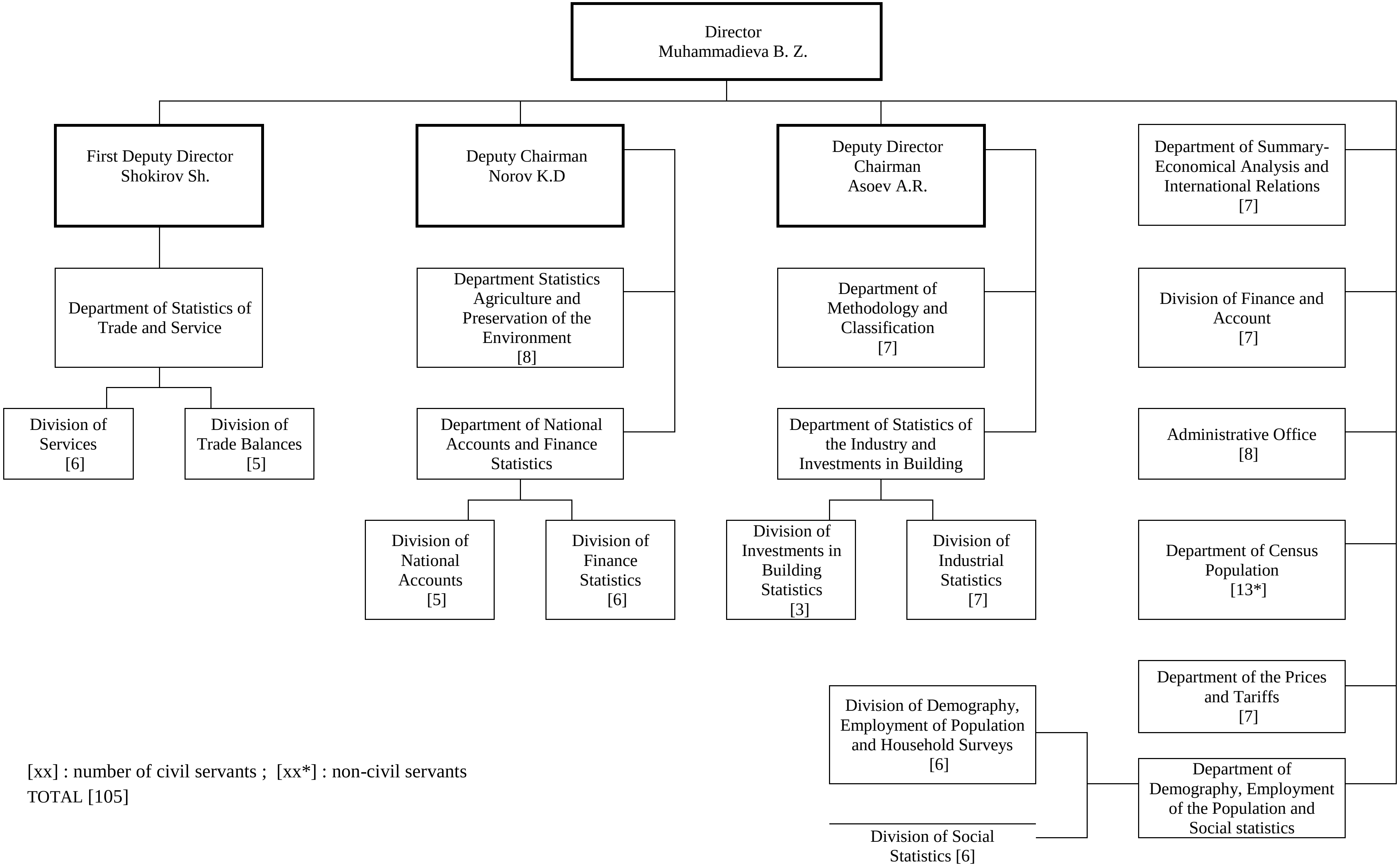
Name of participants	Organisation
Stodolya Olga	Deputy Head of Main Computing Centre (MCC)
Silemunshoev Nuralisho	Deputy Head of Main Computing Centre (MCC)
Rajabova Nigina	Business-register of Main Computing Centre
Khukmatova Maydagul	IT of Main Computing Centre
Diliyobov Rizvon	IT of Main Computing Centre
Rustamov Ravshan	IT of Main Computing Centre
Faiziev Salohiddin	IT of Main Computing Centre
Yakubov Parviz	IT of Main Computing Centre
Khairullaev Rahmatullo	Committee on the Environment under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (member of the Statistical Council)
Niyozov Mustafo	National Bank (member of the Statistical Council)
Zabirova Rano	Ministry of Finance (member of the Statistical Council)
Kimsanov Dilshod	Ministry of Water Resources (member of the Statistical Council)
Kodirov Ahmajon	Ministry of Agriculture (member of the Statistical Council)
Khodjayeva Inobat	National Bank
Aliyev Mukhammadjon	Customs Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
Mirov Odinabek	Ministry of Education
Sangov Odil	Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
Zuev Aleksandr	UNDP – National Coordinator

ANNEX 3: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF TAJSTAT



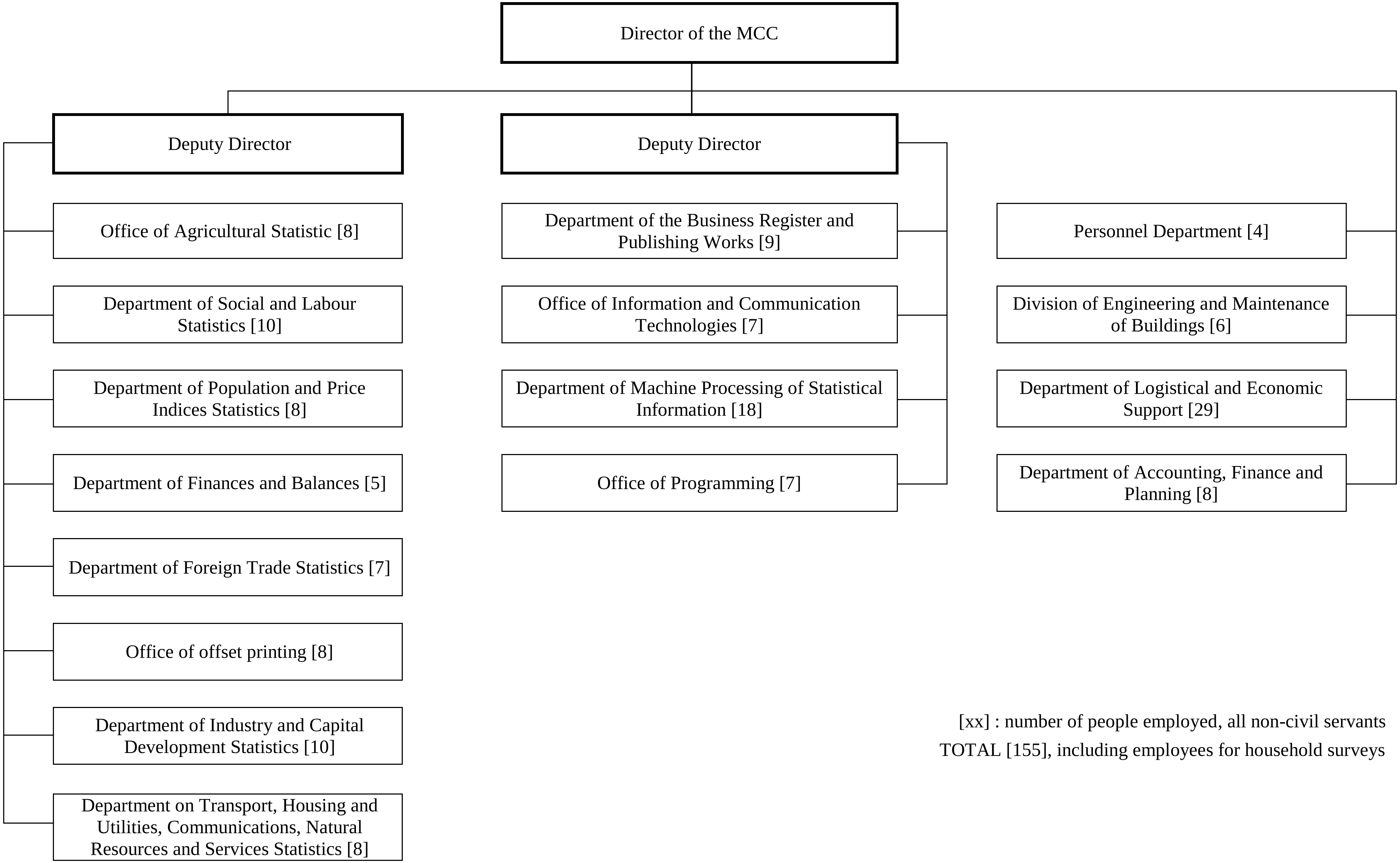
[xx] : number of civil servants ; [xx*] : non-civil servants
TOTAL [770]

ANNEX 4: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE (CSO)



[xx] : number of civil servants ; [xx*] : non-civil servants
TOTAL [105]

ANNEX 5: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MAIN COMPUTING CENTRE (MCC)



[xx] : number of people employed, all non-civil servants
TOTAL [155], including employees for household surveys