



Palestinian National Authority
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) 2009-2013

June, 2009

©June, 2009

All rights reserved.

Suggested Citation:

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009. *National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) 2009-2013. Ramallah - Palestine.*

All correspondence should be directed to:

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

P.O.Box 1647, Ramallah, Palestine.

Tel: (972/970) 2 242 6340

Fax: (972/970) 2 242 6343

E-Mail: diwan@pcbs.gov.ps

web-site: <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps>

Acknowledgment

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) would like to thank all the Ministries and Institutions for their cooperation in assisting PCBS in the preparation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS).

The preparation of the NSDS was supported financially by the World Bank (WB), and the Printing of this document has been produced with financial assistance of the European Union (EU).

On this occasion, PCBS extends special thanks to the WB and the EU for their support.

Table of abbreviations and acronyms

ACS	Advisory Council on Statistics
AFD	Administrative and Financial Directorate - PCBS
ASYCUDA	Automated System of Customs Data
CDB	Comprehensive Data Bank
CFG	Core Funding Group
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DAC	Data Access Centre
DFID	UK Department For International Development
DSMQ	Department of Standards, Methodologies and Quality (new department recently created at PCBS)
EC	European Commission
EQA	Environment Quality Authority
EU	European Union
GDDS	General Data Dissemination Standards – IMF
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GSL	General Statistical Law
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IAOS	International Association for Official Statistics
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISI	International Statistical Institute
IUSSP	International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
INSEE	France – Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques
ISD	Information and Systems Directorate – PCBS
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEDSTAT	Euro-Med cooperation program in statistics
METAGORA	An international project focusing on methods, tools and frameworks for measuring democracy, human rights and governance
MIS	Management Information System
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture

MOC	Ministry of Culture
MOCIT	Ministry of Communication and Information Technologies
MOEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOInf	Ministry of Information
MOInt	Ministry of Interior
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOL	Ministry of Labour
MOLG	Ministry o Local Governments
MONE	Ministry of National Economy
MOPW	Ministry of Public Works
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MOT	Ministry of Tourism
MOTr	Ministry of Transportation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding.
MOWA	Ministry of Woman Affairs
MOYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport
MTR	Mid Term Review
NLS	National Library of Statistics
NRS	Natural Resources Authority
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSS	National Statistical System
OO	Operational Objective
PARIS21	Partnership In Statistics for the 21 st Century
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PHC	Population and Housing Census
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PM	Prime Minister
PMA	Palestinian Monetary Authority
PNA	Palestinian National Authority

PSTC	Palestinian Statistical Training Centre
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standards - IMF
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMP	Statistical Master Plan
SO	Strategic Objective
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TA	Technical Assistance
TFSCB	Trust Fund for Statistical Capacities Building
TQM	Total Quality Management
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCWA	UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNSD	UN Statistics Division
VAT	Value Added Tax
WHO	World Health Organisation

Table of Contents

Foreword	8
1. Introduction	11
2. Fundamentals	15
Vision	15
Mission	15
Values	16
3. Diagnosis on and SWOT analysis of the NSS	17
4. Strategic and operational objectives	21
Strategic objective 1: Strengthening and consolidating the National Statistical System (NSS)	23
Strategic objective 2: Improving the use and dissemination of statistical data and statistical information	30
Strategic objective 3: Improving the use of central registers and administrative records. Developing tools for harmonizing data collected from different sources	38
Strategic objective 4: Developing, improving and expanding subject matters statistics	45
Strategic objective 5: Developing national, regional and international relations and partnerships	51
Strategic objective 6: Improving the managerial and technical issues	54
5. Implementation	59
6. Action Plan	61
7. Bibliography	106

Foreword

Planning is a corner stone for establishing a sound and rational statistical system. Therefore PCBS adopted the concept of long-term and short-term planning as the main platform for directing the official statistical efforts in Palestine. In fact PCBS prepared its first master plan for developing the official statistics for the period 1995-2000. This plan formed the basis for creating PCBS. In 2000, we prepared the second master plan for the period 2001-2010. This plan developed the basis for Palestine's statistical policies. Therefore, the preparation of this national strategy for statistics is a continuation and accumulation on PCBS's efforts in this direction. Actually, this strategy is meant to develop and promote the whole statistical system in Palestine, and make it more visible.

PCBS believed in the importance of strategic planning. In fact we played a vital role in establishing and steering the international initiative for developing national statistical strategies through PARIS21 consortium. In addition, we were in the driving seat in organizing the regional meetings for the Arab region for the years 2003, 2005, 2007.

We prepared this strategy in accordance with the international best practices, starting with the highest level political support, and the anticipation of stakeholders including users and producers of statistics, in addition to the commitment over the UN recommendations in the area of statistics. In 2005, the Advisory Council for Official Statistics approved the PCBS' proposal to prepare the NSDS and formed a national team for this task headed by PCBS with representatives from governmental institutions, universities, research centers, and civil society organizations. The work done systematically on line with PARIS21 manual for preparing the NSDS in addition to organizing a series of national workshops attended by key stakeholders of the Palestinian National Statistical System (NSS), and bilateral meetings with the stakeholders to exchange the views about the concepts and priorities of the NSS.

The vision of the strategy is to establish an integrated, professional, efficient and effective NSS, under the guidance of PCBS, that will serve all spectrums of the Palestinian society, and support the sustainable development for Palestine. The main goals of preparing the NSDS are to improve data quality, defining the roles of various data providers, improving the dissemination methods of official statistics, increasing public accessibility to official statistics, providing sound basis for identifying statistical priorities according to users needs, and assessing current strengths and needs for capacity building for the NSS members.

Finally, by preparing the NSDS, and the previous efforts in this regard including the Code of Practice, the master plans (1996 – 2000, and 2001 – 2010), and the General Statistical Law No. (4) for year 2000, we hope that the Palestinian National Statistical System to be promoted during the coming 5 years to a further stage towards the most developed international statistical systems.

June, 2009



Ola Awad
Acting President of PCBS



1. Introduction

PCBS was established in 1993 by a decree issued by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), several months before the signing of the Oslo agreement and the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). The PCBS was therefore the first institution operational after the implementation of the PNA administration in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The PCBS was created from zero and had the mission to set up and maintain the entire National Statistical System (NSS) of Palestine. The first statistical Master Plan (MP) was prepared in 1994-1995 as the main guideline for the start of statistical activities in the occupied Palestinian Territory. This MP, covering the period 1995-2000, was presented to and discussed during an international conference held in Jerusalem and Gaza on 23-26 April 1995. A second MP was developed in 2000 to draw broad policy guidelines for the establishment of the NSS through 2010.

On 7 August 2000, a General Statistical Law (GSL) was passed, detailing the missions and functions of the PCBS and its financial and administrative organisation. This law also created an Advisory Council on Statistics (ACS) and proposed a frame for the statistical activities of line ministries, consequently giving legal support to the use of administrative records for statistical purposes. Lastly, it introduced some important rules with respect to confidentiality of individual records and obligation of response to censuses and surveys. This law was drafted according to the highest and most modern standards. It was completed by the issuance of by-laws in 2005.

After a mid-term review was organised in 2005, a PCBS Development Programme was prepared, covering the period 2006-2008, as well as "rolling development programmes," each of them covering a 3-year period. The work programme for 2009-2011 was planned for adoption before the end of 2008. In 2006, PCBS subscribed to the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) of the IMF. PCBS also actively participated in MEDSTAT 1 activities (organised by Eurostat within the context of the Barcelona agreement cooperation programme between the member countries of the EU and EFTA and the countries alongside the Southern and Eastern Banks of the Mediterranean Sea).

The adoption of a NSDS was particularly critical at this point in time for several reasons. First, a holistic approach of the MP would ensure that the entire national statistical system, including not just the PCBS but all line ministries and public agencies that participate in data collection and statistical analysis, is optimally organized so as to provide policymakers with critical information for evidence-based decisions. Similarly, capacity for effective monitoring of progress and performance

in a number of vital areas, such as measuring the progress of the society, achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), poverty reduction, social development, macroeconomic performance, and environmental sustainability, would also be enhanced. The NSDS would consequently serve as an important tool to ensure that the overall coherence of PCBS program of activities is maintained.

A second important consequence of a well-conceived and well-executed NSDS would be the signalling effect it would have to the international donor community of the Bureau's professionalism and continued commitment to meet users' needs and timely, accurate and reliable standards of data flow and quality. Although basic expenses such as utilities and PCBS staff salaries are financed mainly by the PNA's contributions and budgetary allocations, the financial support of donors has proven necessary to maintain functionality and improved analytical capacity of the PCBS since its establishment. This support from donors, which now contributes between 40 and 50 percent of PCBS's annual budget, comes primarily through the Core Funding Group (CFG), that was developed in order to promote overall coherence for the PCBS work programme, to help secure necessary financial and technical support from the donor community, to avoid redundancies that might result from donor duplication or "competition" and to organize a "basket funding" system that guarantees a better allocation of resources. Active CFG members are Norway, Netherlands, and Switzerland. The United Kingdom (DfID) and the European Commission (EC) suspended their membership with the outcomes of the 2nd legislative elections of 2006. In addition to the CFG members, other donors are considered as major players in sustaining the NSS by project-based support to the PCBS, such as the World Bank and UN agencies.

Third, the NSDS would help ensure that PCBS technical staff continues to possess the necessary expertise and analytical skills required to provide timely, reliable, and relevant statistics by identifying areas of possible current deficiency and paving the way to proposing appropriate capacity building and training programs. In addition to its active participation in the PARIS21 consortium, PCBS holds full membership or observer status in a number of national, regional, and international statistical organizations and forums, including UNSD, UNESCWA, Arab League, Euro-Mediterranean dialogue, and others, as well as having benefited from technical assistance programs from the World Bank, the IMF, and other international and national agencies. Throughout its history, PCBS has continuously striven to incorporate the most up-to-date international methodologies and standards in the production of the official statistics of Palestine.

Finally, recognizing the difficult situation in Palestine due to the Israeli occupation, the PCBS has taken considerable effort through a number of strategic steps to minimize the potential negative impact of the

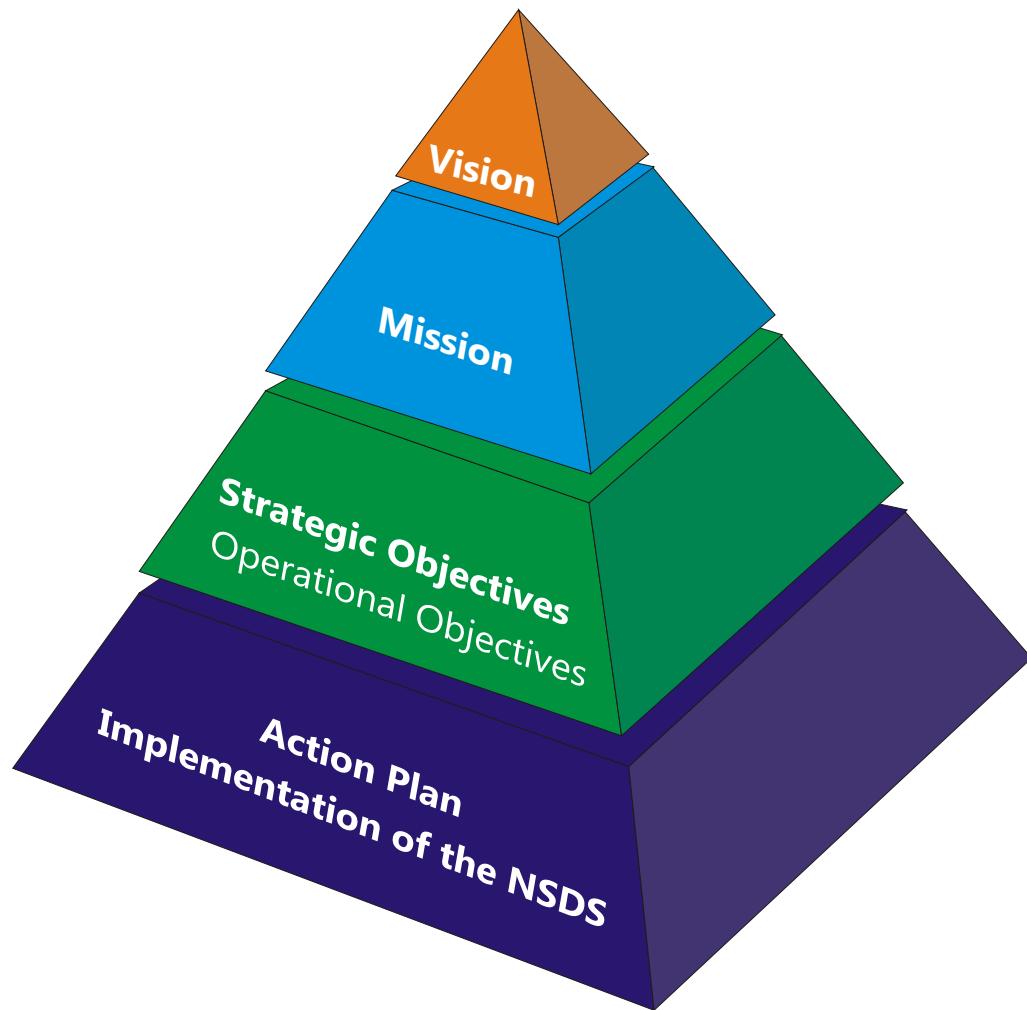
occupation on the timely delivery of official statistics and statistical analysis. The PCBS has developed and implemented function-based business plans designed to maximize flexibility; it is hoped that the NSDS will further support possible effective responses to the obstacles posed by the operating environment during the implementation period of the NSDS and beyond.

The PCBS was mandated by the ACS to take the lead in the formulation of the NSDS. The concept of both the NSDS as a national participatory activity with technical assistance from international experts has gained government endorsement. A national team composed of key stakeholders, both line governmental and non-governmental institutions, was formed in December 2005. The outcomes of the 2nd legislative elections of 2006 and the resulting political crisis delayed the allocation of the grant until 2007.

In short, it was expected that the production of NSDS for the Palestinian Territory would achieve tangible progress in the following areas:

1. Improving the quality of data produced and disseminated by the statistical system, including elements related to accuracy, reliability, relevance, timeliness, and coverage.
2. Defining the particular roles of the various data providers, along with their responsibilities and competencies, in order to ensure comprehensive coverage and to eliminate any possible duplication of effort.
3. Improving the dissemination of official statistics and their usefulness by modernising the information services, in particular the web services, of the PCBS and establishing a National Library of Statistics providing statistical information services from the whole of the NSS to government, private sector, academia, media and the public at large.
4. Increasing public accessibility to produced data through an emphasis on simplification of data provision procedures.
5. Providing a sound basis for establishing statistical priorities in cooperation with users and producers of statistics.
6. Assessing current strengths and defining areas for capacity enhancement, identifying appropriate training opportunities for statisticians and the further development of human resources.

The NSDS approach goes beyond the classical approach through MPs and classical working programmes. Preparing a NSDS was recommended by the PARIS21 consortium for developing countries to ensure well established national statistical systems to provide information for evidence-based decisions, and to facilitate fundraising from the international donor community. The NSDS will be a good tool for the PCBS, in particular, and for the government, in general, to ensure the availability of capable staff.



2. Fundamentals

The NSDS aims at continuing the development of the National Statistical System (NSS) of Palestine to make it comparable to those of the most developed countries through the adoption of best international practices. This will enable the NSS to present a comprehensive and accurate picture of the Palestinian economic, social and environmental structure, improve the implementation of evidence-based policy-making and contribute to the promotion of dialogue and scientific research. The strategy will help to ensure that produced statistical data are reliable, coherent, and effective in monitoring variables, measuring trends and producing indicators. In all developing countries, new policies have been developed (MDGs, poverty reduction, human development, measurement of the progress of the society, environmental sustainability ...) and effective monitoring of progress and performance is considered as essential.

The NSDS has been prepared by developing a holistic approach, including not only the PCBS but the NSS as a whole, that is to say, all line ministries and public agencies which participate in statistical data production, production and dissemination, as well as the NSS stakeholders (policymakers, researchers, users, decision makers in business, and the general public).

Vision

The vision of the NSS in Palestine is to establish an integrated, professional, efficient and effective national statistical system, under the guidance of the PCBS, which will serve all the constituencies of the Palestinian society and support a sustainable development of Palestine.

Mission

The mission of the NSS in Palestine is defined in accordance to law a set of law, regulations and documents, which establish the legal and social environment for the collection of data and processing of statistics and ensure data flow from public institutions and agencies. The main texts are as follows:

- The General Statistics Law (GSL) No. (4) of the Year 2000, issued on 8 July 2000.
- The Advisory Council of Official Statistics (ACS), formed on 1 November 2004.
- A set of by-laws governing the statistical system, approved by the Cabinet on 26 April 2005.
- The Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in April 1994, and endorsed by the Palestinian Cabinet.

- The Code of Practice for Palestinian Statistics, adopted by the Cabinet in May 2006.

Based on the reading of the contents of these legal documents, it can be safely concluded that the legal environment for a NSS is there and one can also argue that it is complete. Utilizing this existing environment should be enough to enable the PCBS to lead the NSS no matter how embryonic this statistical system is. There is no need to amend the existing laws and regulations.

According to these texts, the mission of the NSS may be summarized as follows:

Producing coherent official statistics that meet the current and evolving needs of national and international users in a transparent and timely fashion, using the best statistical practices.

Values

The values to be shared by all units of the NSS and all statisticians working in one of these units are derived from the Code of Practice for Palestinian Statistics that is itself inspired by the best European practices.

These values can be described as follows:

- **Relevance:** the NSS will support significant decision making in government, the private sector and the wider community, and in doing so contribute to the quality of national life.
- **Integrity:** the NSS will gain public trust by using objective and transparent methods.
- **Quality:** the NSS will be suitable for purpose and of high quality.
- **Accessibility:** Access to official statistics will be fair and open.
- **Ensuring confidentiality:** Where data are collected or used for statistical purposes, the confidentiality of the data and data providers is guaranteed.
- **Keeping an equilibrium between the needs of users and the burden on data providers:** Cost of compliance with requests for data will be kept to an acceptable level and data collected only when the benefits of a statistical survey exceed the cost to providers.
- **Enhancement through integration, accumulation and innovation:** the NSS will emphasize coherence and common standards to maximize the value of available statistical and administrative sources.
- **Efficiency in costs, and fairness in prices:** the NSS will strive to be efficient and to provide value for money in both its costs and its prices.

3. Diagnosis and analysis of the NSS

A comprehensive SWOT analysis was conducted and may be found in the report submitted at the end of the second step of the preparation of the NSDS. This SWOT analysis was geared for identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that the NSS is either enjoying or facing.

Here below is a summary of this analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good legal environment• Excellent professional reputation of the PCBS, both in its capacity to deliver reliable and useable data• Robustness and independence of the PCBS• Committed and motivated staff at the PCBS and in some statistical units• Sound methods of planning and budgeting at the PCBS• Quality of ICT equipment and ability to use them for performance. Computer literacy of the great majority of the agents of the PCBS• High capacity to organize important operations (2007 Population and Housing Census)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited visibility of the national statistical system.• Absence of statistical units or poor capacities in a large number of line ministries• Insufficient coordination among the NSS components.• Timeliness of several time series and statistical indicators• Bad quality of statistical registers• Limited available administrative records in the data sources• Shortages in national accounts• Limited role of the statistical library• Limited metadata• High dependence on donors' funding.

- Adoption by the PCBS of international standards and recommendations, and scientific approaches
- Adoption by the PCBS of the internationally recognized best practices. Subscription to the GDDS proposed by the IMF
- Ability of the PCBS to use some modern techniques.
- Importance attached to strengthening personal capacities of the entire NSS through an adequate training program organised by the PSTC
- Existence of the ACS
- Basket funding (all funding for the PCBS are “mutualized” in a single “Basket”).

Opportunities

- International support
- Awareness of the government of the necessity to have an evidence-based decision-making system
- Near installation of the PCBS in new buildings which offer better conditions of work
- Existence of a national effort to improve the national registers
- Trend to enforce a "State of Law" in Palestine

Threats

- Continuation of the Israeli occupation and the Israeli measures to divide the Palestinian Territory.
- Continuous political instability.
- Sustainability of the funding.



4. Strategic and operational objectives

Six strategic objectives (S.O.) have been defined. They constitute the “leading thread” of the NSDS.

The realisation of the six strategic objectives is based on 22 **operational objectives (O.O.)** that have been proposed in order to permit the practical implementation of the corresponding S.O. The O.O. are completed by a total of 55 sub-objectives.

Following the discussion of the operational objectives, the various actions which together are foreseen to carry out the strategy are presented in a tabular form, specifying the content and approximate timing of the actions proposed for the individual objectives.

A list of the strategic and operational objectives is presented here below:

S.O.1: Strengthening and consolidating the National Statistical System (NSS)

- O.O.1.1: Integrating the NSS by developing its infrastructure and improving its coordination.
- O.O.1.2: Developing the role of statistical units in line ministries and public agencies and, if necessary, creating such units.
- O.O.1.3: Developing the role of bodies supporting the NSS.

S.O.2: Improving the use and dissemination of statistical data and statistical information

- O.O.2.1: Defining a pro-active strategy for statistical data dissemination and developing the National Library of Statistics (NLS).
- O.O.2.2: Improving capacities for statistical analysis, both inside the NSS and among the users.
- O.O.2.3: Improving the use of statistical data in planning and decision making.
- O.O.2.4: Developing statistical literacy in Palestine.
- O.O.2.5: Facilitating and developing the use of statistical data by researchers, academia and students by creating data access centres (DAC).
- O.O.2.6: Continuing efforts to monitor quality and integrate quality concerns at all steps of the production process.

S.O.3: Improving the use of central registers and administrative records. Developing tools for harmonizing data collected from different sources.

- O.O.3.1: Developing the use of central registers.
- O.O.3.2: Developing the use of administrative records and creating a comprehensive data base (CDB).
- O.O.3.3: Harmonizing statistical concepts, classifications and methods with international standards, articulated with national requirements and customized for meeting the needs of the national situation.
- O.O.3.4: Formulating a comprehensive approach and practices as regards metadata.

S.O.4: Developing, improving and expanding subject matters statistics

- O.O.4.1: Developing, improving and expanding subject matters statistics, produced both by the PCBS or other units.
- O.O.4.2: Defining and implementing a national strategy for the censuses.
- O.O.4.3: Developing the quality of sampling frames.
- O.O.4.4: Upgrading data capture techniques.

S.O.5: Developing national, regional and international relations and partnerships

- O.O.5.1: Developing regional and international relations and partnerships.
- O.O.5.2: Strengthening the dialogue between producers and users.
- O.O.5.3: Strengthening relationships with research institutes and universities.

S.O.6: Improving the managerial and technical issues

- O.O.6.1.: Developing the policy of human resources.
- O.O.6.2.: Maintaining sound activity planning and financial planning of the PCBS.

Strategic objective 1:

Strengthening and consolidating the National Statistical System (NSS)

A statistical system comprises all producers and data providers of official statistics and the core users. Such a system has several specific features which include but are not limited to the following:

1. It is comprehensive in that it covers all the institutions working with official statistics, as producers or data providers.
2. It recognizes and works by the basic codes of ethics and good practices for official statistics which lay down the basic rules and responsibilities applicable for all the participants in the system.
3. It recognizes the coordination function of the central official institute specialized in statistics, i.e., in Palestine the PCBS. Coordination means both supervising technically all parts of the system and monitoring the implementation.
4. It uses harmonized classifications and definitions for its production and dissemination of statistics.
5. On the user side, a more visible system approach can help to clarify what the producers and the users should do when it comes to refinement and analysis of data.

The main reasons for having a well working system of official statistics are:

1. It greatly aids and strengthens the production, dissemination and use of statistics.
2. It increases the quality of the statistics owing to the harmonization of sources and methods, the cooperation between the participants and the feedback received as a result of the joint efforts to generate and utilize sound official statistics.
3. It also makes for increased economies and efficiencies in the statistical activities, which is even more important in the case of a country with very limited resources.

After almost 15 years of intense statistical activities, the visibility and reputation of the PCBS is recognized by all its stakeholders that enjoy excellent relations with the PCBS. However, there is no awareness of the existence of a statistical system, even if all public institutions agree on the importance of such a system. The PCBS is encouraged to continue to seek cooperation of all Palestinian authorities for strengthening the coordination of official statistical activities with respect to their source data, classifications, definitions, standards, codes, and the division of labor. Through this, an efficient and effective NSS may be formed. Having such a system in place with the PCBS in

the central coordinating role will greatly enhance the efficiency of the statistical production and its exposure to the users. The main pillars of the system are already in place and could easily be campaigned by putting the NSS in the forefront of the statistical production. At the start PCBS may lose some of its "glory" when taking in others to the family, but PCBS will have a stronger incentive to raise the others to its high standards.

The realization of this first strategic objective (S.O.1) is based on three operational objectives (O.O.1.1 to O.O.1.3) and nine sub-objectives. All these operational objectives and sub-objectives may be met without modifying the General Statistical Law (GSL) No (4), 2000.

Operational objective 1.1:

Integrating the NSS by developing its infrastructure and improving its coordination

All reports produced in recent years by international or national experts insist on the necessity to strengthen and give more visibility to the whole statistical system. The first Master Plan (1995) had the vision of the development of a system of official statistics in Palestine, not only based on the PCBS. The first operational objective in the S.O.1 should therefore be to increase the integration of this system by developing its infrastructure and improving its coordination. Such an integration of the NSS must be realized by putting in the forefront the image and potentialities of the NSS, bringing all units of the system to the same high standards as the ones reached by the PCBS.

"Official Statistics" are defined in the article (1) of the GSL as the "statistics which are made available to the public by the PCBS"; this recognizes the central role played by the PCBS within the NSS but does not mean that official statistics are only the ones which are produced and disseminated by the PCBS. A governmental instruction (circular letter of the Prime Minister to the other members of the Cabinet) should give a wide interpretation of that article in the Palestinian context.

PCBS is, according to the article (3) of the GSL, in charge of establishing a comprehensive and unified statistical system. The President of the PCBS must be the "technical" leader of the NSS for all issues concerning methodologies, concepts, classifications, standards, and methods (including the management of samples frames).

Three sub-objectives will allow the implementation of the operational objective 1.1:

1.1.1. Stating a clear definition of the National Statistical System (NSS)

Output: Brochure of presentation of the NSS

1.1.2. Reinterpreting the meaning of "Official Statistics" in Palestine

Output: Circular letter of the PM to the other members of the Cabinet to clarify the concept of "official statistics"

1.1.3. Clarifying and defining the role of the NSS and the relationship of the PCBS within the NSS

Output: Manual of procedures describing the role of the NSS and the procedures of work for the relations between the PCBS and the other statistical units of the NSS

Operational Objective 1.2:

Developing the role of statistical units in line ministries and public agencies and, if necessary, creating such units

At present there does not seem to be much awareness of the NSS at different levels, although at the level of the lawmaker, the Government, and the PCBS the importance of the NSS is very much appreciated as evidenced by the fact that it is mentioned in the preamble to the GSL (see articles 2, 3, and 13) as well as in the functions assigned by the GSL to the ACS. However, the awareness of the NSS is rather low at lower levels of the government, in line ministries and some public institutions. This is evidenced by the fact that some line ministries use their definitions and classifications which are different from those used by the PCBS, and by the ineffectiveness of statistical units at some line ministries or the total absence of such units. This situation cannot continue because it hinders the integration of the system, it adds higher costs to the operation of the system, raises questions about the integrity of the produced statistics, and therefore reduces the impetus to base decisions on evidence prevailed by produced statistics.

According to an evaluation of the NSS made during the preparatory work for preparing the NSDS, among 22 line ministries or public institutions potentially concerned with the production of statistical data, only 9 have a statistical unit of their own¹ and only 6 of these 9 units are properly functioning² in different ways. The remaining 13 ministries³ have no statistical units.

¹ The Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA), Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE), Ministry of Culture (MoC), Ministry of Labour (MoL), Ministry of Health (MoH), the Automated System of Customs Data ASYCUDA (functioning under the authority of the Ministry of Finance), Ministry of National Economy (MoNE), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and the Environment Quality Authority (EQA).

² The PMA, MoEHE, MoH, ASYCUDA, MoA, and EQA.

³ Ministry of Interior (MoInt), Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), Ministry of Woman Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS), Ministry of Information (MoInf), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Ministry of Communication & Information Technology (MoCIT), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Ministry of Local Governments (MoLG), Ministry of Transportation (MoTr), Ministry of Public Works (MoPW), and Natural Resources Authority (NRA).

The most important reasons for the absence (or weak presence) of statistical units in certain ministries are: no related budgets, reliance on other institutions for statistics, lack of interest in statistical scope, and absence of a specialized cadre in statistics.

A number of Arab forums (including the ones organised by PARIS21) have pointed out the importance of the presence of statistical units in line ministries as a base for building up an active national statistical system, developing cooperation mechanisms and imposing legal cover to guarantee availability of accurate and comprehensive data to the users.

A working paper produced by the PCBS in March 2003 summarized the requirements for reinforcing statistical capabilities in the ministries and achieving the integrated national statistical system:

1. Presence of statistical units in all Palestinian ministries that do not have statistical units.
2. Specialized devoted cadre at PCBS to work with the statistical units in the line ministries.
3. Study by the PCBS of the ministries which do not have statistical units to qualify the technical staff working on the production of statistics at these ministries.
4. Comprehensive administrative record system at the PCBS.
5. Periodic studies about statistical units at the Palestinian ministries.
6. Yearly comprehensive plan for producing statistics prepared in coordination among Palestinian ministries.
7. Information exchange net for coordination among statistical units.
8. An integrated training program, prepared by the Palestinian statistical training centre for reinforcing statistical capabilities at the ministries.
9. Importance of classifications and international standards.

The paper also stressed the necessity of establishing new statistical units at ministries and government institutions and recommended that such units should contain three sections (records and external relations, data collection, data processing and follow up of the international classifications and standards).

When considering the issue of creating or organising statistical units at the line ministries and other public agencies, three issues should be borne in mind: a) the need for a statistical unit has to be

considered at each ministry or public agency; b) the statistical units need not be formed exactly in the same manner, they may differ reflecting the different realities in each of the institutions; and c) care should be taken to ensure flexibility in the creation and organization of the statistical units and activities of line ministries and other NSS units.

Three sub-objectives will allow the implementation of operational objective 1.2:

1.2.1. Drawing up a comprehensive list of units within the NSS

Output: Update of the working paper produced by the PCBS in March 2003, in light of the evaluation of the NSS made during the preparatory work for the NSDS.

1.2.2. Stating the objectives and missions of the statistical units in line ministries and their specific responsibilities

Output⁴: Manual of procedures describing the role of the PCBS within the NSS and the procedures of work for the relations between the PCBS and the other statistical units of the NSS

1.2.3. Creating, if necessary, statistical units in selected ministries

Output: Instruction and procedure manuals to establish statistical units everywhere they are necessary

Operational Objective 1.3: **Developing the role of bodies supporting the NSS**

The creation of the Advisory Council on Statistics (ACS) was a major change which came four years after the publication of the GSL. The ACS, chaired by the Prime Minister, meets twice a year. Its involvement in the NSS is very important as it can guide the work of the system as a whole. At the moment, it is practically limited to advise the PCBS. It has a twofold mission: to make sure that quality data are generated and provided at the right time with an efficient utilization of the available resources, and to ensure that evidence-based decision making processes have a solid basis to build on. In short, its importance emanates from its ability for laying the general framework as well as directing the priorities of the statistical programmes in accordance with national interests.

The ACS is a national body comprising representatives from governmental, non-governmental and

⁴ This output is shared with the output for the O.O.1.1.3

private sectors in addition to academic personalities. Its membership is based on nominations from the Council of Ministers. This should ensure that the composition of the ACS involves fully qualified persons along with national and legal persons capable of giving solid advice on the national statistical priorities. The mandate of the ACS, as provided by the chapter 4 of the GSL, is to:

- (a) Review the annual plans of the PCBS and define areas of priority in the strategic planning of the Palestinian statistics.
- (b) Assess the performance of the official statistical system and promote awareness in utilizing statistics for decision-making.
- (c) Advise the President of the PNA and the Council of Ministers on matters related to developing the system of official statistics.

The ACS should become more involved with the NSS as a whole to ensure the integration of the system, its cost effectiveness, and timeliness of quality data. In addition to that, the ACS should target the resources at the disposal of the NSS towards transforming the system from one of production of statistics into a system for information. This should be given the priority in the future work of the ACS.

By the end of the period covered by the NSDS, the programme of work of the NSS will be presented in a joint document including the programme of work of the PCBS and all statistical units that compose the NSS. The compilation of the joint document will be prepared during the 2nd and 3rd years of the strategy by a working exercise and by the presentation to the ACS of the programme of work of the statistical units. The presentation to ACS will start in the 2nd year with the PMA, the MoEHE , the MoH, and Ministry of Interior and continue in the third year by all the other statistical units according to an agreed programme thereon.

In August 2006, the Council of Ministers approved the Code of Practice for Palestine's Official Statistics. The PCBS seeks, thorough issuing this Code, to develop nationwide statistical practices and strengthen confidence in the NSS. This Code, based on the experience of other statistically developed countries, touches upon a number of topics significant to strengthening the Palestinian official statistics including their legal framework, areas of official statistics, the importance of utilizing accumulative data compiled by the PCBS, the integrity of statistics used in studies and research, the importance of the media in statistics, the role of the media in publishing accurate data, the role of the official statistical institutions (all statistical units at ministries and government agencies in addition to PCBS), and defining the relationship between the President of PCBS and the Prime Minister, who is the immediate person in charge of PCBS.

The Code of Practice also refers to best practices concerning the relationship between the President of PCBS and the statistical units at ministries and government agencies, the role of the Advisory Council on Statistics, implementation and interpretation of the Code, best practices of statistical work based on the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, and the role of ministries and government agencies.

The key objective of the Code of Practice includes:

1. Providing a nationally-approved code of best practices in the official Palestinian statistical work.
2. Circulating the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, approved by the UN Statistical Commission, since they constitute main reference to best practices in official statistical work.
3. Providing further explanation for certain articles and paragraphs of the GSL, thus streamlining official statistical work

Constituting an appropriate framework for the best statistical practices three sub-objectives will allow the implementation of the operational objective 1.3:

- 1.3.1.** Enhancing the role of the Advisory Council on Statistics (ACS) as provided by the chapter 4 of the General Statistics Law by enlarging the review of annual plans to all units of the NSS Outputs: Review by the ACS of statistical working programmes of the different statistical units that compose the NSS. Preparation of a joint document including the programme of work of the PCBS and all statistical units.
- 1.3.2.** Appraising the Code of Practices for Palestine's Official Statistics with a reference to the European Statistics Code of Practices
Output: Filling out the Self-Evaluation Questionnaire. Establishing routines for the regular monitoring of compliance with the Code of Practice
Output: Publicizing the Code of Practice and the protocols through workshops or seminars.

Strategic objective 2:

Improving the use and dissemination of statistical data and statistical information

In most of the statistical offices in developed countries, dissemination is considered as one of their most important missions. It is no longer a passive activity, with the publication of statistical compendiums, books and brochures without knowing exactly what is done by their users with these publications, but a very active – and even interactive – activity where the best solutions to meet users' needs are sought. At the same time, statistics are more and more requested by the decision-makers (public and private) to prepare informed decisions based on facts and evidence.

The organization of the information and dissemination of statistical data and statistical information has been changing, if not being revolutionized. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are now systematically used, not only for data collection and processing, but also for data dissemination.

PCBS has in recent years made big efforts to make its dissemination system work with modern standards. The Information and Systems Directorate (ISD) manages a website, user services, a library and desk top publishing. According to national and international users, the website is functioning well. It has graduated from being a first generation pro-forma face of the PCBS to having a rich content of statistical information, including all the publications and press releases. But it needs further development as regards its content, presentation and updating.

At present the dissemination and information activities are split into separate units within the ISD. The library is rather isolated and only carries out traditional functions, and it is not involved in other information activities of the Bureau. The management of the website and the desk top publishing is organized in other separate units. Queries and requests from outside users are immediately directed to the subject matter departments, which has two immediate consequences in terms of working organization:

1. The time of the subject matter specialists is wasted by dealing with routine queries or simple requests for statistics and metadata.
2. The specialized information officers are not used in the most efficient way since they are able to work quicker in dealing with the requests than the subject matter statisticians.

In many developed countries, modern libraries, also those at statistical offices, have put most of their library stock away and are mainly serving their users by providing access to databases and websites. Such search for information is more efficient and quicker than the traditional search in printed books and it is also the main medium known by the younger generations. The former reading spaces in libraries have been converted into workspaces with workstations for visitors.

On the other hand, it has also been found efficient to merge the information and the publication services into the same unit. Furthermore, while the subject matter statisticians are responsible for updating their own tables on the web, the information department is charged with an overseeing role with respect to the content, presentation and updating of the website.

Thus, the information department plays a key role in the overall operations of the statistical office.

The realization of this second strategic objective (S.O.2) is based on six operational objectives (O.O.2.1 to O.O.2.6) and 16 sub-objectives.

Operational objective 2.1:

Defining a pro-active strategy for the dissemination of statistics and developing the National Library of Statistics (NLS)

First of all, a comprehensive review of the website will be organized and will focus on the contents and relevance of presented data. Accessing the data on the PCBS website has sometimes been reported as being troublesome for different users. Hence, it has been recommended that the website should be developed to make it more user-friendly. In 2003, a survey to assess user satisfaction was undertaken by the PCBS⁵ and the results were reported to an internal workshop. A new survey will be undertaken and extended to all dissemination means.

It is time to reorganize the dissemination and information activities and make them more visible by regrouping them into a unique unit. This unit should become a statistical information centre specialised in both Palestinian and international statistics as is the case in the most developed countries. Giving the name, National Library of Statistics (NLS), as specified in the GSL, will give an upgraded image of data dissemination by the PCBS within the country. An evaluation and assessment of the NLS will be undertaken by the end of the period covered by the NSDS.

In the long term, the NLS will disseminate all data produced by the PCBS or elsewhere within the NSS,

⁵ See a brief report of the results of the 2003 user satisfaction survey in the evaluation of the NSS recently made by Dr. Adel Zagha, national consultant, within the framework of the preparation of the NSDS.

without being detrimental to the direct dissemination by the statistical services of line ministries and public agencies of the data they are producing (in particular for their internal users and direct stakeholders). The PCBS will help the other statistical units of the NSS to organize their own dissemination to guarantee the harmonization of concepts, methods and classifications used and avoid any discrepancy between the figures disseminated.

Three sub-objectives will allow the implementation of the operational objective 2.1:

- 2.1.1.** Evaluating and assessing all data dissemination means (actual and desirable) and creating new supports for data dissemination.

Outputs: Results of the review of the PCBS website

Results of a new user satisfaction survey

- 2.1.2.** Improving the actual means for data dissemination by implementing a National Library of Statistics (NLS), regrouping all the units actually involved in dissemination issues and giving a large visibility to this NLS by upgrading its position in the organizational chart of the PCBS.

Outputs: Creation of the NLS

Appointment of the Head of the NLS

Evaluation of the NLS after two years of functioning

- 2.1.3.** Giving to the NLS the duty of disseminating all data, produced by the PCBS or elsewhere within the NSS

Output: All statistical data produced within the NSS are disseminated by the NLS in a uniform manner.

Operational Objective 2.2:

Improving capacities for statistical analysis, both inside the NSS and among the users

In most countries there is a debate – and sometimes a dispute – on the usefulness of developing analytical capacities within the statistical office or whether it is better to leave this niche to specialized agencies or private consulting firms. The most widespread opinion is that it is useful to develop a minimum expertise in statistical offices; statisticians are thus more aware of the quality of the data they produce and more attentive to their users' needs. A multi-year programme to strengthen the capacities for statistical analysis within the PCBS will be prepared by the Palestinian Statistical Training Centre (PSTC).

For the same reasons, it might be useful to develop some expertise in statistical units of line ministries. Usually, the statistical units in line ministries are linked with the departments in charge of planning and/or studies, which - at least in theory - favors the development of analytical capacities in these units. There is already a very strong expertise for studies at the PMA, and to some extent at the MoEHE. Some other statistical units have also developed some kind of expertise in that direction (MoH, for instance). But the priority continues to be increasing the scope and quality of the statistical production, except maybe in those units that have reached a satisfactory level in that respect.

It is recommended that the present user services unit be upgraded through training and/or by hiring skilled staff to a proper information unit (a small staff of 2 or 3 persons) for dealing with all routine requests from users. Thus, the time of the subject matter specialists is not wasted, the efficiency of the information services is increased and the visibility of the PCBS and NSS is improved. The information unit will be created inside the ISD, but will become one of the units of the NLS after it has been established. The information unit must also be able to respond to requests for information in domains not covered by the PCBS.

Three sub-objectives will support the implementation of the operational objective 2.2:

- 2.2.1.** Preparing a multi-year programme to strengthen the capacities for statistical analysis within the PCBS.

Output: A multi-year programme to strengthen the capacities for statistical analysis

- 2.2.2.** Drawing up the "State of the Art" of the capacities for statistical analysis within the statistical units of line ministries and preparing a multi-year programme to helping these units to strengthen their capacities

Outputs: Review of the current practices of the line ministries and public agencies concerning expertise for studies.

Publication of the multi-year programme aiming at helping the line ministries and public agencies in strengthening their capacities in analytical studies.

- 2.2.3.** Helping all stakeholders to develop their capacities in making the best use of statistical data by developing skilled information functions within the PCBS

Output: Creation of a skilled information unit

Operational Objective 2.3:

Improving the use of statistical data in planning and decision making

The Palestinian government is already committed to basing its planning policy and all its decisions on evidence and facts, and consequently to make extensive use of statistical data and statistical information in its day-to-day work. On the other hand, efforts should be made in the direction of the private decision makers. The PCBS will develop advocacy documents (inspired by the library of documents available at PARIS21) to continue the use of statistical data and information by the Palestinian public authorities and develop a culture of evidence-based decision-making by the private sector. These documents may be also used when discussing the budget allocated to statistical activities by the national budget.

A study will be undertaken to identify the uses of statistical data already made by the ministries in charge of macro-economic development or sector-based policies and help them to define ways for improvement. Another study will be made in the direction of private users. An issue is that it should be argued that it is important to use information rather than statistics, meaning that one should make sure that the data and statistics be formulated as information that can be useful for evidence-based decision making processes. Seminars with selected users will be organised to this end. The results of these seminars will be an input for developing data dissemination.

Three sub-objectives will support the implementation of the operational objective 2.3:

2.3.1. Preparing documents for advocating.

Output: Publication of two documents advocating for better statistics for better results, in the direction of the Palestinian government, on the one hand, and the private sector, on the other hand

2.3.2. Identifying the uses of statistical information already made by the ministries in charge of macro-economic development or sector-based policies and helping them to define ways for improvement

Output: Results of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government

2.3.3. Identifying the uses of statistical information already made by the private sector and helping them to define ways for improvement

Output: Results of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the private sector

Operational Objective 2.4: Developing statistical literacy in Palestine

Reaching this objective is not the direct responsibility of the PCBS, but PCBS is one of the main stakeholders in such a policy. Pupils and students are future users of statistical information. A study will be undertaken to identify all means for developing statistical literacy: primary and secondary schools, institutes of higher education, media and other instances. A seminar on developing statistical literacy will be organized with the help of the MoEHE and universities and intermediate colleges.

Media play a fundamental role in the education of the public at large and may be a powerful ally when the integrity of the statistical system is endangered. In addition to the press releases regularly organized by the PCBS, training seminars will be proposed to the journalists to improve their statistical culture. Furthermore, the PCBS will offer introductory courses to teachers as well as offering to assist in selecting or preparing training material for the school system.

Two sub-objectives will support the implementation of the operational objective 2.4:

- 2.4.1.** Identifying means for developing statistical literacy: primary and secondary schools; technical schools and universities, media and other institutions
Output: Results of a study identifying means for developing statistical literacy
- 2.4.2.** Organizing training seminars for journalists and teachers to improve their statistical culture.
Output: Programme of training seminars for journalists and teachers
Output: Statistical resource centre to serve all users needs
Output: Integrating statistical literacy through training of fieldworkers.

Operational Objective 2.5:

Facilitating and developing the use of statistical data by researchers, academia and students by creating data access centres (DAC)

Granting researchers, academia and students access to micro-data is an important issue. They need data for their studies and research and they often need micro-data rather than aggregated data. However, issues concerning confidentiality of individual data and privacy protection should receive

all the necessary attention. The PCBS has made possible and encouraged the use of micro-data for research by making available public use files containing micro-data from different surveys. These files contain unidentifiable data, i.e., all identifiers have been removed in order to ensure confidentiality. While these files have been greatly appreciated by researchers, at the same time they have been found insufficient for certain types of research as important dimensions have disappeared in the de-identifying process. For this reason it is important to review the supply of and the access to micro-data with the view of making it available for research while at the same time upholding all confidentiality concerns. This calls for rules of procedures on the supply of these data and under what circumstances access should be granted to them.

Creating a Data Access Centre (DAC) placed under the direct responsibility of the PCBS and using all facilities provided by ITC will give more visibility to this policy; it might be a good way to promote but also control the prudent use of micro-data.

Some statistical units of line ministries (MoEHE for instance) may also grant access to the micro-data they produce. Thus, it is urgent to harmonize the rules used by the PCBS as regards access to micro-data (which comply with the international best practices) and those used by the other statistical units within the NSS. By the end of the period covered by the NSDS, it should be possible to find at the DAC all micro-data produced within the NSS.

Three sub-objectives will allow the implementation of the operational objective 2.5:

2.5.1. Giving more visibility to the policy aiming at facilitating access of researchers to micro-data by creating a DAC

Output: Creation of a DAC at PCBS.

2.5.2. Harmonizing the rules within the NSS for giving researchers access to micro-data

Outputs: Manual of rules and procedures for the access of researchers to micro-data

Results of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government, cf. 2.3.above

2.5.3. Evaluating this policy (facilitating access vs. protection of confidentiality of micro-data)

Output: Seminar

Operational Objective 2.6:

Continuing efforts to monitor quality management and integrate quality concerns at all steps of the production process

The PCBS has in the last two years been laying increasing emphasis on quality and intends to continue to do so in a systematic way. To this end, the newly-created Methods, Standards and Quality Directorate⁶ (MSQD) is responsible for monitoring data quality at the PCBS. This is an important effort to ensure that quality management and quality is embedded in the production processes. It is important, however, to realize that such an effort be made temporary rather than permanent until quality management has been fully organized. A group of experts recently reporting to the Core Funding Group of the PCBS outlined the dangers associated with having a separate quality management unit: acceptance by subject matter managers would not be easy; mixing quality management with policing activity instead of supporting the work might be counter-productive and such efforts might not be sustainable in the long run. It was concluded that at the present time the resources of the PCBS might better be used for raising quality in specific fields rather than on total quality management, such as improving the PCBS website, classifications and metadata.

An internal PCBS committee has organized quality monitoring of the different departments and surveys, based to a large extent on a UN paper on Data Quality Management. It has prepared a protocol standard manual for a quality management system. The Master Plan 2001-2010 recommended a Total Quality Management (TQM) approach for the quality management. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) realized in 2005 found that a full TQM approach would be too resource demanding for PCBS, but a flexible TQM approach could be the best guide, utilizing the basics of TQM (with users at the centre, continuous improvements, focus on the core processes, regarding management and administration as support processes, etc.).

Such a policy on data quality management will be followed during the period covered by the NSDS.

Two sub-objectives will support the implementation of the operational objective 2.6:

2.6.1. Making operational the Quality Department within the newly created MSQD

Outputs: Report on the activities of the newly-created Quality Department after one year
Establishing a Quality Coordination Committee within the PCBS

2.6.2. Developing a flexible Total Quality Management (TQM) approach with users at the centre and focusing on the core processes

Output: Periodic peer reviews on quality

⁶ The MSQD has taken over some responsibilities from the previous Planning and Coordination Directorate (PDD) in which it previously was located.

Strategic Objective 3:

**Improving the use of central registers and administrative records.
Developing tools for harmonizing data collected from different sources.**

Utilizing administrative records and registers has been on the agenda of the PCBS from the very beginning. All statistical offices in the world strive to develop the use of administrative records (reducing the response burden on respondents, reducing the budgetary pressure, etc.). The first Master Plan 1995-2000 encouraged this use in statistical production. This was further expanded in the Master Plan 2001-2000. The PCBS has over the years spent quite some effort on this issue. However, the Israeli occupation and the political and administrative situation in the country have not helped to promote these issues.

The Department of Central Registers is concerned with three different registers: the population register, the establishment register, and the register of buildings and housing units.

The population register is an administrative register of all Palestinians with rights to be registered in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Palestinian population of Jerusalem is not included. The Central Register Department receives the register from the Ministry of Interior⁷ and adjusts it on the basis of data on vital events, births, deaths, marriages and divorces, from administrative records from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice. In December 2007, the PNA established a national team for the population register and its updating. This team is formed by representatives of 10 public authorities. It is hoped that this close cooperation between the four main stakeholders (MoI, MoH, MoJ, and the PCBS) will allow further development of the population register, both as administrative and statistical tools. Four studies have been commissioned to consider: (1) the legal environment of the electronic linkage between the data bases of different ministries and public institutions; (2) the computer environment at each ministry; (3) forms, classifications, and concepts and the mechanisms to unify them⁸; and (4) the administrative and implementation procedures of the project. Their findings and recommendations are expected by the end of 2008.

The establishment register is a statistical register based on the censuses and surveys of the PCBS. This entails that the register contains not only formally registered enterprises but also establishments

⁷ Because of the Israeli occupation, the Central Population Register is de facto managed by the Israeli authorities

⁸ All the efforts to unify concepts, classifications and coding did not result in the adoption of one unified system. Even what gets agreed upon is not implemented, for example, the geographical clustering and the name of locations. Therefore, it is normal under these conditions to have different figures for birth rates or death rates or migration rates.

which are operating without the proper and formal licenses. This makes it different from the business register at the MoNE where only licensed businesses are registered⁹.

Likewise, the buildings and housing units register is a statistical register based on the censuses and surveys of the PCBS. It is also based on information on building licenses received from the MoLG. Both of these registers will have to be updated and corrected on the basis of the 2007 Census and will thus be greatly improved as sampling frames at the PCBS.

As stated above, the PCBS has from the beginning of its operation been acquiring the large majority of its data by censuses and surveys. This has proved to be a sound method considering the willingness of both people and firms to participate in surveys and in light of the expertise and efficiency of the PCBS field work. However, the response burden of respondents, particularly enterprises, will inevitably be high in such a small economy which is likely to discourage participation and lower the quality of the response. Moreover, the use of direct surveys is very expensive, particularly in a small country like Palestine that needs to use relatively very large samples to obtain significant results. This will be particularly felt when the PCBS will come to rely on financing from the PNA central budget for the majority of its operations.

For these reasons, it is recommended that the efforts of the PCBS of increasing the use of administrative records and registers for providing source data for statistical purposes be continued and strengthened. This should be done in a special project of identifying available or potential records and registers, making such records and registers fit for statistical use and organizing their continuous maintenance for statistical purposes. Technical assistance may be valuable for this. Such a project needs to be carried out in cooperation with relevant line ministries and public authorities which have administrative records at their disposal or where the potential for establishing or improving such instruments may exist. This involves specialized capacity building in the relevant public institutions which may not only be valuable for statistics but also for public administration and services.

An integral part of such a project is the task of harmonizing statistical concepts, classifications and methods and ensuring that they are used by all statistical units of the NSS. Using administrative records coming from very different sources and being firstly built to meet the needs of the ministry or public agency in charge of the collection of these records, indeed makes such harmonization absolutely necessary.

The ultimate goal will be to create a comprehensive data base (CDB) containing census data, survey data and data produced through the compilation of administrative records. For that, the harmonization

⁹ THE first rules for the registration of firms by the Ministry of National Economy were established before 1967 by two different administrations, the Egyptian one in Gaza Strip and the Jordanian one in the West Bank

of classifications, concepts and definitions is inevitable.

At the same time, one must keep in mind that, in despite of all its difficulties, the Palestinian economy belongs to the global economy and has to develop contacts with all its international partners within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership or other partnerships. One objective of the strategy will therefore also be the harmonization of the statistical concepts, classifications and methods with the international standards.

The realization of this third strategic objective (S.O.3) is based on three operational objectives (O.O.3.1 to O.O.3.3) and nine sub-objectives.

Operational objective 3.1: Developing the use of central registers

Reaching this objective depends on the success of the national teams established by the PNA to improve the quality of registers and create two unique registers (population; businesses).

Meanwhile, it is important for PCBS to create and maintain its own tools for statistical purposes. It should also be born in mind that a statistical business register has a threefold use: sample frame for business surveys and surveys on enterprises, tool for making statistics on the dynamics and demography of enterprises, and data base for economic studies on enterprises. The PCBS will therefore propose to the government a "PCBS's policy":

- The PCBS participates in the national effort to build comprehensive registers that could be used by all stakeholders.
- This national effort could benefit from the experience and capacities of the PCBS staff.
- Meanwhile, the PCBS will develop its own "statistical registers" for statistical purposes, based on the existing registers and available information collected through its current activities.

By the end of the period covered by the strategy, a decision will be taken concerning the use of the "official registers" in the place of the ad-hoc "statistical registers".

The PCBS will also clarify and organize the maintenance of its statistical registers on a continuous basis (a "day-to-day" maintenance).

Three sub-objectives will support the implementation of the operational objective 3.1:

3.1.1. Proposing a "PCBS's policy" to the government

Outputs: Agreement of the government on this policy

Establishing a national team on the establishment register

3.1.2. Organizing a continuous maintenance of the "statistical registers"

Output: Manuals of procedures for the updating of the statistical registers

3.1.3. Adopting the "official registers"

Output: Use of the official registers

Operational objective 3.2:

Developing the use of administrative records and creating a comprehensive data base (CDB) with census data, survey data and data produced by compilation of administrative records

From the beginning of its operations the PCBS has been aiming at making intensive use of administrative records for statistical purposes. Considerable effort has been spent on this, for instance, through discussions and cooperation with various ministries and authorities holding administrative records which are potentially very valuable as source data for official statistics. These efforts have brought out that if this policy is to succeed two preconditions must be observed: a) a decisive government policy on the use of administrative records must be in place and endorsed by the various ministries, and b) specialized capacity building must take place in the relevant public institutions (this may not only be valuable for statistics but also for public administration and services).

In the longer term, developing the use of administrative records will be aimed at creating a comprehensive database (CDB) containing census data, survey data and data produced through the compilation of administrative records. The CDB will be used in both ways:

- It is a tool for managing the flow of statistical data compiled from administrative records between the statistical units which produce them and the PCBS.
- It is an interface with the website and permits easy and frequent updating of the database used in the website to meet users' needs.

At the outset, the PCBS will make all its efforts to strengthen and increase the use of administrative data for statistical purposes. The starting point of this effort will be a formulation and adoption of a government policy authorizing and prescribing the use of administrative records for statistical purposes followed by a comprehensive review, in each ministry or public agency, of all sources of administrative data potentially useful for creating statistical information.

Three sub-objectives are necessary for the implementation the operational objective 3.2:

3.2.1. Laying the foundations for using administrative records for statistical purposes

Outputs: Government policy authorizing and prescribing the use of administrative records for official statistics

A circular letter of the PM to proclaim this policy

3.2.2. Strengthening the efforts to increase the use of administrative records

Outputs: A list of all sources of administrative data potentially useful for creating statistical information

Circular letter of the PM to officialize this list requesting the cooperation of the public agencies involved

3.2.3. Designing an integrated CDB available for all PCBS units and statistical units of line ministries and public agencies

Outputs: Design of the CDB

The CDB is operational.

It is not expected to have an operational CDB before the end of the period covered by the strategy.

Operational objective 3.3;

Harmonizing statistical concepts, classifications and methods with international standards

Classifications and definitions are among the very basics of statistics and there must be a complete agreement on these among all producers of official statistics. The whole NSS has to work in harmony as regards classifications and definitions and it is the role of the PCBS to coordinate this national effort. The PCBS has followed international classifications in most fields. But it is nevertheless a major task to keep track of all the changes and to have a very clear overview which classifications should be used within the NSS. All producers must use the same classifications which have been approved by the PCBS.

Some statistical units may have a particular responsibility in the management of certain classifications because of specific links with international statistical agencies (e.g., MoEHE with UNESCO, or MoH with WHO, the PMA with the IMF), but the final responsibility of coordinating the whole system of classifications must remain within the PCBS.

The Methodology Department of the newly-created Methods, Standards, and Quality Directorate¹⁰ (MSQD) is responsible for coordinating, maintaining and updating the system of classifications. The coordination concerns which classifications are appropriate in each survey or data collection and should be used. Until now, the deployment of the international classifications has been quite uniform, but this situation may change with the increasing use of administrative records. Hence, care must be taken that the definitions used in these administrative records are in as much harmony as possible with the statistical definitions.

One specific point should be considered: European classifications are coherent and fully compatible with international standards. Within the context of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue, it might advisable to take the European standards as a reference¹¹. Anyway, the international classifications need to be customised to adapt to the national context. The experience of other countries or regions shows that it is feasible.

The MTR 2005 had already found that, as the use of different international and other classifications by the NSS would be substantially increasing, the PCBS would need a classification system (a server of classifications) to ensure correct and harmonised use of the various classifications --- international, Arabic, European or national --- in the data collection, the processing and the dissemination of statistics. The PCBS needs to organise a data base for all classifications that are in use, have been in use or might be in use. Through an efficient server of classifications built with modern ICT techniques, this data base should be made easily accessible for all producers (PCBS and all units within the NSS) and users of statistics.

After one year of functioning of the newly established organisational structure of the PCBS, it would be useful and advisable to assess the methods of work and results of the new Directorate.

Three sub-objectives will allow the implementation of the operational objective 3.2.:

3.3.1. Providing all classifications used at the PCBS and in other statistical units of the NSS.

Output: Copies of the available classifications used in Palestine.

¹⁰ See also the O.O.2.6.

¹¹ A tool for assessing the gaps might be found in the updated version (2005) of the Statistical Requirements Compendium, produced by Eurostat (last version: 2005). This compendium was produced within the context of the accession of new member countries to the EU, but is also used by countries benefiting of the European Neighbouring Policy). See the link: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/statmanuals/files/Stat_Requirements_CompPENDIUM_2005_EN.pdf

- 3.3.2.** Assessing and bridging the gaps between the concepts, classifications and methods used by the PCBS and the international ones and proposing a programme of work to reduce these gaps.
Output: Results of a study aiming at assessing the gaps.
- 3.3.3.** Preparing a system of classifications (manual or automatic through a server of classifications).
Output: The server of classifications is operational.

Operational objective 3.4:

Formulating a comprehensive approach and practices as regards metadata

Metadata means data about the data and about statistics. Metadata provide the user with information that makes it possible to evaluate the data and the statistics, gauge their strengths and weaknesses, and see the scope and limits of the data and their sources. Having ample and good metadata is indispensable to facilitate the switch from supply-driven production to user-driven statistical information. To this end, metadata formats, standards and systems have been designed and utilised to describe and guide the producers and users of statistics.

The MTR 2005 advocated that the PCBS should prepare the implementation and the application of a metadata system applying modern software for that purpose. But such development has not taken place at the PCBS. It will be advisable to take a simple and pragmatic approach and focus on the content of the metadata rather on the technique with the aim to provide the users with information on data and statistics in a systematic and uniform manner. A first step will be to select suitable formats for the metadata. A second step will be to adopt a plan and a fixed timetable for writing the metadata and lay down how the metadata are to be managed and updated within the PCBS and made accessible to the users. This will be the task of the newly-created MSQD.

This work will also contribute to the operational objective 2.6 (quality improvement). It is recommended that use is made of formats used by international institutions, such as the formats prescribed by the IMF for the General Data Dissemination Standards (GDDS) which the PCBS has subscribed to, and the Special Data Dissemination Standards (SDDS). The PCBS is already subscribing to the GDDS and will during the NSDS period work towards fulfilling the requirements of the SDDS.

One sub-objective will permit to implement the operational objective 3.4:

- 3.4.1.** Creating, implementing and updating a system of metadata accessible to the users

Strategic objective 4:

Developing, improving and expanding subject matter statistics

Various missions realized by external experts and internal working groups in the PCBS have listed the weaknesses of the existing subject matter statistics and their gaps and failures in proposing a comprehensive panorama of the Palestinian social, economic and environmental situation. Valuable proposals for developing, improving and expanding subject matter statistics were proposed by the External Review Report produced on April 11, 2008, by a Group of Experts submitted to the Core Funding Group (see also the Diagnosis Report on the Master Plan 2001-2010 produced on 24 July 2008 by the National Consultant who worked on the preparation of the NSDS). The PCBS has already organized a follow up in order to fulfil these recommendations.

It is important to mention that the final results of the Population and Housing Census conducted in 2007 were announced on 1 September 2008 for the West Bank. This announcement demonstrated that the 2007 Census has been a major success. The data collection was successful in spite of the very adverse conditions for carrying out such an operation and in spite of political discussions concerning the objectives and the uses of the census. It should be considered as a major achievement of the PCBS that by strictly adhering to the principles of official statistics it was accepted that the census was conducted in all territories of Palestine, including the Gaza Strip. It should also be considered as an indicator on successful sustainable building of an independent and highly professional institution.

The PCBS and Palestinian statistics will benefit much from the 2007 Census. Basically, it will render all the traditional information on population, the households, their housing and economic activities as well as additional information on living conditions and establishments. The census will also be of great importance for future data collection of the PCBS. It has rendered completely new information on the dispersal and the settlement of the population, allowing new maps to be drawn up. It will further mean that new sampling frames can be drawn up replacing the existing ones which are mainly based on the 1997 Census. Finally, it may allow some formation of registers with the potential of being updated, such as in agriculture and in construction.

The Agriculture Census planned for 2010 will benefit much from the data collected in the Population and Housing Census 2007. Data sources for agricultural statistics are rather poor. Time lags for getting and compiling administrative records are often too great. It is therefore important to conduct the Agriculture Census in good conditions.

As concerns surveys on firms, the development of the sample frames will largely depend on the

quality of business registers (see S.O.3).

On the other hand, the use of modern data capture techniques will help to reduce the costs and accelerate the release of results.

The realisation of this fourth strategic objective (S.O.4) is based on four operational objectives (O.O.1 to O.O.4) and ten sub-objectives.

Operational Objective 4.1:

Developing, improving and expanding subject matter statistics produced both by PCBS or other NSS units

The main existing problems concerning the population and social statistics are:

- Small size of the samples for making reliable break-downs for small geographic areas.
- Limited flexibility for changing questionnaires.
- Limited metadata and documentation of quality.
- Some unrealistic figures (e.g., poverty rate or child labor rate).

Economic statistics present signs of weaknesses. The existing problems are:

- Shortages and disturbances of sources linked to adverse conditions of work.
- Collection of data for foreign trade statistics (links with Israeli customs, collection of VAT vouchers, etc.) and for balance of payments statistics.
- Lack of update of some methods (e.g., necessity of rebasing the CPI regularly by using the most recent household expenditure statistics).
- Statistics on informal sector and generally on SMEs and individual (family) firms are not produced in good conditions.
- Problems in compiling national accounts, in particular late and deficient flows of source data (foreign trade, balance of payments, government finance, construction, transport, etc.)

The programme of work concerning area statistics is far from being comprehensive:

- Available data on the agricultural situation in Palestine consist of estimates which do not reflect the real situation on the ground. They depend on data from the different localities but not from the agricultural holdings recommended by the FAO. Also no complete sample frames are available for conducting agricultural surveys.

- There is a need for more detailed data on tourists and hotels, on tourist expenditures, and on the supply and capacities within this sector.
- In the field of environment, there is a need for harmonisation between surveys and administrative records.
- The situation for transportation statistics is discouraging.
- It is very difficult to collect data on East Jerusalem because of the de facto annexation by Israel of this part of the Palestinian territory.

Five sub-objectives will support developing, improving and expanding subject matters statistics and implementing the operational objective 4.1:

- 4.1.1.** Identifying the shortages and shortcomings of the subject matter statistics and listing actions necessary to reduce the gaps
Outputs: Report on the shortages and shortcomings of the subject matter statistics
Programme of work to reduce the gaps
- 4.1.2.** Strengthening the dependence on administrative registers and data by re-examining all data sources potentially useful for statistical purposes, connecting directly with data sources providing electronic records when it is feasible
Output: Report on strengthening the dependence on registers and administrative records
- 4.1.3.** Improving the harmonization of work methodologies between PCBS and all units in the NSS (see also S.O.1, sub-objective 1.1.3. of the O.O.1.1)
Output: Manual of procedures describing the role of the NSS and the procedures of work for the relations between the PCBS and the other statistical units of the NSS, see also 1.1.3.
- 4.1.4.** Widening the data sources for the informal sector
Output: Report on a comprehensive project to improve the knowledge of the informal sector
Frame of a household sample survey on the informal sector
Realization of a new household survey on the informal sector
- 4.1.5.** Studying alternative methods for reducing the dependence on the Israeli authorities when appropriate (e.g., population register, foreign trade statistics, balance of payments, etc.)
Output: Report on alternative methods for reducing the dependence on the Israeli authorities

The production of many of these outcomes has already been scheduled in the programme of work 2009-2011 of the PCBS.

Operational Objective 4.2:

Defining and implementing a National Strategy for the Censuses

The collection of data and dissemination of results of the Population and Housing Census 2007 will be followed by an evaluation of its quality. This evaluation and the work that will be undertaken in 2009 for preparing the Agriculture Census (scheduled for 2010) will be a good platform for launching a study on strategies for future censuses (in particular their role to assess the quality and update statistical registers). The preparation of the establishment census will be a part of this study.

The production of many of these outcomes has already been scheduled in the programme of work 2009 – 2011 of the PCBS.

Two sub-objectives will permit implementation of the operational objective O.O.8.2

4.2.1. Assessing the quality of the PHC 2007

Output: Report on the quality of the PHC

4.2.2. Preparing strategies for future censuses

Outputs: Report on the use of censuses to update and develop registers.

National Strategy for the Censuses

Operational Objective 4.3:

Developing the quality of sampling frames

Upgrading the quality of sampling frames is necessary in order to improve the quality of statistical data and increase users' confidence in statistics. Improving the quality of sampling frames and building sound and reliable sampling frames make it necessary to ensure that there are sufficient methodological capacities within the specialized unit at the service of all PCBS subject matter departments as well as the statistical units of line ministries and public agencies. Hence, it is important that the expertise of the Sampling Department is kept up to date in line with the most recent methods. Training abroad is of importance for this purpose.

The role of the PSTC will be fundamental for reaching this objective.

The PCBS has for a long time cooperated with different ministries and institutions on sample surveys: by drawing the samples, providing the sampling frames and/or carrying out a whole survey. While such cooperation is expected to continue the division of labour between the PCBS and the statistical units of line ministries and public agencies as regards sample surveys is subject to regular review. Different possibilities may be considered:

1. The PCBS may undertake the whole process for making a survey on behalf of the statistical unit (sampling frame, sampling, and collection and processing of data). In this case, a MoU is signed between the PCBS and this statistical unit (including the description of the funding of the survey).
2. The PCBS designs the sampling frame and draws the sample that is transmitted to the statistical unit that will collect and process the data for this survey.
3. The capacities of the statistical unit are developed enough and this unit will also prepare the sampling frame.

Two sub-objectives will permit implementation of the operational objective 4.3:

4.3.1. Developing methodological capacities.

Output: Strengthening the specialised unit devoted to sampling and sampling frames by training specialists abroad

4.3.2. Regular review of the cooperation between PCBS and other agencies on sampling and sample surveys.

Output: Review of the organization of sample surveys in statistical units of line ministries and public agencies

Operational Objective 4.4: Upgrading data capture techniques

The use of modern data capture techniques will help to reduce the costs and accelerate the release of results. Among the different possibilities to improve data capture techniques are, for instance, using hand held devices to register data, website surveys, telephone enquiries etc. These methods have all been considered at the PCBS.

Web technologies are well known by the Field Work Directorate (FWD) and Information and Services Directorate (ISD) and it has been found logical to start a first experiment for collecting data through the web. At the time of writing, a pilot web survey on hotel accommodation is being carried out by the FWD. Preparing data collection by using hand held devices might also be easy to organise, the difficulty being perhaps the training of the surveyors. Such devices are, for instance, used in several countries for collecting basic prices used for the computation of the CPI or for the surveys on household consumption.

Collection of data by telephone might be more problematic because of the increasing use of mobile phones in Palestine making it very difficult to get in touch with the sampled respondents. Studies carried out by the FWD also show that Palestinians attach much importance to being interviewed face to face. Thus, the application of telephone surveys are thought to be likely to lead to increased non-response and be detrimental to the quality of the data collected.

One sub-objective will support the implementation of the operational objective 4.4:

4.4.1. Assessing the feasibility of using modern data capture techniques and implementing them.

Output: Report on the feasibility of using a specific data capture technique

Decisions of implementing data capture techniques

Strategic objective 5:

Developing national, regional and international relations and partnerships

Statistics is a global activity, having both characteristics of administrative work (like the work done in ministries or public agencies) and research (like the work done by researchers or academia, aiming at increasing the knowledge of the society). This makes it necessary for statistical offices and statisticians to develop a network of relations and partnerships at international, regional and national levels.

There are important links between this strategic objective and the strategic objectives S.O.1 and S.O.2.

The realisation of the fifth strategic objective is based on three operational objectives (O.O.5.1 to O.O.5.3) and five sub-objectives.

Operational objective 5.1:

Developing regional and international relations and partnerships

There are various kinds of international or regional meetings:

1. Official (and often decision-making) meetings following from international agreements signed by the PNA, such as the meetings of the UN family (UN Statistical Commission, UNESCWA, UN specialised agencies, etc.), or the Arab League.
2. Regional and international conferences, seminars, working groups as the ones organised by international organisations (UN, IMF, World Bank) or by the European Union (e.g., in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue - MEDSTAT seminars - or the European Neighbourhood Policy).
3. Scientific congresses, conferences or seminars organised by non-governmental scientific associations like the biennial sessions of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) or the independent conferences of the different sections of the ISI, not least the International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS) and the International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS), or the International Population Conferences of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP).

4. Participation in international statistical projects.

The attendance of the meetings belonging to the first category above is most often reserved for the leaders of the national statistical institutes or their immediate assistants (these meetings are "official" in the way that their outcomes may commit Palestine in specific decisions). However, it would be useful and valuable to try to distribute the attendance at international meetings in the second and third categories above as much as possible between middle management and the statistical experts in order to reap the most benefit from the valuable exercise of attending such meetings. In the same vein, it may be valuable to facilitate the participation of young statisticians in the meetings of the second and third categories. The participation of statisticians working in the NSS outside the PCBS should also be considered and encouraged. They should be encouraged to prepare and present papers during these events.

A specific report to assess and evaluate the usefulness of international and regional relations of the PCBS and other units of the NSS during these recent years will be prepared.

Two sub-objectives will support the implementation of the operational objective 5.1:

5.1.1. Rationalising the policy for regional and international relations

Output: Report to assess and evaluate the usefulness of international and regional relations of the PCBS and other units of the NSS during these recent years

5.1.2. Adopting a policy for participation of Palestinian statisticians in international events (official decision-making meetings, other official meetings such as seminars or symposiums, meetings organised by non-governmental organisations)

Output: Circular letter of the President of the PCBS to propose the rules to be followed for participation of Palestinian statisticians in international events.

Operational objective 5.2: Strengthening the dialogue between producers and users

The main institutional means to organise a dialogue between producers and users are the meetings of the ACS. But other means may be developed: establishing permanent user groups, dialogue around requests for statistical data, users' satisfaction surveys, periodic users' conferences, etc. The PCBS has also spent efforts on user training, involving the conduct of seminars and workshops on the

individual surveys and their results as well as the organisation of courses on methods and statistical data analysis.

The goal of the national partnership with users is not only to facilitate the access of users to all available statistical information (see the strategic objective S.O.2) but also to prepare a National Statistical Programme that meets the needs of all categories of users (role of the ACS – see the strategic objective S.O.1).

There is only one sub-objective for the implementation of operational objective 5.2:

5.2.1. Strengthening the dialogue with users by establishing user groups in key statistical areas to discuss the priorities in the generation of statistics, helping to establish the programme of work in the different areas, discussing access of users to statistical data and other ways of meeting the needs of all categories of users

Output: Establishment and operation of user groups

Operational objective 5.3: **Strengthening the relationships with research institutes and universities**

The importance of this operational objective is linked, not only with the knowledge of the needs of this specific category of users, but also with the fact that these users are experts in their domain and may be aware of the quality of data and influence further improvements in the data collection and processing.

Two sub-objectives will allow the implementation of the operational objective 5.3., the outputs being shared by the two sub-objectives:

5.3.1. Specifying the nature of the relations with research institutes and universities and defining ways for improving them

5.3.2. Specifying the “rules of the game” and the responsibilities in the domain of statistical analysis

Outputs: Organizing a working group between academia and PCBS staff to propose ways and means to strengthen the relations with research institutes and universities and define ways for improving them

Agreement with academia to specify what are and where are the responsibilities in the domain of statistical analysis

Strategic objective 6:

Improving the managerial and technical issues

The PCBS is a well-working machinery with a regular collection of data and production of statistics. The PCBS enjoys an excellent reputation and is considered to be one of the most efficient and transparent Palestinian institutions. It has shown its capacity to work under the very difficult context resulting from the Israeli occupation and Palestine's political situation. It counts upon very dedicated staff that has acquired a good understanding and experience of official statistics. The challenge is now to extend this mark of excellence to the entire NSS.

Within the PCBS, the Administrative and Financial Directorate (AFD) is responsible for providing administrative services to the PCBS organization and running of its Management Information System (MIS), that comprises financial system, administration, procurement, and human resources. Regular programmes and activities include further development of the MIS, customization of the archive system and training the staff to use it. There is investment in a new building the design of which will help the corporate image of the PCBS and its professional environment.

The realisation of this sixth strategic objective (S.O.6) is based on two operational objectives (O.O.1 and O.O.2) and seven sub-objectives.

Operational objective 6.1:

Developing the policy of Human Resources (HR)

The main challenge concerning the managerial and technical issues is the development of the policy of Human Resources (HR). The PCBS is very much concerned with the profile of each job description, the qualifications required for each job, and the sustainability of the training-on-the job programmes to increase the skills of the staff and provide them with the new knowledge needed for the work. Therefore, PCBS is developing a Competence Profiling System to more efficiently match the needs with the staff profiles and has developed the necessary form to collect the required data on each employee and job. The PCBS is also concerned with the transfer of good management practices to other PNA institutions.

Strengthening the policy for the management of HR is crucial for the PCBS, in particular as concerns

the description of necessary profiles, policy for recruitment, training and management of careers, organisation of training activities and definition of curriculum and programmes, both for the first recruitment and for advanced training. Such a policy should address not only the PCBS, but the whole NSS.

The role and missions of the Palestinian Statistical Training Centre (PSTC) are very important in this respect. The PSTC must be responsible for identifying training needs both for the staff of the PCBS and statistical units of line ministries and public agencies. It should have an excellent knowledge of the training possibilities offered in Palestinian universities and abroad.

As concerns the training policy, the training is quite diversified at present, ranging from general courses (such as in languages) to specialised IT courses. Much of the training takes place within the PCBS but there is also a lot of training outside the PCBS and in other countries. Most of the specialised courses are given by experts from the Palestinian universities and foreign experts. An important number of PCBS staff members (e.g., 148 in 2007) attend many training courses, workshops and conferences abroad, funded by international programmes. In addition, the PCBS has invested in university education of its staff (bachelor students, master students and even one PhD have received direct or indirect scholarships from the PCBS).

The new building of the PCBS will offer new opportunities for increasing and improving activities for the PSTC (new facilities and equipment for training). The PSTC has three functions: training, research and consultations, but until now only the training function has been actively pursued. In the coming years, the PSTC will activate its research and consultation functions, such as improving the quality of the training for the benefit of the whole NSS.

Four sub-objectives will allow the implementation of operational objective 6.1:

- 6.1.1.** Adopting a comprehensive policy of HR (description of necessary profiles, policy for, training and management of careers, organization of training activities, definition of curriculum and programmes)

Output: Report on a comprehensive policy for HR

- 6.1.2.** Widening the scope of the HR policy to cover all statistical units within the NSS by helping and advising the persons responsible for these units to improve the capacities and careers of their statistical staff

Output: Agreements with the Heads of all statistical units within the NSS

- 6.1.3.** Specifying the role and missions of the Palestinian Statistical Training Centre (PSTC) at the service of PCBS and statistical units in line ministries and line agencies. Planning a comprehensive training programme meeting training needs of all components of the NSS, and comprising basic training (newly recruited staff) and "long-life" training

Output: Report on the role and missions of the PSTC at the service of all statistical units within the NSS

- 6.1.4.** Specifying the role and missions of the PSTC in other activities: users' education, consulting activities, etc.

Output: Report on the role and missions of the PSTC in activities other than training

Operational objective 6.2: **Maintaining sound activity planning and financial planning of the PCBS**

The activity planning, the financial planning and the reporting systems developed at PCBS are generally considered to be excellent as evidenced by the recent reviews and appraisals carried out by independent experts. There is consequently no immediate need to revise this policy. It is nevertheless worth highlighting this issue to have a comprehensive presentation of the NSDS. A review of the activity planning policy may be useful by the end of the period covered by the strategy.

PCBS will aim at decreasing the dependence to donors. This can be done in several ways:

- Reducing expenses through gains of productivity, increased use of administrative data, rationalisation of the system of sample surveys, etc.
- Selling services inside the territories (increasing sale of publications, making economic and social studies, making tailor-made tables and publications, etc.); to this end, the AFD has developed a pricing system based on rating of the services required for private usage of data.
- Offering TA to some Arab countries that are less advanced than Palestine; such TA activities may also increase the professional capacities of people involved in it, but have severe limitations¹².

¹² PCBS is not a consulting firm; its principal mission is to produce statistics as a public good for the benefit of all users including citizens. In no country is

- Improving the utilization of the available human and financial resources

On the other hand, it will be important to call for TA only in the domains where Palestinian capacities are not sufficient. A three year planning cycle will be useful to know well in advance what will be the needs of the NSS for TA and in order to select the best consultants available. Organising peer reviews on the general situation of the NSS or on specific technical problems will be considered and funding will be searched for these activities. The possibility to propose twinning projects to the European Commission will also be considered.

Four sub-objectives will allow implementation of the operational objective 6.2:

6.2.1. Reviewing the activity planning policy

Output: Evaluation of the planning methods for statistical activities

6.2.2. Defining a funding strategy and proposing measures for reducing dependence to donors (advantages and problems)

Outputs: Overview of the relations of the PCBS with donors in the period 2001 – 2010.

Report on the funding strategy

6.2.3. Making better use of TA

Outputs: Evaluation of the role, outputs and outcomes of TA to the PCBS in the last few years

Rolling 3-year programme in order to obtain the maximum efficiency of the TA



5. Implementation of the NSDS

The action programme proposed for the NSDS is very varied and concerns many agents, both many Directorates and Departments within the PCBS and several ministries, local authorities and public institutions in the country. For these reasons it is important to agree on and adopt a comprehensive policy for both the implementation and the monitoring of the NSDS programme of actions. Yet another reason might be that as the programme progresses, it will become necessary to adapt it to new realities and align it to changes in circumstances: within Palestine, within the Palestinian government and within the institutions forming the National Statistical System. Hence, a comprehensive implementation and monitoring policy is certainly called for.

Implementing and monitoring the NSDS action programme must be a joint task for the NSS. The PCBS will have the lead in the NSDS owing to its central role in Palestinian official statistics, as specified in law. Hence in the NSS there seem to be two conditions which must be fulfilled if the NSDS and the action programme is to be successful: one the one hand, that the NSS at large is made responsible for the implementation of the action programme and, on the other hand, that the joint ownership of the NSDS and the action programme is recognised by the various ministries, local authorities and other public institutions of the NSS.

For these reasons it is proposed that the implementation and the monitoring of the NSDS and its action programme be entrusted to a high-level NSDS Board. The Board should be led by the PCBS and composed of several representatives of the Board of Directors of the PCBS and by senior officials of 3-5 NSS ministries and institutions. The NSDS Board should present progress reports to the ACS. Care should also be taken to distribute the progress reports to all Heads of Departments at the PCBS and to their colleagues in equivalent positions at other NSS institutions. These progress reports might be followed up by seminars for NSDS partners no less than once a year.



6. Action Plan

The following table contains the action plan with required resources.

**S.O.1: Strengthening and consolidating the National Statistical System (NSS):
O.O. 1.1. Integrating the NSS by developing its infrastructure and improving its coordination**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Presentation of the NSDS to the PM and ACS. Liaising with the ACS and the PM on the presentation of the NSS and its development. Establishing (confirming) contacts with other institutions within the NSS in preparation of the circular letter and future work.	PCBS: Drafting a brochure presenting the NSS and its prospective developments to users and other producers of official statistics. PM: Sending out a circular letter to the cabinet to clarify the concept of official statistics and request cooperation on the development of the NSS.	PCBS: Meetings with other official statistical units and preparatory work on the compilation of a manual of procedures clarifying the role of the NSS and the relationship between the PCBS and the NSS (NSS Manual).	
Year 2	PCBS: Meetings and preparations for the NSS Manual, continued	PCBS: Final work on the draft version 1.0 of the NSS Manual	PCBS: Presentation of the draft version 1.0 of the NSS Manual to the ACS	
Year 3	The NSS Manual implemented by the PCBS and the statistical units of the ministries.	The NSS Manual implemented by the PCBS and the statistical units of the ministries.	The NSS Manual implemented by the PCBS and the statistical units of the ministries.	
Year 4	NSS: Meetings on the experience and possible revision of version 1.0 of the NSS Manual	PCBS: Work on the revision of version 1.0 of the NSS Manual.	PCBS: Presentation of the draft version 1.1. of the NSS Manual to the ACS.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Meetings and preparations for the NSS Manual, continued.	1 man-year (incl. infrastructure). NB. This means that it is assumed that the volume of work is increased by the equivalent of one man year (which may of course be distributed between more than more staff members).
	PCBS: Final work on version 1.0 of the NSS Manual. ACS: Adoption of the NSS Manual .	Same work load as in year 1
	The NSS Manual implemented by the PCBS and the statistical units of the ministries.	Same work load as in year 1
	ACS: Adoption of version 1.1 of the NSS Manual.	Same work load as in year 1

O.O. 1.2. Developing the role of statistical units in line ministries and public agencies and, if necessary, creating such units

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1		<p>PCBS: Establishing a comprehensive list of units within the NSS. Updating the working paper from March 2003 on reinforcing the statistical capabilities in the ministries in the light of recent discussions.</p> <p>PCBS: Drafting of an action plan for improving the infrastructure in ICT and training in the line ministries.</p>	<p>PCBS: Updating the working paper (March 2003), continued.</p> <p>PCBS: Drafting of an action plan, continued.</p> <p>PCBS and line ministries: Discussion of the draft updated working paper and draft action plan.</p>	
Year 2	<p>PCBS: Execution of the first stage of the action plan for improving infrastructure: training and ICT in first line ministry.</p> <p>PCBS and a relevant line ministry: Creation of a statistical unit in the ministry.</p>	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in second group of ministries.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of a statistical units in the ministries.</p>	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in third group of ministries.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of statistical units in the ministries.</p>	
Year 3	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in fifth group of ministries.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of statistical units in the ministries.</p>	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in sixth group of ministries.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of statistical units in the ministries.</p>	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in seventh group of ministries.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of statistical units in the ministries.</p>	
Year 4	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in other NSS institutions.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant NSS institutions: Reorganisation of statistical activities.</p>	<p>PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in other NSS institutions.</p> <p>PCBS and relevant NSS institutions: Reorganisation of statistical activities.</p>	<p>PCBS: Compilation of a draft report on the organisation of statistical units in NSS ministries and institutions.</p>	

Quarter 4	Resource requirements
PCBS: Presentation of the updated working paper and the action plan to the ACS.	1 man year (incl. infrastructure). Training for ministries = 2 general training courses.
PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in fourth group of ministries. PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of statistical units in the ministries.	Same general work load as in year 1. Infrastructure improvements: 4 training courses (1 course for each group of ministries), 2 man years of IT experts (incl. infrastructure)
PCBS: Execution of the action plan continued: training and ICT in other NSS institutions. PCBS and relevant line ministries: Creation of statistical units in the ministries.	General work load, training and IT same as in year 2.
NSS Conference on the experience and future of statistical units and activities in the system of official statistics.	General work load, training and IT same as in year 2.

O.O. 1.3. Developing the role of bodies supporting the NSS

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	ACS and PCBS: Creation of a permanent secretariat of the ACS within the PCBS	ACS: Review of the Code of Practice for Palestinian Official Statistics	ACS: Review of the Code of Practice for Palestinian Official Statistics, continued. PCBS: Revision of European self-evaluation questionnaire with respect to PCBS realities.	
Year 2	PCBS: Presentation of the outcome of the self-evaluation to all PCBS staff. PCBS: Preparing and drafting routines for regular monitoring of compliance with the Code of Practice.	PCBS: Presentation to the ACS of the self-evaluation and the draft routines. ACS: Discussion of the application of these instruments at other units of the NSS. PCBS: Organisation of international peer-review of the PCBS according to European standards.	PCBS: Discussions with line ministries on their statistical programmes of work. PCBS: Drafting of a standard format for compiling and presenting statistical work programmes of ministries and other units of the NSS.	
Year 3	PCBS: International peer-review of the PCBS. NSS: Start of a working exercise to produce a joint NSS document of work programmes.	PCBS: Analysis and internal discussions of the outcome of the peer-review. NSS: Work exercise on joint document, continued. PCBS: Preparations for self-evaluation in ministries.	NSS: Work exercise on joint document, continued. PCBS and NSS: First round of self-evaluation in other NSS bodies: ministries with statistical units. PCBS: Organisation of Arab peer-review of the PCBS.	
Year 4	Arab peer review of the PCBS.	PCBS: Analysis and internal discussions of the outcome of the peer-review. PCBS: Preparations for self-evaluation in ministries.	PCBS and relevant units: Second round of self-evaluation: other ministries with statistical units.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Implementation in all PCBS directorates of the self-evaluation on basis of revised questionnaire.	Work load absorbed by PCBS.
	PCBS and relevant bodies: Presentation to the ACS of the work programme of the PMA, MoEHE and MoH. PCBS: Preparations for international peer-review of the PCBS according to European standards.	Work load absorbed by PCBS.
	PCBS and NSS: Presentation to the ACS of draft joint document of the work programmes of the ministries. Analysis and presentation of the outcome of the first round of self-evaluation in ministries with statistical units. PCBS: Preparations for Arab peer-review.	Work load absorbed by PCBS. Cost of int. peer review (fees, travel, hotel etc. cost for 3 int. experts for 1 work week + preparations and reporting).
	NSS: Presentation to the ACS of joint document of work programmes of the NSS PCBS and relevant units: Third round of self-evaluation: other NSS institutions with statistical units.	Work load absorbed by PCBS. Cost of Arab peer review (fees, travel, hotel etc. cost for 3 Arab experts for 1 work week + preparations and reporting).

S.O.2: Improving the use and dissemination of statistical data and statistical information:**O.O.2.1. Defining a pro-active strategy for the dissemination of statistics and creating the National Library of Statistics (NLS)**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Evaluation of the PCBS website and intranet continued with help of TA from abroad. Results of the PCBS satisfaction survey analysed and presented to the PCBS staff and the ACS. Work and training to strengthen and upgrade the information unit.	PCBS: Evaluation of the PCBS website and intranet finalized and draft proposals for renewal of the website management tools and web management presented. Work and training to strengthen and upgrade the information unit.	PCBS: Decisions reached on renewal of the PCBS website on: a) management software, b) deployment of interactive web data base (PC-Axis, PX-web), c) web management policy including the creation of the post of a webmaster. Appointment of the head of the NLS. Appointment of webmaster. Work and training to strengthen and upgrade the information unit.	
Year 2	PCBS: Execution of the renewal of the website continued. Preparation of an action plan for the establishment of the NLS, continued with the addition of including other NSS units in discussions and proposals.	PCBS: Draft action plan for the establishment of the NLS (including a time plan and plan for coverage of other NSS bodies) finalized and discussed. PCBS: New user satisfaction survey conducted and analysed.	PCBS: Execution of the renewal of the website finalised. Presentation of the draft NLS action plan to the ACS.	
Year 3	PCBS: First phase of the action plan for the establishment of the NLS continued.	PCBS: Second phase of the action plan for the establishment of the NLS, started.	PCBS: Second phase of the action plan for the establishment of the NLS, continued.	
Year 4	PCBS and other NSS units: Conclusion of the action plan for the establishment of the NLS.	PCBS: New user satisfaction survey conducted and analysed.		
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	<p>PCBS: First phase of the execution of the renewal of the website.</p> <p>Action plan prepared (with the aid of TA) for the establishment of the NLS, including proposals for changes in organisation, transfer of responsibilities, necessary staffing, training, TA and study visits to other NSO's. Work and training to strengthen and upgrade the information unit.</p>	<p>General: 1 man year (incl. infrastructure). IT on website and web tables: 1 man year. TA on web and dissemination = 2 missions of 2 weeks each. New position: Head of NLS = salaries + infrastr + study visit abroad Webmaster = additional salaries + infrastr.+ study visit abroad Upgrading skills of information unit: 3 training courses. Hiring of new info. specialists: 2 new staff members + infrastr. + study visit abr.</p>
	<p>PCBS: First phase of the action plan for the establishment of the NLS started (with the aid of TA).</p>	<p>General work and IT same as in year 1. Training as in year 1. TA to follow up from year 1: 1 mission of 2 weeks. Upgrading of info. unit = increased salaries.</p>
	<p>PCBS and other NSS units: Third phase of the action plan for the establishment of the NLS started, covering other NSS units.</p>	<p>Same activities as in year 2, training continued to support NLS = 1 training course.</p>
	<p>PCBS, other NSS units, ACS: Evaluation of the performance of the NLS.</p>	<p>Regular activities at the increased level of year 2</p>

O.O. 2.2. Improving capacities for statistical analysis, both inside and outside the NSS and among users

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2	PCBS and relevant NSS units: Review of current practices and capacities of ministries and other NSS bodies for analysis and studies. Creating a skilled information unit within ISD.	PCBS and relevant NSS units: Review of current practices and capacities of ministries and other NSS bodies for analysis and studies, continued. Creating a skilled information unit within ISD.	PCBS and relevant NSS units: Review of current practices and capacities of ministries and other NSS bodies for analysis and studies, continued. Creating a skilled information unit within ISD.	
Year 3	PCBS: Compiling a multi-year programme to strengthen capacities for statistical analysis.	PCBS: Compiling a multi-year programme to strengthen capacities for statistical analysis.	PCBS: Compiling a multi-year programme to strengthen capacities for statistical analysis.	
Year 4		.		
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS and relevant NSS units: Review of current practices and capacities of ministries and other NSS bodies for analysis and studies, concluded with seminar discussing findings and exchanging ideas on improving analytical capacities..	General work load absorbed by PCBS and NSS units. Seminar cost
	PCBS: Publication of a multi-year programme to strengthen capacities for statistical analysis of ministries and other NSS institutions	General work load absorbed by PCBS and NSS units.
	NSS: Conducting a conference on the outcome of the improvement of analytical capacities	Conference cost

O.O. 2.3. Improving the use of statistical data in planning and decision making

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2	PCBS: Compilation of two documents advocating better statistics for better results, in the Palestinian government on one hand and the private sector on the other hand.	PCBS: Compilation of two documents advocating better statistics for better results, in the Palestinian government on one hand and the private sector on the other hand, continued.	PCBS: Presentation of the two draft documents advocating better statistics for better results.	
Year 3	PCBS: Preparation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government.	PCBS: Preparation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government, continued.	PCBS: Preparation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government, concluded.	
Year 4	PCBS: Preparation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the private sector.	PCBS: Preparation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the private sector, continued.	PCBS: Preparation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the private sector, concluded.	
Year 5			PCBS: Organisation of a seminar on the improvement of the use of statistical information by government and the private sector.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Publication of the two draft documents advocating better statistics for better results.	Writing of two documents: 1 hired nat. expert for 4 months + PCBS work (absorbed).
	PCBS: Presentation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government.	Study of govt. use of statistics: 1 hired nat. expert for 3 months + PCBS work (absorbed).
	PCBS: Presentation of a study aiming at identifying the uses of statistical information made by the government.	Study of private sector use of statistics: 1 hired nat. expert for 3 months + PCBS work (absorbed).
	NSS: Seminar on the improvement of the use of statistical information by government and the private sector.	Seminar cost

O.O. 2.4. Developing statistical literacy in Palestine

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3	PCBS: Setting up a working group with internal and external experts (educationalists, journalists etc.) to identify means for developing statistical literacy.	PCBS: Work of the WG on statistical literacy.	PCBS: Work of the WG on statistical literacy.	
Year 4	PCBS: Seminars or courses for specific groups for improving statistical literacy (teachers, journalists etc.). Improving statistical literacy of fieldworkers through training. Utilizing PCBS website as a resource centre on official statistics.	PCBS: Seminars or courses for specific groups for improving statistical literacy (teachers, journalists etc.). Improving statistical literacy of fieldworkers through training. Utilizing PCBS website as a resource centre on official statistics.	PCBS: Seminars or courses for specific groups for improving statistical literacy (teachers, journalists etc.). Improving statistical literacy of fieldworkers through training. Utilizing PCBS website as a resource centre on official statistics.	
Year 5	PCBS: Organisation for the preparation of education material for use in schools, carried out by 2-3 students invited to work in their summer holidays within the PCBS and under the supervision of PCBS experts.	PCBS: Preparation of education material for use in schools, carried out by 2-3 students invited to work in their summer holidays within the PCBS and under the supervision of PCBS experts.	PCBS: Preparation of education material for use in schools, carried out by 2-3 students invited to work in their summer holidays within the PCBS and under the supervision of PCBS experts.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Report and proposals of the WG on statistical literacy.	General work load absorbed by PCBS.
	PCBS: Seminars or courses for specific groups for improving statistical literacy (teachers, journalists etc.). Improving statistical literacy of fieldworkers through training. Utilizing PCBS website as a resource centre on official statistics.	General work load absorbed by PCBS. Training courses for journalists, teachers etc.in all governorates (16x2 courses). Training of fieldworkers. Editorial work on website absorbed by PCBS.
	PCBS: Education material for use in schools, made available by the PCBS.	Work on education material: 15 student months of salaries. IT support and finalisation of material absorbed by PCBS.

O.O.2.5. Facilitating and developing the use of statistical data by researchers, academia and students by creating data access centres

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3	PCBS: Preparations for establishing Data Access Centres (DAC) at the NLS, incl. harmonised access rules and protocols (in cooperation with researchers).	PCBS: Preparations for establishing Data Access Centres (DAC) at the NLS, incl. harmonised access rules and protocols (in cooperation with researchers).	PCBS: Liaising with other PCBS bodies on harmonised conditions and protocols for access to micro data.	
Year 4				
Year 5	Seminar on evaluation of DAC's			

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Draft rules and protocols (manual) for access to micro data. Presentation to ACS. PCBS: Opening of DAC at the NLS.	General work absorbed by PCBS. 1 hired national expert to draft rules and protocols for 4 months..
		Seminar cost

O.O. 2.6. Continuing efforts to monitor quality and integrate quality concerns at all steps of the production process

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: The new Quality Department (QD) made operational within the MSQD.	PCBS: Forming a new quality coordination committee (QCC) with experts from all directorates under the leadership of the DG of the MSQD to work with the Quality Department.	PCBS: Work of the QD and the QCC. Immediate actions on quality improvements in specific fields such as website, press releases, classifications, metadata.	
Year 2	PCBS: Report on the activities of the QD and QCC. Regular, internal peer reviews on quality introduced.	PCBS: Work on developing a flexible quality management tool for the PCBS, assisted by TA and study visits.	PCBS: Work on developing a flexible quality management tool for the PCBS, assisted by TA and study visits	
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Work of the QD and QCC. Immediate actions on quality improvements in specific fields such as website, press releases, classifications, metadata.	New QD made operational: 2 new staff members + infrastructure. Work by QCC absorbed by PCBS.
	PCBS: Work on developing a flexible quality management tool for the PCBS, assisted by TA and study visits	Continued work on quality at the level reached in year 1. TA – 1 mission for 2 weeks. Study visit for 2 staff members.

S.O.3: Improving the use of central registers and administrative records. Developing tools for harmonising data collected from different Sources:

O.O. 3.1. Developing the use of central registers

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Preparing a NSS policy on utilising registers and administrative records for official statistics. Presentation of the policy to the ACS and the government seeking formal government adoption of the policy. PCBS and ministries: Continued work of the national team on the population register and establishing a team on the establishment register, utilising continuous TA (twinning arrangement).	PCBS and ministries: Continued work of the national teams on the population register and establishment register, utilising continuous TA (twinning arrangement).	PCBS and ministries: Continued work of the national teams on the population register and establishment register, utilising continuous TA (twinning arrangement).	
Year 2	PCBS and ACS: Reports of the national teams on central registers and WG's on organising and utilising administrative records presented and discussed.	PCBS and ministries: Continuous management of statistical registers ensuring continuous updating and flow of data.	PCBS and ministries: Continuous management of statistical registers ensuring continuous updating and flow of data.	
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS and ministries: Continued work of the national teams on the population register and establishment register, utilising continuous TA (twinning arrangement).	Increased work load: 1 man year (together with 3.2.) + infrastructure. National teams on registers: Work absorbed by PCBS and other NSS units. TA – twinning arrangement (for both 3.1. and 3.2.) = Volume of twinning equivalent to 3 foreign experts for the whole year.
	PCBS and ministries: Continuous management of statistical registers ensuring continuous updating and flow of data.	Same work load as in year 1. Twinning arrangement as in year 1.

O.O. 3.2. Developing the use of administrative records and creating a comprehensive data base (CDB)

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS and PM's office: Formulating government policy authorising and prescribing the use of public administrative records for official statistics.	Cabinet: Adopting official government policy authorising and prescribing the use of public administrative records for official statistics.	PCBS: Drawing up a list of administrative records potentially useful for creating statistical information.	
Year 2	PCBS: Forming working groups with each of the main line ministries (MoEHE, MoH) on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics (utilising TA as in 3.1. above).	Work of the WG's of the main line ministries (MoEHE, MoH) on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics (utilising TA as in 3.1. above).	Work of the WG's of the main line ministries (MoEHE, MoH) on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics (utilising TA as in 3.1. above).	
Year 3	PCBS and governorates: Establishing working groups (with formal agendas and timetables, using TA) for organising the harmonised data flows to PCBS for official statistics.	PCBS and governorates: Work of the WG's for organising the harmonised data flows to PCBS for official statistics.	PCBS and governorates: Work of the WG's for organising the harmonised data flows to PCBS for official statistics.	
Year 4	PCBS: Forming working groups with other relevant ministries and public agencies on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics.	PCBS and relevant bodies: Work in WG's on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics.	PCBS and relevant bodies: Work in WG's on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics.	
Year 5	PCBS and other NSS bodies: Feasibility study on organising and maintaining CDB.	PCBS and other NSS bodies: Feasibility study on organising and maintaining CDB.	PCBS and other NSS bodies: Feasibility study on organising and maintaining CDB.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PM and PCBS: Circular letter of the PM to officialise the list of administrative records requesting cooperation of all public agencies involved.	Joint effort with 3.1.
	Work of the WG's of the main line ministries (MoEHE, MoH) on organisation and utilisation of administrative records for official statistics (utilising TA as in 3.1. above).	Increased work for cooperation with ministries and other NSS units: 2 man years + infrastructure.
	PCBS, ACS and governorates: Reports of the WG's for organising the harmonised data flows to PCBS for official statistics presented and discussed.	Same level of activities as in year 2.
	PCBS, ACS and relevant bodies: Reports of WG's on organisation and utilisation of administrative records presented and discussed.	Same level of activities as in year 2.
	PCBS and other NSS bodies: Feasibility study on organising and maintaining CDB.	Same level of activities as in year 2.

O.O. 3.3. Harmonising statistical concepts, classifications and methods with international standards, articulated with national requirements and customised for meeting the needs of the national situation

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Drawing up a list of all classifications used at the PCBS and in statistics of other NSS units.	PCBS: Drawing up a list of all classifications used at the PCBS and in statistics of other NSS units.	PCBS: Drawing up a list of all classifications used at the PCBS and in statistics of other NSS units.	
Year 2	PCBS: Assessing divergences between international and Palestinian classifications.	PCBS: Assessing divergences between international and Palestinian classifications.	PCBS: Assessing divergences between international and Palestinian classifications.	
Year 3	PCBS: Organising a system of classifications, its maintenance and management in a database.	PCBS: Organising a system of classifications, its maintenance and management in a database.	PCBS: Organising a system of classifications, its maintenance and management in a database.	
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: The list of all classifications used at the PCBS and in statistics of other NSS units presented to the ACS.	Increased work by Methodology Dept. (MD) = 2 man years + infrastructure.
	PCBS: Report of divergences between international and Palestinian classifications presented to the ACS.	Same work load as in year 1.
	PCBS: Presentation of the database with the system of classifications, and the rules and procedures for its maintenance and management.	System of classifications: IT support 4 months, 1 TA mission for 2 weeks.

O.O.3.4. Formulating a comprehensive approach and practices as regards metadata

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1		PCBS (QD and QCC): Organising the compilation of the metadata and methodology required by the SDDS.	PCBS: Updating metadata already available in the SDDS formats for metadata and methodology.	
Year 2	PCBS: Selecting suitable formats for metadata, in particular with a view to web-presentation.	PCBS: Selecting suitable formats for metadata, in particular with a view to web-presentation.	PCBS: Working on a manual of procedures for the management and regular updating of metadata.	
Year 3	PCBS: Working on a manual of procedures for the management and regular updating of metadata. Preparing and a fixed timetable for implementing a system of metadata.	PCBS: Adopting a manual of procedures for the management and regular updating of metadata and a fixed timetable for implementing a system of metadata.	PCBS: Studying the possibility of implementing a server of metadata.	
Year 4	PCBS: Studying the possibility of implementing a server of metadata	PCBS: Studying the possibility of implementing a server of metadata		
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Updating metadata already available in the SDDS formats for metadata and methodology.	Work load absorbed by PCBS (new strengthened QD).
	PCBS: Working on a manual of procedures for the management and regular updating of metadata.	Work load absorbed by PCBS (new strengthened QD).
	PCBS: Studying the possibility of implementing a server of metadata	Work load absorbed by PCBS (new strengthened QD) with some IT support (1-2 months absorbed by ISD).
		Work load absorbed by PCBS (new strengthened QD) with some IT support (1-2 months absorbed by ISD).

S.O.4: Developing, improving and expanding subject matters statistics:**O.O. 4.1. Developing, improving and expanding subject matter statistics, produced both by the PCBS and other NSS units**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Preparing a report on the main weaknesses and shortcomings of the subject matter statistics. Preparing an action plan (incl. time table, TA needs etc.) for improvements. Conducting the first household survey on informal sector, cont.	PCBS: Reviewing and preparing a report on the main weaknesses and shortcomings of the subject matter statistics. Preparing an action plan (incl. time table, TA needs etc.) for improvements. Conducting the first household survey on informal sector, cont.	PCBS: Finalisation of a report on the main weaknesses and shortcomings of the subject matter statistics and action plan on improvements. Analysing and reporting on the household survey of the informal sector.	
Year 2	PCBS: Implementation of the action plan on improvements of subject matter statistics. Preparing a comprehensive project to improve the knowledge of the informal sector.	PCBS: Implementation of the action plan on improvements of subject matter statistics. Preparing a comprehensive project to improve the knowledge of the informal sector.	PCBS: Implementation of the action plan on improvements of subject matter statistics. Adoption of a comprehensive project to improve the knowledge of the informal sector.	
Year 3	NSS: Cooperation on the basis of the NSS manual, see O.O.1.1. Special emphasis on utilising statistical registers and maintaining a regular flow of administrative data.	NSS: Cooperation on the basis of the NSS manual, see O.O.1.1. Special emphasis on utilising statistical registers and maintaining a regular flow of administrative data.	NSS: Cooperation on the basis of the NSS manual, see O.O.1.1. Special emphasis on utilising statistical registers and maintaining a regular flow of administrative data.	
Year 4				
Year 5	PCBS: Conducting the second household survey of the informal sector.	PCBS: Conducting the first household survey of the informal sector.	PCBS: Analysing and reporting on the household survey of the informal sector.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Implementation of the action plan on improvements of subject matter statistics. Analysing and reporting on the household survey of the informal sector.	Report and action plan = work absorbed by PCBS. ESD: 1 TA for 2 weeks. PSSD: 1 TA, 2 weeks. ASD: 1 TA, 2 weeks. Survey on informal sector = cost incl. in WP 2009-2011.
	PCBS: Implementation of the action plan on improvements of subject matter statistics.	Action plan =work absorbed by PCBS. ESD: 3 new staff members + infrastructure + 3 study visits or seminars abroad. PSSD: 1 study visit abroad. ASD: 1 study visit abroad
	NSS: Cooperation on the basis of the NSS manual, see O.O.1.1. Special emphasis on utilising statistical registers and maintaining a regular flow of administrative data.	Work level same as in year 2. Work on cooperation same as in 3.2.
	PCBS: Analysing and reporting on the household survey of the informal sector.	Funding through regular WP

O.O. 4.2. Defining and implementing a national strategy for censuses

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Preparing a report on the quality of the 2007 population and housing census. Preparations for an agricultural census.	PCBS: Preparing a report on the quality of the 2007 population and housing census. Preparations for an agricultural census.	PCBS: Preparing a report on the quality of the 2007 population and housing census. Preparations for an agricultural census.	
Year 2	PCBS: Preparing a report on the use of censuses to update or develop registers. PCBS and MA: Conducting the agricultural census.	PCBS: Preparing a report on the use of censuses to update or develop registers. PCBS and MA: Conducting the agricultural census.	PCBS: Preparing a report on the use of censuses to update or develop registers. PCBS and MA: Conducting the agricultural census.	
Year 3	PCBS and MA: Analysis and publication of the findings of the agricultural census.	PCBS and MA: Analysis and publication of the findings of the agricultural census.	PCBS and MA: Analysis and publication of the findings of the agricultural census.	
Year 4	PCBS: Report on the quality of the agricultural census.	PCBS: Report on the quality of the agricultural census.	PCBS: Report on the quality of the agricultural census.	
Year 5	PCBS: elaboration of a national strategy for censuses.	PCBS: elaboration of a national strategy for censuses.	PCBS: elaboration of a national strategy for censuses.	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Presentation of a report on the quality of the 2007 population and housing census. Preparations for an agricultural census.	Regular work for census directorate.
	PCBS: Preparing a report on the use of censuses to update or develop registers. PCBS and MA: Conducting the agricultural census.	Work on agricultural census in WP 2009-2011.
	PCBS and MA: Analysis and publication of the findings of the agricultural census.	Same as year 2.
	PCBS: Report on the quality of the agricultural census.	General work (absorbed).
	PCBS: elaboration of a national strategy for censuses.	General work (absorbed).

O.O.4.3. Developing the quality of sampling frames

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Strengthening methodological capacities as regards sampling techniques. Working on renewing or restructuring sampling frames on basis of the 2007 census.	PCBS: Strengthening methodological capacities as regards sampling techniques. Working on renewing or restructuring sampling frames on basis of the 2007 census.	PCBS: Strengthening methodological capacities as regards sampling techniques. Working on renewing or restructuring sampling frames on basis of the 2007 census.	
Year 2	PCBS: Working with relevant NSS bodies on a programme of work, division of tasks and on procedures as regards cooperation on sampling and sample surveys.	PCBS: Working with relevant NSS bodies on a programme of work, division of tasks and on procedures as regards cooperation on sampling and sample surveys.	PCBS: Working with relevant NSS bodies on a programme of work, division of tasks and on procedures as regards cooperation on sampling and sample surveys.	
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				

Quarter 4	Resource requirements
PCBS: Strengthening methodological capacities as regards sampling techniques. Working on renewing or restructuring sampling frames on basis of the 2007 census.	Training for sampling experts: 1 training course and 1 study visit abroad,
PCBS: Presentation of a work programme and manual of procedures as regards cooperation on sampling and sample surveys.	Training: 1 course abroad.

O.O. 4.4. Upgrading data capture techniques

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Continuing the pilot web survey of hotels. Study visits on data collection techniques, present practices and experience and innovative techniques.	PCBS: Continuing the pilot web survey of hotels. Study visits on data collection techniques, present practices and experience and innovative techniques.	PCBS: Continuing the pilot web survey of hotels. Study visits on data collection techniques, present practices and experience and innovative techniques.	
Year 2	PCBS: Preparing a scenario of extending the use of web surveys and web-based data collection. Testing the use of hand-held devices for collecting data.	PCBS: Preparing a scenario of extending the use of web surveys and web-based data collection. Testing the use of hand-held devices for collecting data.	PCBS: Presenting a project of extending the use of web surveys and web-based data collection. Testing the use of hand-held devices for collecting data.	
Year 3	PCBS: Feasibility study of using CATI for data collection.	PCBS: Feasibility study of using CATI for data collection.	PCBS: Feasibility study of using CATI for data collection.	
Year 4	PCBS: Pilot to test the use of CATI for data collection.	PCBS: Pilot to test the use of CATI for data collection.	PCBS: Pilot to test the use of CATI for data collection.	
Year 5	PCBS: Preparation of a report on the state of data collection and data collection techniques.	PCBS: Preparation of a report on the state of data collection and data collection techniques	PCBS: Preparation of a report on the state of data collection and data collection techniques	

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Continuing the pilot web survey of hotels. Study visits on data collection techniques, present practices and experience and innovative techniques.	1 study visit abroad + participation in conference on surveys.
	PCBS: Presenting a detailed programme of work for extending the use of web surveys and web-based data collection. Testing the use of hand-held devices for collecting data.	1 study visits abroad + participation in conference on surveys. Investing in hand held devices: cost of buying the devices
	PCBS: Feasibility study of using CATI for data collection.	1 study visit abroad. Work absorbed by PCBS
	PCBS: Pilot to test the use of CATI for data collection.	Investment in software. Training abroad in software = 2 experts for 1-2 weeks. Work of IT and FWD experts on setting up questionnaire in: 2x4 months.
	PCBS: Presentation of a report on the state of data collection and data collection techniques	Regular work.

S.O.5: Developing national, regional and international relations and partnerships:
O.O. 5.1. Developing national, regional and international relations and partnerships

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2	PCBS: Preparing a report on usefulness of international and regional relations and on guidelines for participation of the different levels of PCBS staff in international and regional meetings, seminars and conferences.	PCBS: Preparing a report on usefulness of international and regional relations and on guidelines for participation of the different levels of PCBS staff in international and regional meetings, seminars and conferences.	PCBS: Preparing a report on usefulness of international and regional relations and on guidelines for participation of the different levels of PCBS staff in international and regional meetings, seminars and conferences.	
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Presentation of the report on usefulness of international and regional relations and rules for participation of the different levels of PCBS staff in international and regional meetings, seminars and conferences.	Work absorbed by PCBS.

O.O. 5.2. Strengthening the dialogue between producers and users

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2	PCBS: Preparing a report on the organisation of permanent user groups in key statistical areas aiming at cooperation with main users in government, private sector, academia and media.	PCBS: Preparing a report on the organisation of permanent user groups in key statistical areas aiming at cooperation with main users in government, private sector, academia and media.	PCBS: Preparing a report on the organisation of permanent user groups in key statistical areas aiming at cooperation with main users in government, private sector, academia and media.	
Year 3	PCBS: Running a programme of having regular user group meetings at least twice a year.	PCBS: Running a programme of having regular user group meetings at least twice a year.	PCBS: Running a programme of having regular user group meetings at least twice a year.	
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Establishing permanent user groups in key statistical areas aiming at cooperation with main users in government, private sector, academia and media.	Work absorbed by PCBS.
	PCBS: Running a programme of having regular user group meetings at least twice a year.	Work absorbed by PCBS.

O.O. 5.3. Strengthening the relationship with research institutes and universities

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1				
Year 2	PCBS: Establishing a working group with representatives of PCBS and research institutions and universities for proposing ways and means to strengthen the ties between the producers of official statistics and facilitate the use of official statistics for research.	PCBS (WG on cooperation with academia): Conducting a seminar on ways and means to strengthen the ties between the producers of official statistics and facilitate the use of official statistics for research.	PCBS (WG on cooperation with academia): Continued work of WG on ways and means to strengthen the ties between the producers of official statistics and facilitate the use of official statistics for research.	
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS (WG on cooperation with academia): Presentation of the findings of the WG on ways and means to strengthen the ties between the producers of official statistics and facilitate the use of official statistics for research.	Cost of extraordinary activity of WG.

S.O.6: Improving the managerial and technical issues:

O.O. 6.1. Developing human resource policies

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year 1	PCBS: Comprehensive review (utilising TA) of HR policies at the PCBS.	PCBS: Comprehensive review (utilising TA) of HR policies at the PCBS.	PCBS: Presentation of a programme for comprehensive HR policies at the PCBS.	
Year 2	PCBS: Comprehensive review of the supply of training organised by the Palestinian Statistical Training Centre (PSTC) and the objectives, scope and workings of the PSTC.	PCBS: Comprehensive review of the supply of training organised by the PSTC and the objectives, scope and workings of the PSTC.	PCBS: Presentation of a report on training with proposals and clear priorities for the role and the operations of the PSTC.	
Year 3			PCBS: Evaluate the impact of the adopted HR policy on PCBS and the statistical units within NSS and do the necessary modifications	
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Adoption of a programme for comprehensive HR policies at the PCBS.	TA on HR policies and practices = 1 mission for 2-3 weeks.
		Review: Work absorbed by PSTC.

O.O. 6.2. Maintaining sound managing activity planning and financial planning of the PCBS

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
Year1	PCBS: Continued monitoring of the management information system (MIS) and its utilisation for planning, organising and monitoring the work programme and the finances of the PCBS.	PCBS: Continued monitoring of the management information system (MIS) and its utilisation for planning, organising and monitoring the work programme and the finances of the PCBS.	PCBS: Continued monitoring of the management information system (MIS) and its utilisation for planning, organising and monitoring the work programme and the finances of the PCBS.	
Year 2	PCBS: Evaluation of the role, output and outcome of TA to the PCBS in the last few years.	PCBS: Evaluation of the role, output and outcome of TA to the PCBS in the last few years.	PCBS: Preparation of proposals of strategies to make the best use of TA.	
Year 3	PCBS: Evaluation of planning methods for statistical activities.	PCBS: Evaluation of planning methods for statistical activities.	PCBS: Evaluation of planning methods for statistical activities.	
Year 4				
Year 5				

	Quarter 4	Resource requirements
	PCBS: Continued monitoring of the management information system (MIS) and its utilisation for planning, organising and monitoring the work programme and the finances of the PCBS.	General work absorbed by PCBS. 1 study visit abroad.
	PCBS: Presentation of proposals of strategies to make the best use of TA.	Evaluation of TA: 1 national expert for 3 months.
	PCBS: Evaluation of planning methods for statistical activities.	Evaluation of planning methods: 1 study visit to abroad.

7. Bibliography

Documents on Palestinian statistics

1. General Statistical Law No. (5) for Year 2000
2. Master Plan 2000: Statistical Policies for Palestine Towards the Year 2010
3. The situation of statistical units at the Palestinian ministries. March 2004.
4. PCBS Development Programme 2006 – 2008
5. MEDSTAT Project: Project Orientation Report for the PNA. 21 May, 2007
6. PCBS Annual Report 2007: The Year of Excellency and Creativity. January, 2008.
7. Data provided by West Bank and Gaza strip as a participant in the GDDS. Spring, 2008 (from the IMF Website)

Core Funding Group: External Review

1. Group of Experts appointed by the Core Funding Group of the PCBS: External Review Report - 11 April, 2008
2. PCBS Follow ups and Plans to fulfil Recommendations of the External Review Report
3. Group of Experts appointed by the Core Funding Group of the PCBS: Appraisal of the Work Programme of the PCBS for 2009-2011 - 29 May, 2008

General documents on the preparation of NSDS

1. Making the Case: NSDS. PARIS21 Secretariat – November 2004
2. Stratégie Nationale de Développement de la Statistique 2007 – 2012 de la République Islamique de Mauritanie
3. Draft of the National Statistical Strategy 2008 – 2013 of the Kingdom of Jordan

Preparation of the Palestinian NSDS

1. Request to the TFSCB for the preparation of a NSDS. 1 September, 2007
2. Final Mission Report of the international consultant (step 1 of the project): Preparatory and launching phase of the NSDS – 31 May, 2008
3. Final Mission Report of the international consultant (step 3 of the project): Proposals for designing the NSDS – 22 August, 2008
4. The national consultant for the phase 2 of the project : Diagnosis Report on the PCBS Master Plan 2001-2010 - 24 July, 2008
5. The national consultant for the phase 2 of the project: Evaluation and SWOT analysis of the Palestinian National Statistical System - 30 August, 2008

