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Title of paper: Data Products, Dissemination and Use of Economic Statistics in Nepal Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Abstract

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by incorporating into its development plans and programs. GoN is formulating the 15th Periodic Development plan of the country. Emphasis is on creating a national data profile (NDP) aiming to build a statistical database to support the formulation and implementation of development plans at local, provincial and central level. The NDP system aims to create a culture of data sharing and data use from local to central level of government as a practice of evidence for development.

Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) has been focusing the programs of basic economic statistics in Nepal. In this connection, CBS has recently successfully completed the enumeration of the First National Economic Census 2018 of Nepal and disseminated preliminary statistics as well. CBS will soon release the final economic census results of the country. The economic census is a collection of exceptional value to a developing country like Nepal. It is the primary source of basic economic data covering most of the sectors as defined in International Standard Statistical Classification for all economic activities (ISIC revision 4). Data from the economic census represent a valuable public good which should be widely promoted to enhance its utilization by the various users.

Use of economic data will ensure increased public knowledge about the progress of society and for transparency, governance, evidence-based management and transformation. A culture of data use is needed across various levels of data users for evidence-based decision making. Data products should be user friendly and communicated effectively. This paper will

highlight the data products, dissemination strategies, programs, and use of statistics primarily based on Economic Census, third labour force survey and other data sources of Nepal. The paper will also discuss how the census and survey results contribute to developing and monitoring the SDG-related plans and programs as evidence base to support the SDGs. The paper will also elaborate on data use culture in Nepal with respect to economic statistics.

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II. Introduction

The growing importance of data and statistics has been realized in the various aspects of society in these days. Statistics are instrumental in informing policymaking processes, development of plans and programs, and their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The data need to be of high quality, trustworthy and reliable. Likewise, the produced statistics should be used in the right way. The aim is to improve relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of policy reforms.

The GoN is committed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 which has been incorporated in its periodic plans and annual budgets with the social, economic and environmental development aspirations. The GoN has been emphasizing the need for evidence-based policy, which helps people make well-informed decisions about policies, programmes using the best available evidence. Evidence-based policymaking demands reliable and accessible statistics, understanding of statistics, statistical analysis, theoretical (with the use of statistical tools), practical (sometimes mere theoretical analysis may not be understandable to everyone), and proper utilization of statistics. In totality, statistics provide a strong base of evidence for policy.

The GoN has given a space in periodic plans and programs for enhancing the statistical system of the country. Recently, the GoN has approved National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS) (February 04 2019 by GoN cabinet)¹, which is a milestone achievement in statistical plans and programs. Timely and quality economic statistics are indispensable for informed decision-making. Economic data are instrumental in understanding development challenges and the suitable actions for persuading and informing change in relation to socio-economic progress and environmental phenomena. The effectiveness of program implementation and measurement of the level of achievement can only be obtained only if the

¹ <https://cbs.gov.np/national-strategies-for-the-development-of-statistics/> (in Nepali Language)

statistical infrastructure have been strengthened. In addition to the NSDS, the GoN have developed new statistical legislation for the effective national statistical system in the country. Economic statistics in Nepal is produced using censuses, surveys and administrative sources. Economic statistics are produced on prices and cost, demand and output, income and wealth, money and banking, government, labour market, and natural resources and environment and have been used in formulating periodic, annual development policies as well as other economic policies in Nepal. However, a lot of effort is needed and made to improve the quality of data products related to economic statistics in Nepal. CBS as well as other national custodian agencies have challenges to enhance the quality and minimize the data gaps fulfilling the users need. As the country has adopted a federal structure (one central, seven provinces, and 753 local levels), local and provincial governments are accountable for developing their own policies and plans. CBS and other custodians of data have challenges to supply the required data at disaggregated level. Also, there are challenges ahead to produce relevant, reliable, timely and standard data products at various disaggregation. For example, there has been demand of provincial and local level data on population structure, GDP, employment structure, economic structure and living standard.

According to the statistical legislation of Nepal, the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) is an authoritative body in producing and disseminating statistics integrated from different sources of official data at various disaggregation levels. CBS has been enhancing data products by conducting census and surveys, and compiling administrative data. Statistics provide the quantitative evidence supporting government decision making. This paper will elaborate on data utilization practices in government policies and programs in Nepal with respect to economic statistics. The paper will also make attempt to discuss the data products, introduce the National Data Profile system as a dissemination platform for reaching users with integrated data sources, and utilization aspects primarily based on economic census, third labour force survey and other data sources of Nepal. The paper will also discuss on how the census and survey results contribute in developing and monitoring the SDGs related plans and programs.

A. Utilization of economic data in plans and programs

In Nepal, available economic data, along with other social sector data, have been used in formulating national development policies, plans and programs for reviewing the achievement and setting targets in periodic as well as annual programs. The GoN has recently drafted the fifteenth periodic plan (2019-23) which envisions rapid and balanced economic development, prosperity, good governance and realizing happiness for the citizens. The plan aims to upgrade the nation from least developed country to a developing country by 2022 and achieve sustainable development goals by 2030 with income growth, quality human capital formation and reducing economic risks. The plan has challenges to achieve equitable income growth and improve the quality of people's life. It is necessary to achieve a high economic growth by developing quality human capital and modern infrastructure. Significant resources and investment are needed to achieve the sustainable development goals. This requires the coordination of central, province, and local level governments.

The national goal of the plan is to achieve the vision of "Prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali". The plan uses quantifiable economic indicators such as economic growth rate, per capita national income, absolute poverty ratio, Gini Coefficient, labour participation rate, unemployment rate, share of formal sector in the employment, sector-wise (primary, secondary and tertiary) contribution in the total economy, export-import ratio, labour productivity, and agriculture productivity, and the Human Development Index.

B. Localization of Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs were first incorporated in the fourteenth periodic plan (2016-18) and the process for developing annual budgets and programs are indexed according to SDG. The fifteenth periodic plan is formulated in light of an SDG needs assessment, cost estimate and financial strategy. The basis for formulating and setting targets on macro-economic policy, economic growth target, total investment estimate, investment of public, private and cooperatives, contribution of primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in GDP. The plan has emphasized the

internalization and localization of SDGs. The goals, strategies related to economic growth, employment, infrastructure, industrialization, urban and human settlement, consumption and sustainability of production incorporated in the 15th plan will help in achieving the SDG 8 and 9 on prosperity, and 11 and 12 on the planet.²² The plan has extensively used the available various economic statistics like gross domestic product (GDP), marginal ratio of production capital and total investment, investment of public, private and cooperatives, projection of public finance, monetary inflation, saving and investment, government finance, financial sector, capital market, external trade, cooperatives etc. Table 1. shows some of the major economic indicators used in setting national goals and targets in 15th periodic plan (2019-2023) of Nepal.

Table 1: National Goals, Targets and Indicators of Prosperity

S.N.	National Goal, Target, Indicators	Unit	Status in Fiscal Year 2017/18	Target in Fiscal Year 2023/24
1	High and Equitable National Income			
1.1	High Income at the level of Industrialized Countries			
1.1.1	Economic Growth Rate	Percent	6.8	10.3
1.1.2	Per Capita National Income	US \$	1047	1595
2	Human Capital Formation			
2.3	Productive and Decent Employment			
2.3.1	Labour Participation Rate (15 years and above)	Percent	38.5	48.5
2.3.2	Unemployment Rate	Percent	11.4	6
2.3.3	Share of formal sector in the employment	Percent	36.5	50
4	High and Sustainable Production and Productivity			
4.1	Sectoral Contribution in the economy			

²² SDG 8 relates to sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. SDG 9 relates to building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation. Similarly, SDG 11 is about making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable and SDG 12 is concerned to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

4.1.1	Primary Sector (Agriculture, Forestry and Mining quarrying)	Percent	27.6	23.0
4.1.2	Secondary Sector (Manufacturing Industry, electricity, gas and water, construction)	Percent	14.6	18.1
4.1.3	Tertiary Sector (service)	Percent	57.8	58.9
4.3	Trade Balance			
4.3.1	Export of Goods and Services (ratio of GDP)	Percent	9	15.7
4.3.2	Import of Goods and Services (ratio of GDP)	Percent	50.8	51.0
4.4	National and Sector-wise Productivity			
4.4.1	Labour Productivity	In Rs 1000 (Nepalese Currency)	184.6	276
4.4.2	Agriculture Productivity (Major Crops)	Metric ton per hectare	2.97	4

Source: 15th Periodic Plan of Nepal (2019-2023)

C. Major data products on economic statistics and sources in Nepal

According to international standards, economic statistics covers macro economic statistics, national accounts, statistics on the activities of enterprises, and sectoral statistics (agriculture, forestry & fisheries, energy, mining, manufacturing etc.), government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics, external trade, balance of payments, and price statistics. Economic data are usually produced by one or more statistical agencies-governmental agencies, semi-governmental agencies and the central bank of the country. In Nepal, the main sources of economic statistics are Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Central Bank of Nepal (NRB), Ministry of Finance (Department of Custom, Inland Revenue office, Office of comptroller), Trade Export Promotion Centre, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supply, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Ministry of Forestry etc.). Some main data products of the different data sources are shown in following table 2:

Table 2: Some Data products on Economic Statistics and Sources

SN	Data Source Agency	Data Products	Data Dissemination means
1	Central Bureau of Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Accounts (GDP) Producer price index (PPI) Labour costs index / Wage index Economy structure statistics 	Hard and soft publications, websites (www.cbs.gov.np), press releases, seminars

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity • Income distribution • Labour supply and demand • Hours worked • Natural resources 	
2	Nepal Rashtra Bank (Central Bank of Nepal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monetary and banking • Consumer price index (CPI) • Commodity Price Index • External merchandise trade price indices • Banking and Financial Statistics • Labour costs index / Wage index • External trade – merchandise • Balance of Payments (BoP) • International Investment Position • External debt • Assets / liabilities of depository corporations • Broad money and credit aggregates • Interest rate statistics • Government Finance Statistics 	Hard and soft publications, websites, seminars, press release System of Enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS) www.nrb.org.np/red/gdds/gdds.php
3	Comptroller General Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General government operations • Central government financial statistics 	Hard and soft publications, website (www.fcgo.gov.np/reports-publications/financial-statements), seminars
4	Department Customs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External trade Merchandise 	Hard and soft publications, website (www.customs.gov.np/en/monthlystatistics.html), seminars
5	Trade and Export promotion Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External trade 	Hard and soft publications, website (www.efourcore.com.np/tepcdatabank), seminars
6	Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue statistics 	Website (https://data.mof.gov.np/), Hard and soft copy (Economic Survey Report)
7	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current agriculture and livestock statistics 	Statistical Information on Nepalese Agriculture (www.moad.gov.np/en/publication/index?page=5)

D. National Data Profile System: a platform for basic data sharing

In the fiscal year 2018/19, the GoN set a long-term vision as “Prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali”. The government is determined to proceed the development programs of local level to central level in an evidence-based way. As part of this, in its’ Policy and Program of 2018³ the GoN declared to develop and institutionalize a **National Data Profile (NDP)** system. Right Honorable President of Nepal had mentioned to develop an integrated statistical information system while addressing government’s policies and programs. The national policy and program state that “*Our development program will be based upon in-depth analysis, research and evidence now then. The NDP will contain the data and information of all possible information and data of different opportunity sectors*”. The government’s policy 2019 has reiterated that “*Development of the country will be based upon the evidence, research and in-depth analysis of statistics*”.

³ <https://www.opmcm.gov.np/en/?wpdmc=downloads>

The main objective of the NDP is to have a data portal integrating basic data required for evidence-based policy formulation and informed decision making, maximizing the use of information technology and giving easy access to data administrators for uploading and data access for the users. For this, CBS has developed a framework for the **National Data Profile system** which contains statistical information on geography and nature, resources, capacity, others and development potential”.

NDP is an online platform of data users and producers for sharing official data from local level authoritative agencies to central agencies and using in the similar level. The NDP system has been developed to address gaps in data disaggregation needed for planning and programs at the central, province and local levels. It is a model of integrated data platform that can be utilized by various users as well as data can be uploaded by authorized or designated agencies of the concerned official statistics across government. The portal makes use of available data to all levels of government so that people’s representatives also can view data on the sectors and areas of interest. It will encourage to people to better understand the situation through quantitative measures.

This system is a data portal of different census and survey results, and administrative data in temporal and geographic format. It is encouraging fact the prime minister of Nepal recently on 28 April 2019 launched the official website of NDP portal at www.nationaldata.gov.np. Figure 1 and 2 provides some screen shots of the NDP system.

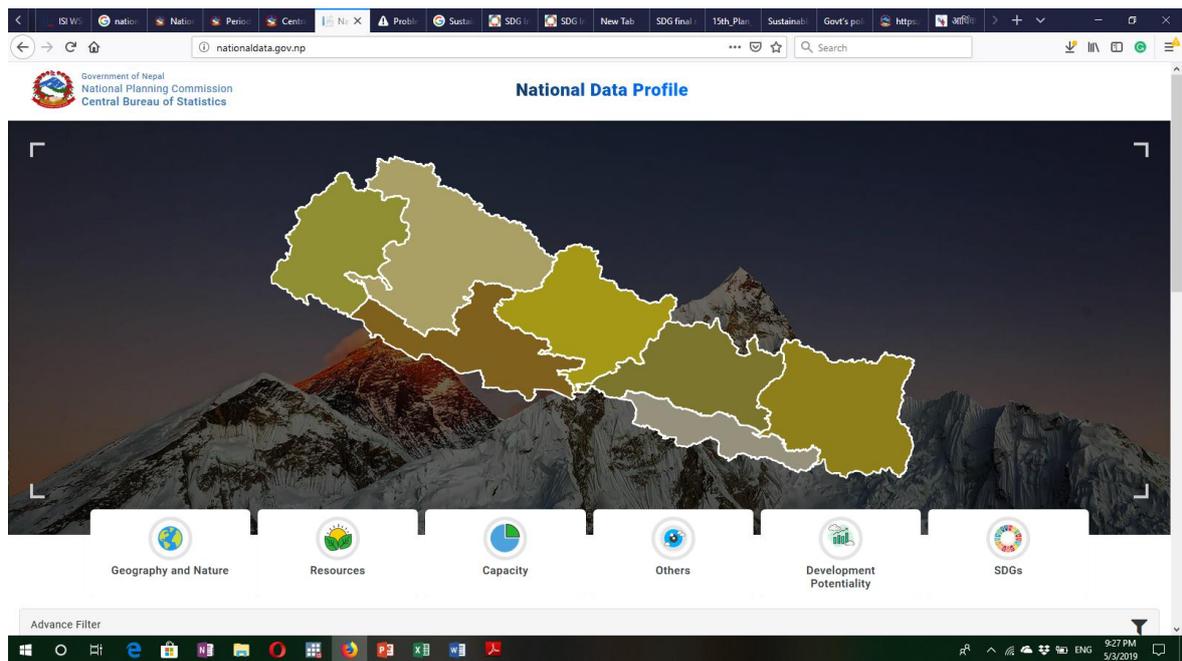


Figure 1 National Data Profile System Portal of Nepal

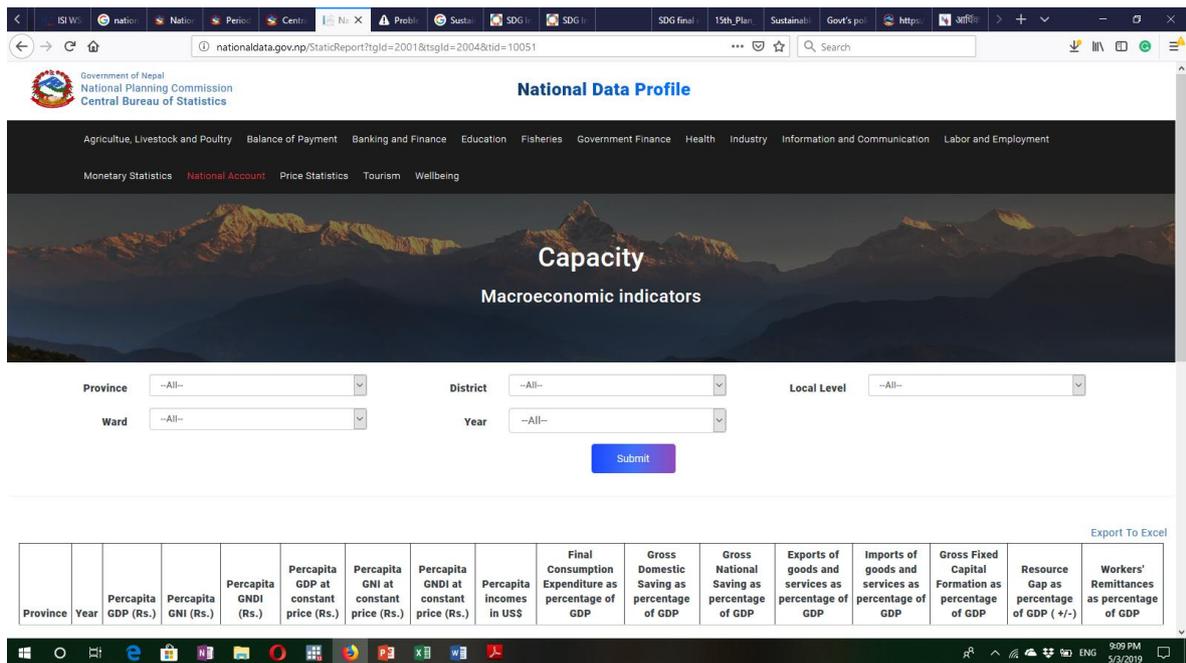


Figure 2: Example of Display of Macro Economic Indicators in NDP framework

1. Framework of NDP system and economic statistics

The framework of National Data Profile system consists of six themes namely:

1. Geography and nature
2. Resources
3. Capacity

4. Others
5. Development Potential
6. SDGs

Each theme contains the relevant data products or indicators. Users can search the indicators mentioned in the list by province, district, local or ward level, and by year. The users can export the data values into Excel format. In regards to the economic indicators, mostly they are contained under the **capacity** theme as listed below.

3. Capacity

- 3.1. Agriculture, Livestock and Poultry
- 3.2. Balance of payment
- 3.3. Banking and Finance
- 3.4. Education
- 3.5. Fisheries
- 3.6. Government Finance
- 3.7. Health
- 3.8. Industry
- 3.9. Information and communication
- 3.10. Labour and employment
- 3.11. Monetary Statistics
- 3.12. National Account
- 3.13. Price Statistics
- 3.14. Tourism
- 3.15. Well being

The framework of the NDP system contains the basic set of economic statistics in different sub-themes. However, the system will be able to satisfy the users' economic and other data needs for various purposes. The portal may be updated, improved or revised if new data

variables are the demand of the users in future. The system is devised in such a way that the designated data can be uploaded in a decentralized way.

The NDP system has been developed using HTML, CSS, Bootstrap, JavaScript, MVC Framework, .NET as front end and MS SQL Server as back end. The system has been linked with the government integrated data center (GIDC) of GoN where the main data server is installed. The quality and reliability of the data uploaded will be updated and maintained by the designated agencies at the assigned level only. In the future, the portal also will be able to provide the SDG related indicators at the maximum possible level of disaggregation.

2. Custodian agency to develop, maintain and update the NDP system

The NDP system is the government's official data portal initiated for building the culture of data use at local, province and central level of government as well as to other users as a practice of evidence for policy formulation and development activities implementation. Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) as the national statistics office is the main agency to develop and manage the NDP system.

One of the strategic objectives of the NSDS is to manage the regular supply of reliable and quality statistics addressing the demand of users and for the management of evidence policy formulation and development implementation. To produce and supply the quality statistics is one of the key strategies under this objective. This strategy includes development and regular updating of the NDP, bringing together statistics produced by different designated agencies. An NDP operation guideline has been drafted for the endorsement from the GoN which indicate the CBS as a major key custodian to manage the NDP overall. This operation guideline is still under development and will incorporate feedback from training and consultations with different stakeholders to make it more functional.

An objective of the NDP is to make the designated agencies accountable and responsible to produce and update their data in a timely way. CBS will also play role in the data standardization, apply standard concepts, methodology and classification, technical support,

capacity development through training, and coordination among different data producing stakeholders. The NDP system will only be functional if the three tiers of government work together in a participatory way.

3. Capacity development for the NDP

CBS recently implemented local training programs in more than 20 locations across the country to train stakeholders to utilize and upload data regularly. The training was mainly targetting officials of 753 local level governments (rural municipalities and urban municipalities). Out of 753 local level officials, 677 officials (mainly of IT staff) participated in the capacity development programs. CBS will conduct training for the remaining local level governments. Officers of CBS trained the participants in operating the NDP system but the program was more a statistical advocacy campaign in sensitize to realize the need of integrated statistical profile system at the local level. The participants were positive and enthusiastic about the NDP system.

4. Challenges and opportunities

The NDP system has been implemented and the CBS has accomplished its responsibility to develop the system and roll it out at the local level. However, the major challenges are ahead to sustain the system, in particular:

- to make accountable and responsible to maintain and update the system by uploading the designated statistics regularly and using them in policymaking
- to minimize the duplication of production of statistics
- to produce data based on international standards, concepts and methodology
- to establish the permanent institutional units at the local, province and central levels other than CBS
- to retain human resources, capacity and infrastructure development for the NDP system, educating and raising the awareness to different types of stakeholder
- secure continuous resource allocation to sustain the NDP system.

The provision of local level, province level and central level statistics in the constitution 2015 is a major opportunity for enhancing the statistical system in Nepal. The government's policy address on evidence-based policy formulation and development implementation, and approval of NSDS show political will and support to build the sustainability of the NDP system in long run. NDP operation guideline will also be implemented after its endorsement for the continuation of the program. Further, a new statistical act has been drafted and proceeded for the endorsement which will also be strong base to strengthen the NDP system integrating all the data sources and access to the stakeholders.

E. Data products from National Economic Census 2018 of Nepal and Labour Force Survey 2017/18

In many countries, economic censuses and statistical business registers provide quantitative measures of economic structure. A shortage of basic economic statistics, such as the number of enterprises, establishments, persons engaged, and absence of statistical business register (SBR) created the demand to conduct the first economic census in Nepal during April-June 2018. This was to improve availability and quality of existing basic economic statistics and establish or improve their survey frames or registers for surveys in the future.

The major objectives of the Economic Census of Nepal are to provide with the fundamental statistics on the current status of the business activities of the establishments and enterprises including the financial aspects, provide with the basic economic statistics required for policy and plan formulation at central, province and local the governments levels, provide statistics for enhancing National Account statistics, provide benchmark statistics for establishing Nepal Statistical Business Register, and provide statistics to private business entrepreneurs and researchers, academicians to make policy and plans for the promotion of business, and business research study respectively.

CBS disseminated the preliminary results in a timely way in September 2018 which showed 922,445 establishments with 3.4 million persons engaged. CBS is going to soon release the results of the census in June 2019. General content of the information collected were as follow:

1. Area Information (*District, Local Level, Ward No, EA, SEA, Name of Settlement*)
2. Establishment Information (*Establishment SN, Name of Establishment, type of establishment*)
3. *Address, email, web address, phone, contact person etc.*
4. Registration Status at Government Agencies
5. Legal Status of Registered Establishment (*Individual proprietor, partnership, Private limited, Public limited, Cooperative, government, state owned corporation, NGO, others*)
6. Ownership Status of Unregistered Establishment (*Individual, partnership, others*)
7. Characteristics of Manager and Owner (*Sex, age, country of owner*)
8. Business Operation Information (*Opening time, closing time, working hours, business period*), *Number of working days of the establishment for the last one year, Year of starting the business*
9. Tenure, Kind, and Area (square feet: ft²) of Business Place, *Tenure of Business Place (Building), Tenure of Business Place (Land)*
10. *Kind of Business Place, Total Area of Business Place (square feet: ft²)*
11. Number of Persons Engaged (*Working proprietors/partners, unpaid family workers, working directors, regular employees, temporary employees, total*), *Employment of other characteristics*
12. Main Economic Activity carried out by the establishment
13. Status as Single Unit, Head Office or Branch Office

14. Information on Head Office establishments (*Number of Branch Offices, Subbranch Offices, Total number of entire regular employees, Main and Secondary economic activity*)
15. Accounting Record Practice
16. Average monthly revenues/ sales and operating expenses, *Average monthly compensation (salaries and wages)*
17. Capital and Ratio of Foreign Capital
18. Access for Credit
19. Parent Company

1. Economic indicators from the Economic Census of Nepal

CBS plans to produce different economic statistics based on the information collected in the census. Some examples of data products of Economic census are listed as follow:

1. Number of Establishments by Economic Activities (ISIC Rev.4)
2. Number of Establishments by Persons Engaged
3. Number of Establishments by Whether Registered at any Government Agencies or Not
4. Number of Not Registered Establishments by Ownership
5. Number of Establishments by Sex of Manager, Sex of Owner, Age of Manager, Age of Owner
6. Number of Establishments by Working Hours per Day
7. Number of Regularly Operating Establishments by Working Days per Year
8. Number of Establishments by Year of Starting the Business
9. Number of Establishments by Tenure of Business Place (Building)
10. Number of Establishments by Tenure of Business Place (land)
11. Number of Establishments by Kind of Business Place
12. Number of Establishments by Area of Business Place (Building/Room)
13. Number of Establishments by Whether Head Office or Branch

14. Number of Establishments by type of Economic Activities (ISIC class)
15. Number of Entities by Whether having an Accounting Record or Not
16. Number of Entities by Whether borrowed Financial Loan or Not
17. Number of Entities which have borrowed Financial Loan by Average Interest
18. Number of Registered Establishments by Registered Ministry or Agency

The census tables will be released phase-wise by compiling them in eight statistical reports. Besides this, a census atlas, booklets, and nine thematic analytical reports are planned to be released. The reports will provide comparative analysis by industry, in particular manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, tourism, street businesses, and women in business. They will elaborate the economic structure of the country and support policy reform in the relevant sectors. CBS has plan to release these analytical products from November 2019 to February 2021. The products will be uploaded in CBS website (www.cbs.gov.np).

The statistics from economic census can be used as a benchmark frame to generate the relevant SDG indicators. For example, employment in informal establishments other than agriculture can be used in monitoring and target setting the target indicator 8.3.1 which states that proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment by sex. Similarly, the data on number of commercial banks can be utilized in monitoring SDG target indicator 8.10.1 (a) which states that number of commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults.

2. Data Products from Nepal Labour Force Survey 2017/18 of Nepal

The Nepal Labour Force Survey is also one of the major sources of economic statistics in terms of supplying the data on employment status in the country. CBS recently published report on the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2017/18 on 27 April 2019. It is the third labour force survey report. The major data products are working age population, employed population, unemployed population, labour force participation rate, unemployed rate disaggregated by various classifying features like geography, administrative division, industry and occupation

sector, Hours worked, education and labour market, average earnings of employee, children and work indicators, and forced labour indicators. The report was disseminated to users and press at a brief seminar. It has been printed as well as soft copy available on the bureau's websites.

The indicators like proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, average earnings, unemployment rate, children and work are needed to monitor SDG 8 on *sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*. This relates with targets 8.3.1, 8.5.1, 8.5.2, and 8.7.1 respectively.

F. Dissemination strategy, plan and practices

A wide range of dissemination methods are needed to meet the requirements of different users. Technologies and media provide effective and easy dissemination of statistical products. Data products are only one component of the dissemination program of the statistical agency. In addition to the standard release of tabular data, spatial data, and microdata, National Statistical Organizations also provide in-depth analysis of the features of the data, and documentation of the methodology used in producing it.

According to statistical legislation of Nepal, CBS has a responsibility not only to collect and compile the data but also it has liability to publish and disseminate the results to users. Hence, the bureau has been disseminating the outcome of the censuses, surveys and other statistical products like national accounts statistics to users using different means of communication. In CBS, general data products are published and generally released via press conference or launching the reports with ceremony or only uploading the products in the websites or conducting regional release seminars to make known to remote users. While disseminating the annual growth rate and gross domestic product (GDP) along with other national accounts statistics, generally a press meet is organized in the bureau annually during April and immediately uploaded the data in the websites. Similarly, hard copy prints are also published.

Media or mass communication has been considered an effective means to convey the results and information on economic data products. In these days, the media personnel's interest is grown in communicating or broadcasting the economic data products. The media of dissemination use to be radio, newspaper, television broadcasting, and online news.

In relation to Economic Census 2018 of Nepal, the data products of economic census will be released in hardcopy and softcopy publications. Data products will be communicated to users by organizing a dissemination seminar, uploading the census products in the websites, regional and local level dissemination seminars, and delivering the relevant publications at the local level. A help desk is planned to be set within bureau and its district offices to support users in understanding the data products. The preliminary result of the Economic Census was launched with a ceremony to the stakeholders and the relevant preliminary reports were delivered up to the local levels of all provinces⁴.

National Report on Economic Census which contain the number of establishments by ISIC sectors and employment size at disaggregated level is planned to be disseminated by July 2019. Other national reports containing the statistical tables and reports including analytical reports, statistical maps will be released and disseminated phase wise in next fiscal year. The census data products will be visualized using the GIS technology or use of maps, and other infographics in user friendly way.

G. Data use culture

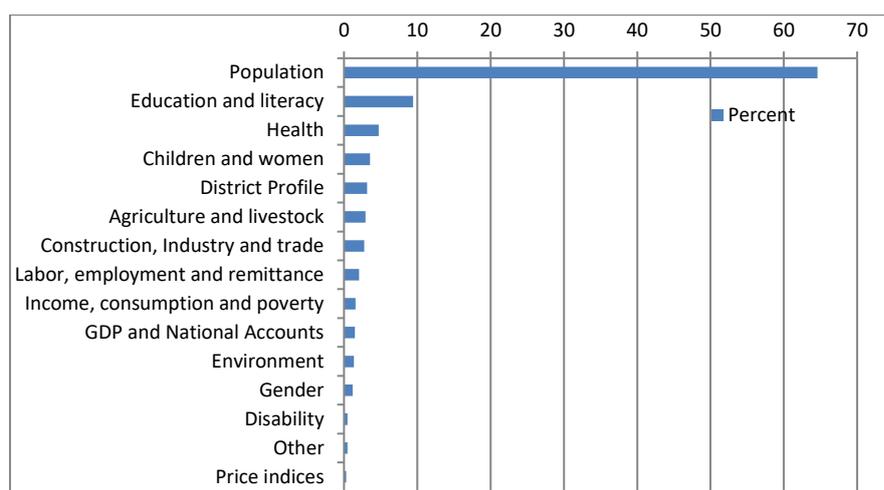
Data use culture means the customs, practices and behaviors of an institution to support and encourage the use of evidence (facts, figures, and statistics), for informed decision-making. An effective data use culture means a system where the users demand data, organization understand their role as data producers and users, users are motivated and empowered to use and act on data, and users use data to inform decision-making. In Nepal, data use culture

⁴ <https://cbs.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/NEC2018-Preliminary-Results-National-Report-No.1-complete-set-final-rev6-180916.pdf>

can be viewed in different dimension of activities by individuals, academics, media, planners, government and non-government organizations, international organizations in their decision-making process in general understanding.

It is a matter of research or study to understand the data use culture for economic statistics in Nepal. CBS conducted a User Satisfaction Survey for the first time in 2017 to assess data needs, satisfaction levels and perceptions of its users towards the current state of data products and services produced and provided by the Bureau. A sample of 1200 users was purposively selected across the country and from abroad. Users were from government and semi-governmental organizations, non-government organizations, international organizations and development partners, academic and research institutes, commercial organizations, media and press, and political parties and civil societies. Regarding the main sectors of statistics of users' needs, use of the population statistics was found to be highest preferred (64.6%) followed by Education and literacy (9.4%) and Health (4%). The proportion of users using data on economic statistics sectors seems low in comparison to social statistics (Figure 3).

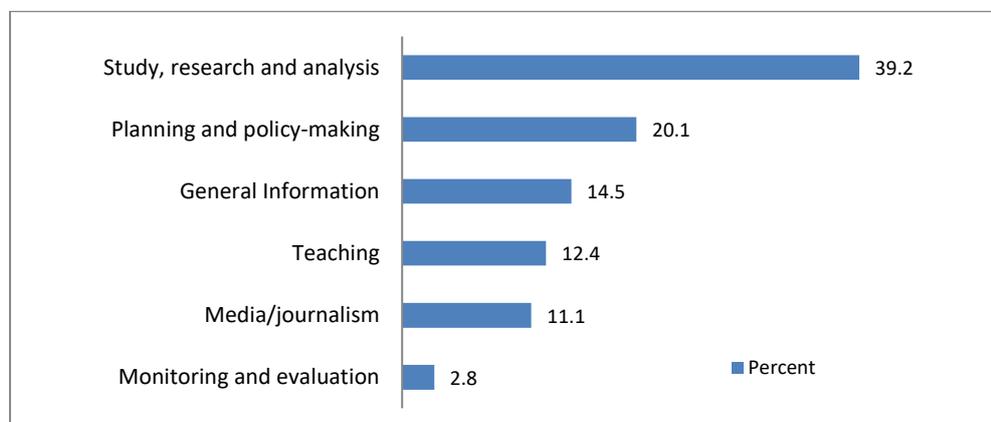
Figure 3 The main sector of statistics used by users (cited from report on users' satisfaction survey by CBS)



Regarding the main purpose of using CBS data products, a higher number of users (39.2%) use CBS statistics for study, research and analysis purposes followed by planning and policymaking (20.1%) and general information (14.5%). Figure 4 shows the proportion of users

by main purpose of using statistics. The aim to present this scenario is to understand our data use culture and preference in Nepal.

Figure 4 Main purpose of using statistics produced by CBS (cited from report on users' satisfaction survey by CBS)



H. Capacity development for using data products

National Statistics Offices have responsibility of not only to disseminate the statistical products, but also, they need to conduct statistical literacy to its potential users on how to utilize the data in proper use and how users can get maximum benefit by using the data. Capacity building on data use is needed for smart decision-making based upon the available data. Such awareness or knowledge imparting program will enhance the data quality, data use culture and data demand in future.

CBS seldom conduct special literacy programs to its users on how to utilize the data and how to analyze data. It also imparts the procedural knowledge on official statistics production process to statistical academics of the universities. In relation to the Economic Census, CBS has a plan to impart knowledge on data utilization aspects to CBS officials as well as officials working in line ministries and universities. The aim this program is to raise awareness and foster in-depth data use culture among the stakeholders for informed decision making. CBS has also long-term vision to establish a statistical database including a statistical business register (SBR) on the basis of the Economic Census results. For this, CBS plans to train the officials about SBR system and its operation for update and maintenance in 2019. Capacity development involves increasing knowledge about the data production process, concepts and

definitions of indicators, skills for use, analysis and interpretation, identify data gaps that demand data to be generated, and other data quality aspects. CBS has launched programs to educate users on the National Data Profile (NDP) system to the officials involved in data management in 753 local levels, seven province levels and other line agencies as mentioned above. However, this program is successful in creating conducive environment for sensitizing the need of integrated data portal and enhance knowledge and skills in managing NDP system (upload data and use available data).

III. Conclusion

The Government of Nepal has committed to evidence-based policy formulation and development programs. It has incorporated SDG oriented policies, plan and programs in its national strategies and work processes. In support of this, CBS has successfully introduces the National Data Profile system for data sharing and data use portal. However, there remains several challenges ahead to sustain the NDP system with continuous supply of data products from different sources in the portal. The sustainability can only be achieved by the reforming the prevailing statistical legislations, its endorsement and reforming the prevailing other statistical infrastructures. However, approval of NSDS, initiation of NDP, utilization of available economic statistics in the plans and program formulation, conducting new statistical operation and maintaining the regular census and surveys are the positive steps towards strengthening the Nepalese Statistical System.

CBS conducted an Economic Census as new data initiation which is a milestone to strengthen the economic statistics of the country. This will be a major basis of statistical framework for generating economic data ahead. Still there remains more work to do to make maximum use of available administrative data for producing the standard economic statistics through collaborative and coordinated approach among the data producing agencies. This will enable

to establish an SBR in sustainable way to supply frame data as well as data on key economic characteristics.

A specific national data dissemination strategy, which will ensure the timeline of releasing data products, its quality, relevance and access to the data products, remains to be developed. Different kinds of data products need to be generated or made available the access upon identifying the key users and segmenting the target users like media, general data users, specific data user, and specialist data user. Hence, CBS as national statistical office must take responsibility on producing various data products and data dissemination modalities to diverse users. It is also equally important to take care on how to grow data utilization culture in the informed decision-making process.

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