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**THE SADC SUCCESSOR REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS
(2020 – 2030)**

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FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I write this Foreword to the successor Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) for SADC. It cannot be emphasized enough that for modern organizations to succeed, they need to be evidence or data-driven. Indeed, data have become a powerful asset and strategic resource that drives change and catalyzes action. Not only are data needed to monitor progress towards achievement of development goals but also in order to attain development progress. So statistics is at the cutting-edge of change and development.

This important role of statistics in development is well appreciated by SADC. It is recognized that SADC development agendas as well as associated protocols and development programmes require good quality statistics in terms of harmonization, scope, quantity, quality, timeliness and disaggregation including by gender. Accordingly, SADC has taken concrete steps to build an effective regional statistical system to provide needed statistics.

In particular, SADC Secretariat has prioritized statistical development in the SADC overarching development agendas, namely Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2020-2030) as one of the cross-cutting issues. A SADC Statistics Committee was established and is functional. The Committee provides policy, strategic and professional guidance for the development and execution of regional statistics programmes. Until recently there was no legal framework to underpin the regional statistical system. Now a SADC Protocol on Statistics has been produced and approved by the SADC Summit of Heads of States. A Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (2015-2020) has been successfully implemented and this successor statistical strategy has been designed. The successor strategy aims to provide a systematic, coordinated and coherent framework for the development and use of harmonized and quality regional statistics. The strategy also brings on board new industry trends as well as emerging issues and innovations to create greater value in statistical organization and development

I want to thank various stakeholders (individuals and institutions) at SADC Secretariat and in Member States that found time for consultation meetings as part of the process of designing this statistical strategy. I also want to thank the African Development Bank which provided technical assistance towards the design of this strategy and several partners that have over the years supported statistical development in the SADC region.

I commend this statistical strategy to all stakeholders in the SADC integration and development processes.

**Secretary General,
SADC**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I: Introduction

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) was formed in 1992 with the overall objective of furthering regional socio-economic cooperation and integration as well as political and security cooperation among the 16 Member States. SADC recognizes that her development agendas as well as associated protocols and development programmes require good quality and harmonized statistics to guide policy and decision-making, monitor and report on development progress. Accordingly, it has taken various concrete steps to build an effective regional statistical system including: prioritizing statistical development in the SADC overarching development agendas - Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan; establishing a SADC Statistics Committee to provide policy, strategic and professional guidance for the development and execution of regional statistics programmes; preparation of a SADC Protocol on Statistics to provide a legal framework to underpin the regional statistical system; and development and implementation of a Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) (2015-2020).

II: Evaluation of RSDS (2015-2020) and main findings

(a) Evaluation: The RSDS (2015-2020) was independently evaluated in 2020 with emphasis on learning for the future. The evaluation involved review of relevant literature and stakeholder consultations (SADC Secretariat and Member States through the National Statistics Offices). Also consulted were pan-African institutions as the SADC regional statistical system is part of the wider African Statistical System. The evaluation also included use of a PARIS21 RSDS self-assessment evaluation tool in addition to drawing insights from recent comprehensive assessments of the National Statistical Systems of some SADC Member States.

(b) Main findings: A number of findings from the evaluation which informed the design of the successor RSDS (2020-2030) included the following:

Institutional and organizational issues: Statistical advocacy is inadequately done both at SADC Secretariat and in Member States; while Member states have legal frameworks that underpin their statistical systems, SADC did not have such legal framework for the regional statistical system until 2021; although SADC secretariat has successfully mainstreamed statistics in her policy and planning processes, the same has not been done in many Member States; although statistical coordination is critical to statistical development, it is inadequately done in Member States; there is a well laid out framework for RSDS implementation; SADC Secretariat has a small Statistics Unit while Member States have comparatively large National Statistics Offices (NSOs); Member States have developed and are implementing National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) but these are not sector-inclusive neither are they aligned to the RSDS; there is inadequate statistical capacity in some Member States and there is huge demand for basic statistical training;

a few Member States have established In-service Training Centres for meeting basic training needs of the National Statistical Systems; and the SADC Harmonized Statistical Training Syllabus developed in 2005 has not been promoted and is not widely used in the region.

Specific achievements of the RSDS: These include the following:

- *Widened the scope and range of available regional statistical data* including compilation of regionally comparable data in various areas; a template was designed for collecting data from Member States for compilation of The Statistics Yearbook, selected indicators and the Harmonized Consumer Price Index (HCPI); compilation of the Annual SADC Statistical Yearbook was done for 2015-2017.
- *Increased comparability and quality of prioritized regional statistics* through trainings on agreed frameworks and common standards, preparation of technical manuals, customization and adaptation of agreed frameworks.
- *Strengthened stakeholder partnerships and coordination of regional statistical system* through convening of data user-producer forums at regional level and TWGs/Task Forces which were established and are operational.
- *Promoted statistical capacity building in the region* including on real and external sector, national and regional training workshops on SADC Template of Trade in Services Statistics, Technical Working Group Meetings on Harmonized Consumer Price Index (HCPI), Training of Statistics Yearbook focal persons and Training for Heads of NSOs on management and leadership.
- *Building partnerships* with various institutions regionally, in continent and internationally.

Evaluation of RSDS against statistics criteria: It was found that:

- the RSDS remains relevant as a framework for building statistical capacity and production of harmonized regional statistics which are used by various stakeholders. While many Member States reported undertaking a Data User Satisfaction Survey, the SADC secretariat has to-date not undertaken this survey.
- effectiveness of the regional statistics has been limited by data scope, insufficient periodicity, perceived inadequate data reliability, some inconsistency between data sources, lack of timeliness, lack of or inadequate metadata and lack of established channels for feedback and inadequate data dissemination and access.
- digitalization has made data collection to be efficient in Member States. However, data management and dissemination by the SADC secretariat is not efficient - there is no database at the SADC secretariat which creates challenges of data access. Lack of resources has constrained production of publications like the SADC Statistical Yearbook since 2017 and posting of PDF reports on regional statistics on the SADC website does not help those users who want to do further data analysis. On the other hand, Member States have established open data portal which present readily accessible, comprehensive, up-to-date and user-friendly statistical database systems on a wide range of socio-economic indicators.

- sustainability of statistical activities has been compromised by inadequate funding for statistics by SADC secretariat and governments of Member States and there is heavy reliance on funding for statistics from development partners.

Overall performance of the RSDS: Using the PARIS21 self-assessment evaluation tool pointed to resources, data quality, demand responsiveness and data dissemination and use as the weakest aspects of the RSDS implementation. The overall performance of the statistical strategy implementation was 62.9% which is average performance for the strategy.

Challenges: Implementation of RSDS was constrained by the following challenges: general inadequate statistical advocacy; inadequate awareness about RSDS both at SADC secretariat and in Member States; inadequate staffing of the SADC Statistics Unit; inadequate design and implementation of the NSDSs; inadequate statistical capacity and skills in some Member States; high staff turnover including in leadership of some NSOs; the SADC Statistical Yearbook has not been produced since 2017; resources for implementing the ICT intervention of the RISDP were not mobilized; governments of some Member States did not always make resources available for statistics; Member States have not established a “statistics fund” as recommended by SHaSA2; some Member States experienced high dependence on development partners funding for statistics; inadequate data management and dissemination due to limited harnessing of ICT; SADC secretariat does not have a database that users can access to get the data they need; and there is no data portal for dissemination of regional statistics. The evaluation also identified strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the regional statistical system.

III: Strategic framework for Successor RSDS

(a) Thrust and basis for the successor RSDS: The thrust of the successor RSDS is transformation and modernization of the SADC regional statistical system to address basic and emerging data challenges in a robust manner and consistent with international standards, frameworks and guidelines. The framework presents the strategic foundations (vision, mission and core values) and the strategic direction (strategic intervention areas, strategic objectives and initiatives).

(b) Strategic foundations: These include:

Vision: A robust and responsive regional statistical system to underpin regional integration processes, including measurement of progress and impact.

Mission: To provide evidence pipeline by producing and disseminating relevant, reliable, timely, disaggregated and harmonized regional statistics, consistent with international principles and standards, required to achieve peace, security and democratic governance in the SADC region, attain African integration and international development goals.

Core Values: identified core values include User focus, Integrity, Accountability, Transparency and Professionalism

(c) Strategic foundations: The strategic intervention areas include: (1) policy frameworks for development of regional statistics, (2) institutional strengthening and sustainability, (3) harmonization of regional statistics, (4) digital transformation of regional statistics, (5) capacity for data collection, management, dissemination and use, and (6) quality of regional statistics. And for each strategic intervention area, a number of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) strategic objectives (SOs) were identified and for each SO, a number of initiatives (programmes, projects and activities) were identified and elaborated.

IV: RSDS Implementation, Monitoring And Evaluation

Implementation will involve action planning to operationalize the selected goals, strategic objectives and initiatives of RSDS, mobilization of drivers of strategic success, viz. institutional and organizational enhancement including, people development and motivation, processes improvement and harnessing innovative technologies. It will also involve identifying and managing risks, and preparation and implementation of operational plans on annual basis.

Monitoring and evaluation will be done to: ensure that stated objectives are being achieved, track inputs, activities and outputs, determine if implementation is on course or not, alert on potential problems before the situation becomes critical, and take corrective actions to ensure that performance conforms to strategy or that the strategy is revised in light of new experiences. A mid-term review will be independently undertaken in 2025 and an end-term evaluation will be independently undertaken in 2030. A monitoring and evaluation framework will be used to measure progress in RSDS implementation.

Indicative budget and financing plan: An indicative budget covering activities to be implemented by SADC secretariat will be prepared based on the RSDS annual operational plans and the SADC budgeting process. Core activities in the RSDS will be financed from the SADC budget. Most activities to be undertaken at Member State level will be funded by respective governments. In addition, various statistical projects will be funded by development partners.

ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AGROST	African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interview
CCBG	Committee of Central Bank Governors
CODGs	Committee of Directors General
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CTGAP	Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data
EAC	East African Community
EASTC	Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCPI	Harmonized Consumer Price Index
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
NDP	National Development Plan
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSS	National Statistical System
NSSs	National Statistical System
RECs	Regional Economic Community
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RSDS	Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SCC	SADC Statistics Committee
SCI	Statistical Capacity Indicator

SDMX	Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange
SHaSA2	Second Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics for Africa
SPI	Statistical Performance Indicator
SRSS	SADC Regional Statistical System
SSC	SADC Statistics Committee
TGN	Technical Guidance Notes
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
UNSC	UN Statistical Commission

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents background information about SADC (membership, governance, planning), role of statistics in regional integration and development, the Regional Strategy for Development of Statistics (RSDS) and the organization of the document.

1.1.1 Membership

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is one of the eight (8) Regional Economic Communities (RECs) recognized by the African Union. SADC comprises 16 Member States: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Declaration and Treaty establishing SADC was signed by Heads of State or Government in August 1992. The objectives of SADC, as stated in the SADC Treaty are to:

- achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through Regional Integration;
- evolve common political values, systems and institutions;
- promote and defend peace and security;
- promote self-sustaining development on the basis of collective self-reliance, and inter-dependence of Member States.
- achieve complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes;
- promote and maximize productive employment and utilization of resources of the region;
- achieve sustainable utilization of natural resources and effective protection of the environment; and
- strengthen and consolidate the long standing historical, social and cultural affinities and links among the people of the Region,

SADC Member States currently have a combined GDP of approximately US\$ 721.3 billion and a population of approximately 345 million (SADC, 2019).

1.1.2 Governance

SADC has six principal bodies including The Summit, comprising heads of state or heads of government; Organ on Politics, Defense and Security; Council of Ministers; SADC Tribunal; SADC National Committees (SNCs) and the Secretariat. The Council of Ministers which consists of Ministers from each Member State, is the decision-making body and it oversees the functioning and development of the Community, and ensures that Community policies are properly

implemented. The Council consists of Ministers from each Member State , usually from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Economic Planning, or Finance. It meets twice a year in January or February and immediately prior to the Summit in August or September.

The SADC Secretariat is the Principal Executive Institution of SADC, is responsible for strategic planning, facilitation and co-ordination and management of all SADC Programmes. It is headed by the SADC Executive Secretary and is located in Gaborone, Botswana. The Directorates and Units of SADC are arranged into eight (8) directorates and eight (8) stand-alone units responsible for cross-cutting issues, established by the Council of Ministers as provided for by the SADC Treaty. Each Directorate is led by a Director - also part of the SADC Management Team - and supported by Senior Programme Officers. Each Unit is led by a Senior Officer.

1.2 Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan

A Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (2005-2020) was developed and adopted by the SADC Summit as a 15 years regional integration development framework which set priorities, policies and strategies for achieving the long-term goals of SADC. It was to complement the restructuring of SADC institutions and provide a clear direction for SADC policies and programmes over the long term. The RISDP was built on the premise that good political, economic and corporate governance are prerequisites for sustainable socio-economic development, and that SADC's objectives for poverty eradication and deeper levels of integration will not be realized if these are not in place.

1.3 Statistics and regional integration and development

Statistics play a crucial role in the development process at every level. Not only are statistics needed to monitor progress towards achievement of development goals and objectives but also in order to achieve them. Statistics therefore have a dual function – to inform and enable (catalyze) development. SADC fully recognizes the imperative of statistics in informing regional integration and development processes as the following indicates..

1.3.1 Statistics at regional level

In 1991, a directive was given by the Council of Ministers to develop SADC statistics. And so, SADC and its organs are paying attention to the development and strengthening of the SADC Regional Statistical System (SRSS) so that the system can produce accurate, reliable, timely, harmonized, comparable and publicly accessible statistics for policy, planning, decision-making, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on development progress in the region. This recognition led to mainstreaming statistics into the SADC integration and development processes.

- a) In 1991, the SADC Council of Ministers established a SADC Statistics Committee (SCC) comprising Heads of NSOs of Member States and the SADC secretariat as the nucleus of the SRSS. The SCC provides policy, strategic and professional guidance for the development and execution of regional statistics programmes. In addition, a Statistics Unit was established at the SADC secretariat to coordinate the SRSS and regional statistical activities; and rationalize the development and dissemination of regional statistics. The SCC reports directly to SADC Council of Ministers, the decision-making body of SADC.
- b) the SADC RISDP identified and provided for statistical development as a cross-cutting sector very much like gender, youth, climate change and urbanization. The design of the RSDS is provided for in the RISDP.

1.3.2 Statistics in Member States

Following their independence from colonial rule, emerging independent states in Africa including SADC Member States, needed statistics mainly to inform national planning processes and administration. Thus they established National Statistical Systems (NSSs) to produce and disseminate important statistics to meet their data requirements. National Statistics Offices (NSOs) were established and mandated by national statistical legislations to coordinate and develop official statistics, and were also designated as the custodians of official statistics. The available statistical data from Member States constitute the main basis for the generation of regional statistics to inform regional policies, strategies and implementation plans. It is very important that if statistics from Member States are to be consolidated into harmonized and quality regional statistics, they should be produced in such a way that they are harmonized and comparable in terms of coverage, definitions and classifications as well as data collection methodology. This requires that the SRSS is well-coordinated and regulated.

The role of the regional statistical programme and interventions is to foster coordination in statistical production in Member States and support capacity building to ensure production of good quality statistics and their transmission to SADC secretariat in a timely manner.

1.4. Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics

The 2015-2020 Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) was developed with the view of addressing data challenges faced by the SRSS. The RSDS was developed based on the 2008 data needs assessment for regional integration and development in context of RISDP, consultations with Member States and international guidelines on the design of RSDS. It was built around a common vision and mission and established an agenda based on six strategic themes for the development of the SRSS viz:

- (i) Widen the scope and range of available regional statistical data and indicators;
- (ii) Increase quality of prioritized regional statistics;

- (iii) Improve services to users and promote wider use of regional statistics;
- (iv) Strengthen stakeholder partnerships and coordination of the regional statistical system;
- (v) Harness the latest innovations in Information, Communications, and Technology for statistical development in the region; and
- (vi) Promote statistical capacity building in the region.

The implementation period of the RSDS came to an end in March 2020 and a decision was made by the SSC to have an independent evaluation of the RSDS made and a successor RSDS designed. The evaluation report was to provide valuable inputs for the development of the successor strategy. It is against the above backdrop that SADC requested the African Development Bank (AfDB) to provide technical assistance in undertaking the said evaluation and the designing of the successor strategy. This evaluation Report has been prepared by the Bank consultant and is based on a Concept Note on the RSDS, an agreed Inception Report, review of relevant literature and information collected from the SADC headquarters and Member States using structured questionnaires and some country visits.

1.5 Structure of the document

This RSDS document has four chapters. Chapter one presents background information about SADC, the role of statistics in regional integration and development and the RSDS. Chapter 2 is about the evaluation of the RSDS. It presents the purpose, scope and the methodology used in RSDS evaluation as well as main findings with a focus on emerging issues, achievements of the RSDS, challenges faced in implementation of the RSDS, lessons learnt and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Chapter three presents the strategic framework which is the core of the successor RSDS whose focus is transformation and modernization of the SADC regional statistical system. It presents the strategic foundations (vision, mission and core values) and the strategic direction (strategic goal, intervention areas, objectives and initiatives). Finally, chapter four presents arrangements for the successor RSDS implementation, monitoring and evaluation including a monitoring and evaluation framework, action planning, budget and funding arrangements. A list of key references is presented.

CHAPTER 2: EVALUATION OF RSDS (2015-2020)

2.1 Need for and scope of the evaluation

SADC secretariat sought technical assistance from the African Development Bank (AfDB) to undertake an independent evaluation of the RSDS and assist to formulate a successor RSDS. The overall objective of the evaluation was to independently review the overall implementation of the RSDS, identify lessons learnt, and use these lessons in the design of the successor RSDS.

The evaluation covered the following issues, among others, which can facilitate or hinder statistical development and use in the SADC region.

- Statistical awareness and advocacy
- Alignment of the RSDS
- Implementation of the RSDS
- Demand responsiveness to internal and external data users
- The capacity of the SADC Statistical Unit in terms of staffing and budget
- Financing mechanisms and sustainability of the SADC statistical system
- Quality of SADC statistics
- Dissemination of data and their timeliness
- Use and satisfaction level of users.

2.2 Methodology for the evaluation

The evaluation was to take into account the perspectives of data users at SADC headquarters, data producers in SADC Member States and pan-African institutions which support statistical development in Africa. Accordingly, the evaluation involved the following three key steps:

- Review of relevant literature
- Stakeholder consultations
 - ✓ SADC Secretariat.
 - ✓ Member States through the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) as National Statistical Systems are part of the SADC Regional Statistical System (SRSS).
 - ✓ Pan-African institutions – the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission and the Un Economic Commission for Africa as the SADC regional statistical system is part of the wider African Statistical System.

The evaluation also drew insights from recent comprehensive assessments of the NSSs of some SADC Member States including Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zanzibar (part of Tanzania with its own and separate statistical system).

2.2.1 Review of literature

In order to ensure both relevance and compliance with international standards and guidelines, relevant literature was reviewed including:

- RISDP (2015-2020) and SADC Industrialization Strategy (2015 – 2063);
- Various reports on SADC regional statistical system including any assessments done so far;
- National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) of Member States. Where these exist, it was to be established whether they are sector-inclusive, up-to-date or in need of revision/ updating. etc.;
- Relevant documentation from other Regional Economic Communities; and
- Continental and global statistical frameworks including:
 - ✓ UN Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics
 - ✓ The African Charter on Statistics
 - ✓ The Harmonized Strategy for the Development of Statistics for Africa (SHaSA2)
 - ✓ PARIS21 international guidelines on the design of both national and regional statistical strategies.
 - ✓ The data revolution
 - ✓ Cape Town Global Action for Sustainable Development Data

2.2.2 Stakeholder consultations

These consultations were undertaken to broaden and deepen engagement with a wide range of stakeholders which is crucial for making the RSDS relevant, demand-driven and sustainable. The following stakeholders were consulted to get their perspectives on the RSDS in particular and the SADC regional statistical system in general:

- Data users (subject matter Directorates/Units) and producers (Statistics Unit) at SADC secretariat
- Member States
- Pan-African institutions supporting statistical development in Africa.

(a) SADC Secretariat

Statistical information is required and used a lot at SADC Secretariat and in Member States. At SADC Secretariat, the main users are Directorates heading SADC Regional Integration Agenda and also, corporate services. The Secretariat is the principal executive institution of SADC, responsible for strategic planning, facilitation and co-ordination and management of all SADC programmes. Relevant, timely and accurate statistical information is required to inform evidence-based policy formulation, planning and decision-making as well as reporting on development progress in the SADC region.

The SADC Statistics Unit is the major data producer at the Secretariat. This Unit was established by the 1995 Council Decision to: co-ordinate and rationalize all regional statistical activities; design and implement regional projects on prioritized statistical subject matter areas; provide leadership, professional and technical advice (think tank) on harmonization and standardization issues; and to be the central point for regional data and statistics including technical advice on the development of official statistics regional database system (integration of integrated databases for subject-matter areas e.g. trade, national accounts, prices, environment, gender, etc.). Consultations were held with staff of the Statistics Unit at SADC Secretariat.

Both the users and producers of data at SADC Secretariat were consulted on a host of issues including the following:

- data needs – what they are and how they are identified, expressed and prioritized,
- conceptualization of SADC statistical system,
- community statistics policy (Protocol on Statistics),
- regional statistical system and programmes,
- state of statistical coordination with Member States,
- extent of assistance to Member States
- systems for data collection and compilation,
- data management including statistical databases,
- use of statistical data and information at SADC,
- overall effectiveness of the RSDS.

(b) Member States

National Statistics Offices

Key stakeholders consulted were National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of Member States. These offices are the main agencies of Member States responsible for official statistics and coordination of National Statistical Systems (NSSs). The issues of interest in consulting Member States included:

Institutional issues

- statistical advocacy,
- political support and commitment to statistics by national governments,
- extent to which official statistics are demand-driven (aligned to development agendas) and user friendly,
- the extent to which statistics are developed as a “public good” funded by the Member State,
- mainstreaming statistics as part of development policy, planning and budget processes,
- adequacy of current statistical legislation,

- status of statistical coordination, networking and information sharing (technical, organizational, development partners),
- statistical capacity building initiatives and programmes including technical assistance programmes,
- nature and status of the NSDS, and
- awareness and ownership of the RSDS.

Some organizational issues

- governance and accountability (leadership and management),
- statistical culture and values,
- adequacy of resources (technical, human resources, financial, communication, etc.),
- infrastructure development including ICT.

Some technical issues

- ✓ state of statistical capacity,
- ✓ methodological and classification issues,
- ✓ integrated survey programmes,
- ✓ national statistical database,
- ✓ data innovation, integration and interoperability,
- ✓ data dissemination,
- ✓ data communication.

SADC Statistics Focal Points

In addition to general information collected from NSOs, specific information was collected from SADC Statistics Focal Points (centres of excellence). These Focal Points were established, within the framework of the 1998 Strategy, to complement the role of the Secretariat in providing the required statistical service as well as to effectively co-ordinate and guide statistical development for the region. They included the following:

Country	Statistical Area
Botswana	Informal Sector Statistics
Mozambique	National Accounts
South Africa	Population and Housing Censuses
Tanzania	Investment Statistics
Zambia	Foreign Trade Statistics
Zimbabwe	Economic Classifications

The TOR for the Focal Points were specified. Efforts were made to establish how these focal points performed their respective roles.

(c) Pan-African institutions

It need not be emphasized that the SADC Regional Statistical System is part of the wider continental and global statistical systems and the development of statistics in SADC is impacted by statistical developments at these other levels. It was, therefore, crucial to establish the extent to which the SADC Regional Statistical System is connected to the continental statistical system so that it can take advantage of opportunities they present for technical assistance, knowledge transfer, peer learning and benchmarking on best practices.

Therefore, information about SADC regional statistical system was collected from the perspective of Pan-African institutions – African Development Bank, African Union Commission and the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

2.2.3 Consultation process

The consultation process took three forms, administration of questionnaires, email contacts and country visits.

Administration of questionnaires

Because of time constraints, questionnaires were designed and administered to key stakeholders as follows:

At SADC Secretariat

Questionnaire for data users: A short questionnaire was administered among users of statistics at the Secretariat. The questionnaire aimed to establish the extent to which statistics are taken as a priority, ease of access to and use of SADC Regional Datasets vis-à-vis other datasets, perceived quality of the regional datasets, how much feedback is given to the Statistics Unit, etc. The questionnaire was also used to collect information on what the new RSDS should cover.

PARIS21 RSDS self-assessment evaluation tool: This tool was administered to the SADC Statistics Unit to get a quantitative indication of the overall quality of the RSDS, the extent of its implementation and its overall impact. The tool helps to identify, in a quick and easy way, statistical development areas within the SADC statistical system that require more attention. The tool has been used to great effect in evaluation of RSDSs elsewhere including COMESA and its national variant has been used to evaluate NSDS in several SADC Member States including Malawi and Zambia.

In Member States

A questionnaire was designed and administered among NSOs which are the main producers of official statistics, coordinators of the NSSs and SADC Focal Points on statistical matters in Member States. The questionnaire covered a whole range of issues including institutional, organizational and technical issues related to data production, management, dissemination and use in Member States; and issues related to capacity building, emerging data revolution, information flow to policy and decision-makers and to SADC Secretariat. The questionnaire was also used to collect information on what the new RSDS should cover.

In addition, SADC Statistics Focal Points were contacted during country missions or by email on how effectively they played their respective roles.

Pan-African institutions

Realizing that the SADC regional statistical system is part of the wider African Statistical System, a brief questionnaire was administered to pan-African institutions, mainly the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union (AU) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to collect information on: the relationships between SADC and these institutions, participation of SADC in programmes of these institutions, assistance by these institutions to SADC, etc. The questionnaire also collected information on what the new RSDS should cover.

Visits to selected Member States

Visits were made to four SADC Member States, namely Botswana during a mission to SADC headquarters, South Africa, Mozambique and Zambia as part of the NSDS technical assistance mission by AfDB. The four countries are SADC Focal Points. Also in recent past, the consultant has provided technical assistance to Namibia and Mauritius to design their NSDSs. Experiences in these countries was also brought to bear on the evaluation.

2.3 Main findings

2.3.1 Genesis of the RSDS vis-à-vis changing statistical environment

The development of the SADC RSDS was agreed during a 2-days workshop on National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS) for Heads of NSOs of SADC Member States which was organized by PARIS21¹ in September 2008. The NSDS is recommended as the best framework for building national statistical capacity as it covers the entire NSS and is designed to, *inter alia*,

¹ PARIS21 which stands for Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century is an international organization that brings together institutions and individuals interested in evidence-based policy and decision-making in developing countries.

better coordinate the NSS, address data limitations, mobilize and prioritise use of resources for statistics (national and international), integrate statistics within national policy, planning and budget processes. The workshop felt that a statistics strategy at regional level would invariably provide a systematic approach to the development of regional statistics anchored on NSDSs of the Member States. With support from the EU, development of the SADC RSDS 2013-18 was finalized and formally approved in principle by the SADC Council of Ministers meeting in February 2013 pending determination of realistic cost implications for its implementation. To operationalize this Council decision, the SADC Statistics Committee agreed in May 2013 to set up a Task Force assisted by the Secretariat to determine realistic cost implications relating to the implementation of the RSDS and identification of sustainable funding mechanisms.

During this period, the revision of the RISDP took center stage with a decision by Council not to mobilize resources for new initiatives or projects outside the framework of the revised RISDP. The revision of RISDP and subsequent decision of the Council of Ministers led to all SADC programmes and initiatives from the different sectors or disciplines being aligned to the RISDP aims and objectives including the time frames of the revised RISDP 2015-2020. Accordingly, the RSDS implementation period was shifted from 2013-18 to 2015-2020 to comply with the directive of the Council of Ministers and key objectives, major milestones and targets of the RSDS were included into the overall framework of the revised RISDP. In particular, the original six strategic themes of the RSDS were converted into Focus Intervention Areas of the RISDP 2015-2020.

While the implementation period for the RSDS was shifted, the themes for the RSDS were not reviewed to onboard the emerging data issues and associated data revolution wrought about by post-2015 development data requirements. The data revolution which was endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission is about unlocking the power of data by delivering the “*right data to the right people in the right format and at the right time*”. It entails, *inter alia*, drawing on existing and new data sources to fully integrate statistics into decision-making, promoting of open access and use, and ensuring increased support for statistical systems. This means that the discourse on statistical development in the region did not address contemporary issues in statistical organization and development which are powering the data revolution in the world – issues such as new data ecosystem, data innovation including exploitation of new data sources (e.g. big data and data analytics), modernization and transformation of the NSSs, new partnerships for development data, etc. To that extent, the RSDS underplayed its hand in introducing the data revolution in the region.

2.3.2 Institutional framework for RSDS implementation

This institutional framework addresses the following issues which are critical to statistical development at the regional and Member State level:

- legal framework for statistics
- mainstreaming statistics into policy and planning processes
- statistical advocacy

- statistical coordination
- framework for RSDS implementation
- National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
- Statistical capacity

(a) Legal framework for statistics

At regional level

It is generally agreed internationally that a strong legal framework is a fundamental prerequisite for an effective statistical system. Therefore, such a framework is essential at both regional and Member State level. At the time the RSDS was designed, there was no legal framework to underpin the SADC regional statistical system and programmes. Indeed, the formulation of the SADC legal framework or protocol was one of the expected outputs of the RSDS. A SADC Statistics Protocol has now been formulated and was validated by a designated SADC Task Team in May 2019, endorsed by the SADC Statistics Committee in June 2020 and approved by the Council of Ministers in 2021. It derives from the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics which were endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in 1994 and subsequently by the UN General Assembly in 2014; it also derives from the African Charter on Statistics which was endorsed by African Heads of State and Government in 2009.

The Protocol also takes cognizance of the Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA2) adopted by the Conference of the African Ministers for Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2010 and the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data which was endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission at its 48th Session in March 2017 as a global framework for planning and implementation of statistical capacity building necessary to achieve the scope and intent of the 2030 Agenda.

It was observed that the Protocol is more comprehensive than Statistics Acts that have been formulated for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC).

At Member State level

All Member States have a legal framework to regulate statistical activities and operations. These legal frameworks vary depending on the form of government, the kind of administrative arrangements in force and legislative and administrative conventions in the Member States. It is, however, important that there is general awareness about the legal frameworks among stakeholders; that the legal frameworks are up-to-date, enabling and implemented. Like the SADC Protocol on Statistics, the legal frameworks for statistics of Member States derive from the UN

Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and some derive also from the African Charter on Statistics. Eleven (11) of the reporting Member States indicated that their legal frameworks for statistics are up-to-date while 3 indicated that their frameworks were out of date but under review. In some Member States, these legal frameworks provide for the establishment of a National Statistics System (NSS) and in all Member States, the legal frameworks provide for the establishment of a National Statistics Office (NSO) as the main producer and custodian of official statistics as well as the coordinator of the NSS. While all legal frameworks provide for professional independence of the NSO, some (e.g. for Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania) provide for administrative autonomy of NSOs with own governing boards to further enhance the credibility, efficiency and effectiveness in provision of official statistics and to be seen to do so.

It was observed that even when the legal frameworks for statistics of Member States have the potential to affect the quality of official statistics produced, the SADC Statistics Unit has not been involved in the review and/ or updating of the frameworks or in addressing some issues related to the said frameworks. This point is particularly important in view of the fact that some Member States have had challenges with their legal frameworks for statistics in terms of content and yet others which are reviewing their legal frameworks need technical assistance to ensure that they address issues emerging from adoption and implementation of the SDGs.

(b) Mainstreaming statistics

Lack of or inadequate investment in statistics has been attributed to failure to prioritize and mainstream statistics into national and development partners' development policies, programmes and budgets. This is in spite of the recognition of statistics as a development issue and also as an integral part of the infrastructure/ enabling environment for development given the increasing role of statistics for policy and decision-making, for measuring progress and for reporting on development results. Mainstreaming statistics as a cross-cutting sector in the development process is the second of the twelve main strategies recommended to African countries by the Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF)² which was endorsed by the Conference of African Ministers for Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2007. By mainstreaming statistics is meant recognition of statistics as a development issue and an integral part of the development process, and targeting it for development, like other development issues – gender, environment, governance, etc. While statistics has been mainstreamed into the SDGs and the RISDP, this has not cascaded down to National Development Plans (NDPs) of a number of many Member States.

² UN Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank and the World Bank (2007): Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF), Addis Ababa, 2007

In particular, and as pointed out earlier, the RSDS is wholly incorporated into the RISDP as one of its 12 special intervention areas. In addition, there is a SADC Statistics Committee established by the Council of Ministers to provide policy, strategic, and professional guidance for the development and execution of regional statistics programmes. Generally, in Member States, statistics features in NDPs in the downstream chapter on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) which mainly talks about types of data and source for M&E purposes. Generally, the NDPs fail to identify statistics as a cross-cutting development area like gender, environment, water, etc. that needs to be targeted for development. By targeting statistics for development means providing resources for building sustainable systems, infrastructure and capacity to produce relevant, accurate, consistent, disaggregated and timely statistics in a sustainable manner. In all Member States, lack of adequate funding for statistics was given as a major challenge to statistical development. SADC Member States, therefore need to take a cue from the SDGs and RISDP and work towards having statistics appropriately mainstreamed into their national policy and development processes especially the NDPs. Some Member States such as Namibia and Zambia have mainstreamed statistics into their NDPs.

The Namibia's 5th National Development Plan (2017/18-2021/22) has a section on Statistics Development in chapter 5 on Good Governance. It presents analysis of where we are, where we want to go (desired outcome indicators and targets), challenges, statistical development strategies and desired outcomes 2017-2022. Statistics is mainstreamed into Zambia's Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) (2017–2021). Statistical development is provided for as a Strategy on Enhancing National Data and Information Systems in the Section on Development Outcomes: Improved Policy Environment. In the Section on Structural Reforms, the 7NDP provides for enhancing national data and information systems including repealing the 1964 Statistics Act, strengthening the NSS, improving scope and quality of national statistics by designing a NSDS and sectoral statistical strategies.

(c) Statistical advocacy

Statistical advocacy is a strategic issue aiming to bring about necessary changes in decision-making behavior through quality statistics. Specifically statistical advocacy is about:

- (i) creating greater statistical awareness or numeracy as well as demystifying, democratizing and promoting wide use of statistics in society;
- (ii) making the general case for the importance and role of statistics in the wider context of development and, in particular, in informing the process of governance (e.g. supporting policy development, resource allocation and accountability);
- (iii) demonstrating the statistics-policy and decision-making chain and in particular, use of statistics for policy, planning and decision-making at all levels;
- (iv) making a case for specific statistical activities e.g. the Population and Housing Census;
- (v) making a business case for statistics and mobilizing national and international resources for statistics; and

- (vi) promoting statistical planning and coordinated investment in developing statistical capacity.

Statistical advocacy should, therefore, be recognized and addressed alongside the other strategic issues within the RSDS and the NSDS processes and in the strategic management of the SRSS and NSS. To foster statistical advocacy, a statistical advocacy programme should be developed and implemented. While the RSDS and NSDSs provide for statistical advocacy, in actual fact such advocacy is not well done at the SADC Secretariat or in Member States. The RSDS provided for the formulation and implementation of an advocacy strategy for statistics in the region. Such a strategy and accompanying statistical advocacy programme would aim to identify advocacy targets, channels and messages. This was not done. As a result, there was no effective RSDS rollout and RSDS awareness creation both at SADC secretariat and in Member States. As a result, a cross section of stakeholders at the SADC secretariat and in Member States visited reported lack of awareness about the RSDS, unless the consulted officials directly participated in the RSDS design or are directly involved in implementation of SADC statistics activities. In particular,

- 13 out of the 15 reporting data users at SADC secretariat indicated that not enough advocacy is being done to create statistical awareness and in general build a “statistics culture” at SADC secretariat. There is no Data User-Producer Forum;
- 10 out of the 15 reporting data users at SADC secretariat indicated that they are not consulted in the design of regional statistical plans and programs;
- 12 out of the 15 reporting data users at SADC secretariat indicated that there are no well-established channels to provide users’ feedback on their needs, complaints, complements or suggestions to statistical work at SADC secretariat;
- suggestions were made for the Statistics Unit to engage more with Directorates/Units of the SADC secretariat through annual planning and reporting processes. The need for the Statistics Unit to engage Directorates/Units to support review/development of indicators for monitoring the Protocols was emphasized. This is consistent with development of indicator framework for the SDGs where politicians and policy makers decided on 17 goals and 169 targets and mandated the statistical community to formulate the indicator framework for use in monitoring progress towards the SDGs. This was done by the UN Statistical Commission whose members are heads of NSOs from across the world.
- While 12 out of 13 responding Member States reported that they are aware about the RSDS, it was found during the visits to some Member States that the questionnaires sent to Member States were filled by SADC contact persons who naturally would know about the RSDS. Other stakeholders talked to were not aware about the RSDS.

Discussions in Member States visited and from technical assistance mission to other SADC Member States indicated that the NSDSs are also not well known among stakeholders again because of inadequate statistical advocacy. Even where there are advocacy strategies, these have not been effectively implemented. This is a contradiction as the NSDS is meant to mobilize and

galvanize stakeholders to proactively participate in the NSDS implementation. However, all 13 reporting Member States indicated that they regularly consult with data users on statistical development issues mainly through data user-producer committees (8) and workshops (6). Only two Member States indicated engagements through visits to data users.

On statistical advocacy, there is a need to step up both at the SADC secretariat and in Member States. South Africa presents an interesting experience on statistical advocacy at high level. The Statistician General of South Africa who is also the Chief Executive Officer of Statistics South Africa engages with top policy and decision-makers in the country including through:

- monthly scheduled one-on-one meeting with the Minister responsible for statistics. In addition, other meetings are held according to need,
- monthly scheduled meeting between the Executive Committee of Statistics South Africa and the Minister,
- meeting with the Cabinet once a year or more often depending on topics to be discussed e.g. SDG report, legislative reforms, etc.
- meeting with Cabinet Committees, as and when required and so far it has been every 2 months,
- meetings between the Executive Committee with the Portfolio Committee of Public Service and Administration of Parliament – it was mentioned that Statistics South Africa provides periodic reports to the Parliamentary Committee which monitors the performance of the organization.

(d) Statistical coordination

Statistical coordination is another important strategic issue in the functioning and development of a statistical system that it is explicitly provided for in the Protocol on Statistics and national statistical legislations. Statistical coordination is essential to achieve mutual support and synergy among data producers, avoid duplication of effort and production of conflicting data, rationalize use of available resources for statistics and achieve data quality. It is, therefore, critical that the SRSS and NSS are well-coordinated. Three types of statistical coordination need attention. They are presented in the following table:

The RSDS provides for SRSS coordination. In addition to institutional coordination through statutory meetings, tools have been produced including guidelines, methodologies and classifications for coordinating statistical production so that harmonized and comparable statistics are produced in all Member States. For Member States, it is important to underscore the fact that national statistical legislations confer on the NSOs a dual mandate – to produce some data (GDP, CPI, Census data, etc.) and to coordinate the NSS. While a lot has been done on the former mandate, not enough has been done on the latter. In a number of NSOs, the coordination function is weak indeed. In some cases, coordination is undertaken by a small unit in the structures of the NSO with

a handful of personnel. It lacks both visibility and gravitas to be able to coordinate an NSS. There is, therefore, a need to strengthen coordination both at the SADC secretariat and in member states.

Table 2.1: Types of statistical coordination

Type of coordination	Narrative
Inter-institutional coordination	This type of coordination aims to break down “silo mentality” or territoriality and will be achieved by establishing inter-institutional or horizontal coordination mechanisms or deepening them if they exist. Such mechanisms usually include: Data user - producer committees, data producer-producer committees
Technical coordination	This type of coordination aims to ensure that data from different sources are mutually consistent or at the very least comparable. Technical coordination addresses issues related to harmonizing different data sources and data integration, and interoperability of data systems. It is achieved through service-wide adoption of standardized concepts, definitions and classifications.
Coordination of development partners	In the past, support to statistics by development partners was by and large piecemeal and uncoordinated. For such support to have enduring or lasting impact, it needs to be coordinated. The Scandinavian Statistics Project for Mozambique presents a good model for coordination of support from development partners.

Statistical governance and coordination practice in South Africa is noteworthy. In South Africa, the governance and coordination of the NSS uses the national SDG implementation coordination framework to great effect. This framework takes cognizance of the country’s NDP aspirations and principles which are fully consistent with those of the UN 2030 Agenda, the AU Agenda 2063 and the SADC-RISDP. The framework is multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder and includes government and non-government stakeholders. It includes the Cabinet; Cabinet Committees (Ministerial level) and the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and SADC-RISDP Proposed Coordination Mechanism Framework; Inter-Ministerial Committee of SDGs, Agenda 2063 and SADC-RISDP; Presidential Coordinating Council (to enable vertical and horizontal coordination); Clusters, Presidential Coordinating Committee to include the Provinces and local government.

This framework gave the NSO (Statistics South Africa) a niche in SDG coordination structure with the Statistician General chairing the National Coordinating Committee, the highest decision making structure in the national SDG report preparation process. This high-level committee comprises the accounting officers or delegated members from organs of state, representatives from civil society organisations, business and academia. It provides strategic guidance and oversight to the preparation of the national SDG Report, approves the final reports (goal reports, thematic

reports and the country report) drafted by the Report Drafting Team and fosters national ownership of the SDG Report. Statistical coordination is effected through Sector Working Groups which are the core of the SDG report preparation process. These are chaired by sector departments and consist of members from government, civil society organisations, academia and business. The working groups are responsible for domestication of indicators, assembling indicator values and related metadata for reporting on SDGs, conducting data verification, participating in SDG workshops, etc.

(e) Framework for RSDS implementation

An operating institutional framework for RSDS implementation and statistics at SADC in general was elaborated by the RSDS and includes the following:

Table 2.2: Framework for RSDS implementation

Institution	Functions
(i) Council of Ministers	Council provides overall policy guidance and approves the regional statistical programme proposed by the SADC Statistics Committee through the Secretariat
(ii) SADC Statistics Committee	The SADC Statistics Committee (SSC) comprising the heads of the national statistics offices of the Member States and the SADC Secretariat is the nucleus of the SRSS. The SSC provides policy, strategic, and professional guidance for the development and execution of regional statistics programmes and meets for those purposes, at least once every year. The SSC meets every year.
(iii) Secretariat (Statistics Unit)	The role of the Secretariat (Statistics Unit) includes: co-ordination of regional statistical activities; design and implement prioritized regional statistical projects; provision of leadership and technical advice on harmonization and standardization issues; be the central point for the development of official statistics regional database systems; and co-ordination of the regional statistical capacity building development. The current establishment for the Statistics Unit is four staff.
(iv) Member States	Each member state has an NSS that is underpinned and regulated by a legal framework for statistics. The frameworks confer on the NSO the responsibilities to develop and coordinate the NSS. The NSO is the contact point for statistics related matters in SADC Member States.

The evaluation established that:

- (i) The SADC leadership - Council of Ministers and management – have a good understanding of the importance of statistics to regional integration and development. This understanding is critical as it is a trigger for buy-in and support for statistical development.
- (ii) Most Heads of NSOs of Member States attend scheduled SSC meetings. In addition, from time to time the SSC establishes Task Forces of a few Member States to work with the SADC secretariat to handle specific issues such as the Protocol on Statistics, the RSDS, etc.
- (iii) It was pointed out earlier that within the framework of the 1998 Strategy, some Member States were designated Focal Points to complement the role of the small SADC Statistics Unit. In particular, the focal points were expected to periodically include budgetary provision for perceived critical regional activities in their budgets to promote sharing of knowledge and best practices in the prioritized subject matter areas. In half of the six focal points, only South Africa, Mozambique and Zambia functioned well for some time. It was reported that:
 - South Africa was able to actively advocate census taking in Member States like Angola and DRC which had not had a Population and Housing Census for a long time. Also as a census focal point, South Africa organized meetings to develop common questions for inclusion in censuses of Member States to produce harmonized census data.
 - Mozambique was able to use funding from development partners to organize some activities on national accounts but when development partners funding ended, these activities could not be continued.
 - Zambia worked with both SADC secretariat and the COMESA secretariat in training workshops on Eurotrace and on harmonization of trade statistics. In addition, Zambia which is relatively strong in trade statistics was able to share knowledge and experience with other SADC Member States. In particular, Zambia provided direct assistance on building systems for compilation of trade statistics to a number of SADC Member States including Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Namibia, etc.
- (iv) Related to c) above, Technical Working Groups/Task Teams were supposed to be established in 12 identified statistical areas under the coordination of the SSC. In the event, only a few of them were established. In particular,
 - A Task Team on the Protocol on Statistics was established comprising Tanzania, South Africa and Namibia. The team discussed the Draft Protocol and a Draft Roadmap for signature of the Protocol by the Summit in August 2020 was produced and endorsed by the SADC Statistics Committee in May 2019. The roadmap included validation of the Protocol with Member States and approval; the latter was done by the SADC Statistics Committee at its meeting in June 2021???. The Protocol was finally approved by the SADC Summit of Heads of States at its 41st Meeting in Lilongwe, Malawi in August 2021.

- A Task Team on the RSDS was established comprising 4 Member States - Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania - to provide guidance on and oversight for the review of RSDS (2015-2020) and the development of successor strategy.
- (v) The Statistics Unit at SADC Secretariat is small. It used to have an establishment of two officers and the RSDS had recommended a staffing complement of 8 staff. The new establishment approved for the secretariat in March 2017 increased the establishment from 2 to 4 officers responsible respectively for:
- Strategic planning, legal, resource mobilization and project management (Head of the Unit)
 - Real sector
 - External sector
 - Social sector (health, gender, education, etc.).

The proposal to have an administrative assistant, a database administrator and an assistant database administrator was not accepted. Clearly a staffing level of four staff is not enough and advocacy will be continued for more staff including in new areas such as data analytics, governance, etc.

- (vi) According to the principle of subsidiarity, a lot of the work involved in implementation of the RSDS is done in Member States. Accordingly, some of the activities should be integrated and implemented in context of the NSDSs of Member States. Others are implemented at regional level. Each Member State should, therefore, be required to integrate activities that have been identified at regional level into their NSDS. This should be possible given that most Member States are now updating their NSDS or planning to do so in the near future.

(f) National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

Member States are designing or implementing statistical plans to improve their official statistics. The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) is recognized internationally as the new standard in statistical planning. The NSDS is a second generation statistical plan. Unlike the first generation statistical plan that aims at improving the performance of the NSO, the NSDS aims to improve performance of the entire NSS. The NSDS is a framework that aims to address data challenges including: effective assessment and prioritization of data needs at every level, integration of statistics into policy and decision-making, effective coordination of the NSS, resource mobilization for statistics and their effective utilization, introduction of change and its management and capacity building across the entire National Statistical System. The NSDS is also seen as a good framework for introducing the data revolution aimed at transforming and modernizing the NSSs. Member States have designed or updated their NSDSs. However, as of 2016, only about 1/3 of Member States had designed and were implementing sector-inclusive

NSDSs³. Sector-inclusive NSDSs are designed using sector statistics plans as building blocks for the NSDS.

(g) Statistical capacity

Assessments of statistical systems and development in Africa have and continue to point to statistical capacity deficits and gaps as a major impediment to statistical development in the continent. In addition, concern about lack of statistical capacity has been expressed in various international, continental and regional fora including the 38th Session of UN Statistical Commission held in 2007, the first meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) held in 2008 and various meetings of Statistics Committees of Regional Economic Communities including SADC.

There is inadequate statistical capacity in some Member States. Five Member States (1/3 of all Member States) scored less than 60 on the World Bank Statistical Capacity Indicator (SCI), with one of them scoring as low as 35.6 in 2018. Since 2004 the World Bank has been compiling and publishing the SCI for over 140 countries to monitor their progress in building statistical capacity. The score is a general measure of the development of the National Statistical System as a whole. A score is computed for three dimensions: (1) statistical methodology, (2) source of data, and (3) periodicity and timeliness. A score for each dimension is built up from a number of criteria against which each country is scored on a scale of 0-100. The overall indicator is an average of the scores for the three dimensions.

The RSDS provided for statistical capacity building on specific areas of statistics such as Real and External Sector Statistics, Trade in Services Statistics, Harmonized Consumer Price Index, etc. However, there is huge demand for basic statistical training in Member States. There are two types of training that are demanded:

- basic training for staff that manage data in government ministries, departments and agencies. The purpose of such training is to build at least minimum capacity across government to collect and compile data.
- training at diploma and degree level, which is mainly done at Universities. It is critical that the training is practical-oriented.

The Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF) recommended establishment of a Statistical Training Centre at the NSOs in Africa. This Centre can facilitate building minimum capacity for data collection and compilation across the public sector. The Centre can also be an effective anchor to the NSS. Mozambique runs such a Statistical

³ African Development Bank, Draft Report of NSDS SADC Workshop, Maputo, Mozambique, 09-13 November 2015

Training Centre. In 2014, the Minister responsible for statistics in Mozambique established by decree a National School of Statistics (ENE) as a public institution under the National Institute of Statistics (INE) to promote statistical culture and to contribute to improvement of official statistics in the country by training statistical personnel across the NSS with a focus on a medium course (high/tertiary education), professional training, research and extension. The target groups for ENE were statistical personnel of INE (60%), NSS (30%) and the general public (10%). It was reported that since its inception, ENE has undertaken 5 Medium Courses on Official Statistics and graduated 122 personnel, among them only 16 are from the NSS. During the same period, 20 short courses were taught.

Fortunately, there is already a Harmonized Statistical Training Syllabus that was developed by SADC in 2005 with support from European Union (EU) as part of its support to the SADC statistical development programme. In 2007, this syllabus was turned into a SADC Training Pack by the Statistics Services Centre at the University of Reading in U.K with support from EU. The Training Pack is at three levels - Basic, Intermediate and Higher – corresponding to statistical professional training levels of the Royal Statistical Society of U.K. and is distributed as an Open Educational Resource throughout the world. It is offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and re-use for teaching purposes, learning and research. This resource should be put to maximum use in training statistical personnel in the region.

2.3.3 Achievements of the RSDS

This section presents the achievements of the RSDS in accordance with the theory of change (intended results) as well as other achievements (unintended). The intended results are anchored in the strategic intervention areas of the RSDS and the SRSS. The results are premised on components of the SRSS – the SADC Secretariat and the NSSs - playing their part in delivering on their respective mandate.

a) Achievements against planned interventions/initiatives

Achievements at regional level:

These are presented by theme:

Strategic theme 1: Widen the scope and range of available regional statistical data

Under this theme, the following was achieved:

1. Regionally comparable data was compiled for the Harmonized Consumer Price Index (HCPI) as a collaborative effort with AfDB and COMESA. HCPIs are produced and disseminated every month

2. A template was designed for collecting data from Member States for compilation of the Statistics Yearbook, selected indicators and the HCPI.
3. The Annual SADC Statistical Yearbook that provides time series data for each Member State on regional integration domains was produced for 2015-2017. However due to resource constraints it has not been produced post 2017.

Strategic theme 2: Increase comparability and quality of prioritized regional statistics

Under this theme, the following were achieved:

4. Trainings on agreed frameworks and common standards was undertaken on:
 - New expenditure classifications for CPI and HCPI agreed and endorsed during the 49th United Nations Statistical Commission Meeting in March 2018.
 - The Statistics Committee approved and endorsed (then indicated when) of HCPIs Technical Guidance Notes (TGNs), SADC Template on Trade in Services Statistics and Technical notes for Statistics Yearbook.
5. Technical manuals were prepared, including:
 - Technical Guidance Notes (TGNs) produced in 2016 on Harmonized Consumer Price Index (HCPI).
 - Technical Notes on definition of SADC indicators for Statistics Yearbook were produced annually.
 - Guidelines on SADC Template for Trade in Services Statistics were produced in 2015.
6. Customized and adapted agreed frameworks. The above frameworks were endorsed in SADC Statistics Committee Meetings

Strategy theme 3: Increase services on users and promote wider use of regional statistics

Under this theme, the following was achieved:

7. The SADC Statistical Yearbook was produced and launched in a side event during SADC Summit.

Strategic theme 4: Strengthen stakeholder partnerships and coordination of SRSS

Under this theme, the following was achieved:

8. A Protocol on Statistic was drafted and approved by the SADC Statistics Committee Meetings in June 2020. It was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2021.
9. User-producer forums at regional level were convened including:
 - Peer Review Missions on macroeconomic surveillance were undertaken to Member States to ensure quality statistics are used to monitor macroeconomic policies;

- The Committee of Central Bank Governors (CCBG) Meetings were held including CCBG Research & Macroeconomic subcommittee;
 - SADC Macroeconomic Subcommittee Meetings were held.
10. TWGs/Task Forces were established and are operational. These undertook the following activities:
- A Task Team for development of the Protocol on Statistics was established in 2018.
 - A Task Team for review and development of RSDS was established in 2019
 - A Technical Working group on HCPI held annual meetings
 - SADC Statistics Yearbook Focal Points were designated in 2012
 - Trade in Services Statistics Technical Working Group was established in 2015
 - Poverty Expert Group for SADC common poverty measurement was set up in 2019

Strategic theme 6: Promote statistical capacity building in region

11. Capacity building initiatives on statistical standards were undertaken as planned. These include:
- Capacity building initiatives in real and external sector statistics organized under Pan-African Statistics Programme in collaboration with AUC, 2015-2018;
 - Real Sector Statistics capacity building initiatives undertaken by Afritac South for SADC region;
 - National and regional training workshops on SADC Template of Trade in Services Statistics undertaken 2015-2017;
 - Technical Working Group Meeting on HCPI methodological development;
 - Training of Statistics Yearbook focal persons on technical validation of economic and social statistics;
 - Training for Head of National Statistics Offices (NSOs) on management and leadership organized in collaboration with PARIS21 in 2016.

a) Other achievements

Other achievements recorded by SADC during the RSDS implementation period included:

(i) Partnerships

Partnerships were built with various institutions including regional economic communities such as COMESA, pan-African institutions (AfDB, AUC and UNECA), UN agencies such as FAO and multilateral agencies including the IMF, the World Bank and European Union.

(ii) Harnessing regional resources

Human resource endowment in NSSs of Member States is uneven. While some Member States are severely resource constrained in terms of availability of professional statisticians, skills and experience, others are well endowed with these and other resources. SADC has provided institutional framework for Member States to share the said resources. This has been done through statutory meetings of the SCC where Heads of NSOs officially meet to exchange views on how best to develop regional statistics. In addition, individual Member States have supported other Member States in different areas. Two cases are cited in this regard.

a) South Africa undertook to advocate for the Population and Housing Census in Angola and DRC, which had not undertaken this census for many decades. It was also reported that Statistics South Africa assisted some Member States to establish their own SDG Trackers. Statistics South Africa undertook this initiative to support citizens and policymakers in tracking progress towards the SDGs, identifying gaps and priority areas for action. Launched in December 2019, the Tracker portal is publicly available in an interactive and user-friendly format. The Tracker also provides information about South Africa's national policies related to achieving the SDGs that, paired with the data made available, can offer improved tools for decision-making, resource allocation and enhanced collaboration between all stakeholders in support of the SDGs.

b) As reported earlier, Zambia is relatively strong in trade statistics and has been able to share knowledge and experience with other SADC Member States. In particular, Zambia has provided direct assistance on building systems for compilation of trade statistics to Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Namibia, etc.

State of statistics at Member State level

1. As mentioned earlier, the RSDS is not well known in Member States because of inadequate awareness creation about the strategy. It is also not reflected in NSDSs. The RSDS roll-out to Member States does not seem to have taken place.
2. Member States are implementing different aspects of the RSDS. For instance, most Member States reported implementing/supporting agricultural statistics (9), National Accounts (13), Harmonized Consumer Price Indices (13) and International Merchandise Trade Statistics (11).
3. Some Member States updated their national statistical legislations (Tanzania, Mozambique, etc.) or are in the process of doing so (e.g. South Africa). It is critical that national statistical legislations are up-to-date and are aligned to the Protocol on Statistics once it is endorsed.
4. In Member States, consultations between data producers and users was stepped up mainly occasioned by the requirements for SDGs monitoring and reporting. This was done mainly through Data User-Producer Committees and workshops.

5. Member States have designed or updated their NSDSs. However, only about 1/3 of Member States have designed and are implementing sector-inclusive NSDSs⁴.
6. Most Member States have at least one University teaching statistics. However, statistics is taught as part of mathematics or economics and in any case does not adequately cover official statistics. They, therefore, do not produce job-ready or "turnkey," *graduates* for running the NSS. Tanzania has a well-established Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) which has over the years offered training in applied statistics at diploma level. It now offers degree training in official statistics. This is a facility Member States can exploit to train their statistical personnel.
7. Few Member States have been able to establish In-service Training Centres as part of capacity building programme for the NSS as recommended by SHaSA2. These centres aim to do basic/ordinary training in statistics. As mentioned earlier, Mozambique presents a model of how such a centre can be run.
8. Member States are at different stages of statistical development and effecting data innovation including using tablets for data collections.
9. About half responding Member States disseminate their statistics using open data portal developed under the AfDB Information Highway Project. These portals present readily accessible, comprehensive, up-to-date and user-friendly statistical database systems on a wide range of socio-economic indicators.
10. Many Member States reported undertaking a Data User Satisfaction Survey. Some undertake the survey periodically.
11. Funding for statistics remains a big challenge. The idea of establishing a Statistics Fund as recommended by SHaSA2 has not gained traction in the region. So many Member States depend on funding from development partners to be able to undertake statistical activities like surveys and censuses.

b) Evaluation of RSDS against statistics criteria

The evaluation was also undertaken using the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact as well as the Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) of the IMF.

Relevance

The RSDS remains relevant as a framework for building statistical capacity and production of harmonized regional statistics that are used for policy, planning, decision-making, monitoring and reporting on development progress. The statistics are used by the SADC secretariat, Member States and other stakeholders such as investors for a variety of purposes. However, it was reported that currently data supply is not matching data demand. Data users at the SADC headquarters pointed

⁴ Report of NSDS SADC Workshop, Maputo, Mozambique, 09-13 November 2015

out data gaps in some development indicators including energy, infrastructure and related services, gender, environment, disasters, food security, etc. They also pointed out lack of granular details (disaggregation) in available data.

While only 3 Member States reported that the RSDS is an important policy document for the country, Member States, about a half of reporting States reported that the RSDS has been successful or partly successful in harmonization of Agricultural Statistics, National Accounts, industrial statistics, Social Statistics, Consumer Price Indices and External Trade Statistics.

Effectiveness

A lot of outputs were produced especially those related to guidelines and methodologies for production of harmonized statistics and statistical capacity building were implemented. Member States are, therefore, able to produce and provide harmonized statistics on a number of indicators although there are still data gaps as pointed out above. The gaps are due to limited capacity at Member States level.

However, a number of outputs were not delivered because many interventions/ initiatives were not implemented. The RSDS had identified 26 interventions /initiatives for implementation. But for many reasons including lack of resources, only 11 or 42 % of the interventions /initiatives were implemented and 15 interventions /initiatives were not implemented. The strategic themes with least implementation of interventions /initiatives are: Increase services on users and promote wider use of regional statistics (only 1 out of 4 implemented), Promote statistical capacity building in region (only 1 out of 3 implemented) and Harness latest innovations in ICT (none of 4 interventions /initiatives implementation). Interventions/ initiatives not implemented include:

1. Integrated Trade Statistics Database	7. Use state of the art for data management including dissemination
2. Regional central database	8. Establishing integrated socio-economic indicators on SADC
3. Data dissemination strategy	9. Data dissemination portal?
4. Facts and figures	10. Analytical capacity at secretariat and in Member States
5. Advocacy strategy	11. Build partnerships between NSOs and training centres in the region
6. Use ICT for data collection and transmission to Secretariat	

The effectiveness of the regional statistics has been limited by:

- limited scope (available data are mainly about National Accounts and Prices), insufficient periodicity (data are mostly annual), perceived inadequate reliability, some inconsistency between data sources (some gaps between SADC regional statistics and statistics from other sources such as AUC, UNECA, IMF and the World Bank), lack of timeliness e.g. with Annual SADC Statistics Yearbook, lack of or inadequate metadata and lack of established channels for feedback.
- inadequate data dissemination and access. As pointed out earlier, there is no database at the SADC secretariat, there is no data portal, the Annual SADC Statistical Yearbook has not been printed since 2017 (lack of timeliness) and the SADC website contains very limited data – mainly on HCPI. The website postings are in form of reports in PDF which do not allow for: user-friendly analysis of data; grouping of indicators in different frameworks, sectors and sub-sectors, by themes (poverty, disparities, etc.), by institutions, by sources, by international commitments and goals; providing updated time-series as well as multiple estimates from various sources, disaggregated by sex, urban/rural strata and other domains of interest whenever these are available; and the creation, modification and merging of indicator databases without the need for specialized programs or technical support.

Efficiency

Member States provide some data on monthly and annual basis. However, many of them face capacity and resource challenges in data collection, hence some gaps in the data they transmit to the SADC secretariat. Increasingly, however, Member States are digitizing data collection including use of the Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) and there is demonstrable reduction in the cost of data collection, timeliness in data production and improvement in data quality.

Data management and dissemination by the SADC secretariat is not efficient. Data transmission by Member States to SADC secretariat uses Excel templates which take time to fill and are prone to errors. There is no database at the SADC secretariat which creates challenges of data access. Lack of resources has constrained production of publications like the SADC Statistical Yearbook since 2015 and posting of PDF reports on regional statistics on the SADC website does not help those users who want to do further data analysis. In any case, data users need to access a comprehensive database which is not yet in place.

Sustainability

While about half the reporting Member States indicated that they have structures in place for supporting the continuing implementation of the RSDS, about the same number indicated that there was no evidence that the implementation of the RSDS has attracted/leveraged additional interest

and funding for statistics. Also about the same number of Member States indicated that the implementation of the RSDS is not sufficiently monitored with progress reports and recommendations discussed at the regional level.

A high dependence on development partners both at the SADC secretariat and in Member States make statistical programmes unsustainable. The SDGs have provided the statistical community in Africa and in the region in particular a good opportunity to make a case for increased funding for statistics from government budgets. Member States need to be assisted to make a stronger business case for governments to fund critical statistical activities. The case will need to be made that *“enhanced investment in statistics will pay for itself many times over by improving the efficiency of governments and development partners in allocating resources and monitoring outcomes”* (PARIS21, 2006). Statistical advocacy, therefore, should be an important intervention area in the successor RSDS.

Secondly, a shift in development partners assistance in Member States from focusing on production of data sets for meeting immediate data needs to building sustainable statistical capacity to produce data now and into the future will go some way in ensuring sustainability of the NSSs and the SRSS.

Impact

Regional statistics have been used by various stakeholders to analyze the impact of regional integration. Regional statistics have also helped in the formulation of the Industrial Strategy and Roadmap and the Regional Agricultural Policy, among others. The private sector and other stakeholders e.g. researcher and academia have also used regional statistics for various purposes. However, the usefulness of regional statistics has been limited by data gaps and also the way the statistics are disseminated. The gaps have been highlighted above. The website which is the main channel for dissemination of regional statistics is not interactive and user friendly. Going forward, there will be a need to develop and proactively promote use of a dedicated open data portal that is accessible and interactive. There are good examples in some Member States on such open data portals and their use as outlined above.

c) Overall performance of the RSDS

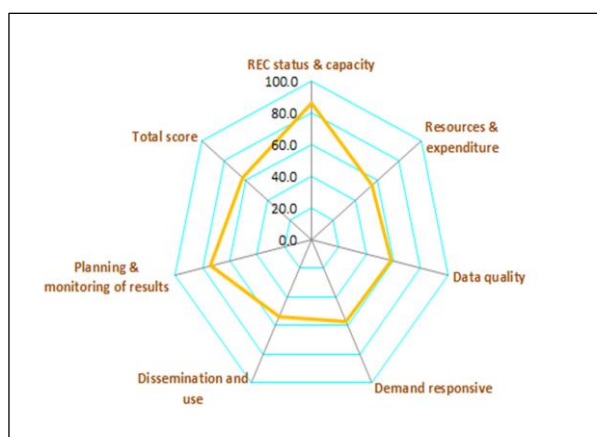
As part of the evaluation process, a PARIS21 self-assessment evaluation tool was used to get a quantitative indication of the overall quality of the RSDS, the extent of its implementation and its overall impact. The tool helps to identify, in a quick and easy way, statistical development areas within the regional statistical system that require more attention. It was filled-in by the Statistics Unit of SADC Secretariat and the results are automatically processed and produce a summary table along with corresponding performance charts based on major themes as can be seen below.

The performance across specific areas is illustrated in table 4 and figure 1 respectively.

Table 2.3: RSDS Total Implementation Score

Activity	Score (%)
Status and capacity	86.4
Resources & expenditure	55.0
Data quality	53.5
Demand responsive	58.5
Dissemination and use	57.2
Planning & monitoring of results	74.0
Total score	62.9

Figure 1.1: Performance of RSDS



The table shows that the highest score (86.4%) was on the status and capacity of SADC secretariat to prepare and guide the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the RSDS, followed by the score (74.0%) on planning and monitoring implementation of the RSDS. The lowest scores were on resources and expenditure (55.0%), data quality (53.5%), data dissemination (57.23%) and data demand responsiveness (58.5%). These are therefore areas that need special attention in the design of the successor RSDS. The overall performance of the statistical strategy implementation was 62.9%. This is average performance for the strategy.

2.4 Challenges

Implementation of RSDS was constrained by a number of challenges including the following:

1. Inadequate statistical advocacy at both SADC secretariat and in Member States and lack of visibility of the SADC Statistics Unit. As pointed out earlier, statistical advocacy is absolutely critical to statistical development in Africa.
2. Inadequate awareness creation about RSDS both at SADC headquarters and in Member States. This limited ownership and support for the implementation of the RSDS.
3. Inadequate commitment of Member States to SADC statistical programmes. This affected resourcing of focal points to function well.
4. There was inadequate staffing of the SADC Statistics Unit. This very much limited the work of the Statistics Unit.
5. While Member States have designed and are implementing their NSDS, many of them are not sector-inclusive. As a result, these NSDSs will not lead to improvement of administrative data.

6. The NSDSs were not aligned to the RSDS. To the extent most RSDS activities are undertaken in Member States, they need to be reflected in the NSDS for easier implementation.
7. Inadequate statistical capacity and skills in some Member States. Five Member States (1/3 of all Member States) scored less than 60 on the World Bank Statistical Capacity Indicator (SCI)⁵, with one of them scoring as low as 35.6 in 2018.
8. High staff turnover including in leadership of some NSOs such as NSOs for Mozambique and Zambia. This was not good for the stability of the affected NSOs.
9. Limited resources:
 - The SADC Statistical Yearbook has not been produced since 2015.
 - resources for implementing the strategy on “Harnessing the latest innovations in ICT for statistical development” in context of the RISDP were not mobilized.
 - governments of some Member States did not always make resources available for the development of the NSSs.
 - Member States have not established a “statistics fund” as recommended by SHaSAII. As mentioned earlier, Zambia has set the pace on this matter.
 - some Member States experienced high dependence on development partners funding for statistics
10. Inadequate data management and dissemination due to limited harnessing of ICT.
 - Member States use EXCEL templates to transmit data to the SADC secretariat whenever data are required to compile regional statistics. This is not an efficient way to collect data from Member States. An efficient way would be for the SADC secretariat to establish a data portal that is able to exchange data and information with data portals which are already established in Member States so that when Member States make changes in their data these are automatically received by the secretariat.
 - SADC secretariat does not have a database that users can access to get the data they need. Oftentimes they have had to get to Member States to get the data they need and this has not promoted the intermediation role of the SADC Statistics Unit.
 - There is no data portal for dissemination of regional statistics. Regional statistics are disseminated through printed reports and also using the SADC website. On the website, statistics is hidden under Information Services and getting to statistics domain is not easy. What is posted on the website are reports in PDF mainly on Monthly Harmonized Consumer Price Index (HCPI), and nothing more.

⁵ The Statistics Capacity Indicator (SCI) is used as a general measure of statistical capacity and it ranges between 1 and 100. It is a composite indicator of three dimensions - source data, methodology and periodicity. The World Bank has been compiling country scores on this indicator annually for developing countries since 2004 using readily available data on countries. Country scores are published on a World Bank SCI Dashboard.

11. Inadequate knowledge management at the SADC Statistics Unit as the following two examples show. It was found that at SADC secretariat, there was no knowledge of the SADC harmonized statistical training syllabus which was developed in 2005. And yet some countries like Mozambique are using this syllabus in its statistical training programme. It was also found that there was no knowledge of a data portal that the AfDB assisted to build for effective data transmission and dissemination. This portal was built at all pan-African institutions and regional organizations including AUC, COMESA, SADC and AFRISAT as well as all Member States as part of the Africa Information Highway initiative. This portal could, therefore, be updated and used to automate data collection from SADC Member States which all have the same platform thereby reducing the reporting burden on Member States and the effort by SADC. As soon as SADC Member States update their portals all the data linked to SADC would also be automatically updated on the SADC portal.

2.5 Lessons learnt

A number of lessons were learnt from the evaluation and they have been factored into the design of the successor RSDS. They include the following:

1. Statistical advocacy at every level is an important investment for statistical development. It helps to secure stakeholder awareness, buy-in and demand for statistics as evidence and support for statistics including commitments to invest in statistical production and development. Through statistical advocacy, the profile of statistics can be raised. Indeed, where statistical advocacy has been done well, this has resulted into greater support to statistics.
2. Creating awareness about the RSDS at every level is critical to confer ownership and to enlist support for its implementation.
3. The way statistics has been mainstreamed into the SDGs and RISDP has not been cascaded to SADC Member States. There are many Member States where statistics is not mainstreamed into national policy and development processes and this is hampering national statistical development.
4. It is important that all Member States design and implement sector-inclusive NSDSs covering the entire NSS rather than design statistical plan for the NSO. The design of the NSDSs should be based on international guidelines and best practice.
5. While administrative data constitute a significant portion of official statistics on key sectors such as agriculture, education, health, vital events (marriages, births, and deaths), employment, trade, finance, crime, etc. a cross Africa, they have tended to be incomplete, inconsistent, out-of-date and insufficiently reliable to be used with confidence. Improving administrative data must therefore be a major intervention area in statistical development in the region. Designing sector-inclusive NSDS will go a long way in achieving the objective in 5 above.

6. Fostering statistical coordination at all levels deserves to be given greater priority in statistical development because of the many benefits that derive from such coordination including harmonization of statistics from different sources.
7. The data ecosystem is expanding and diversifying to include new data users, data producers and sources of data. There is a need to transform the NSS to respond to the changing statistical environment. The review of the national statistical legislations should take this into account.
8. There is a need to undertake data innovation including using new-data sources and innovative technologies to be able to meet the ever-increasing and diversifying demand for data. This will involve building statistical capacity and skills including in new areas such as data science and data analytics,
9. There is need to keep national statistical legislations up-to-date. SADC secretariat should play a role in this updating.
10. Given rapid changes in staff in Member States, it is important to undertake succession planning and knowledge management in part to preserve institutional memory.
11. There is need for more discussion about and advocacy for establishment of a National Statistics Fund in Member States as recommended by SHaSA II.
12. Partnerships for statistics are important and to the extent possible should be leveraged for statistical development in the region. It is also important to foster peer learning and to harness regional capacities in statistics across the region.
13. It is not enough to post regional statistics on a website. To enhance data access and effective data use, there is a need for a dedicated data portal that allows for user-friendly analysis of data; allows grouping of indicators; provides updated time-series as well as multiple estimates from various sources; allows the creation, modification and merging of indicator databases without the need for specialized programs or technical support; and contains a wizard that provides step by step orientation for these tasks.

2.6 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis

This analysis is important as it enables us to identify strength and weaknesses and opportunities and threats so that we can build on identified strength, eliminate identified weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities and avoid threats. The analysis of the SADC statistical system is summarized in the following table.

The results of the SWOT analysis are summarized in the following table.

Table 2.5: SWOT analysis of SADC statistical system

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Existence of a SADC statistical strategy	1. Implementation period for the RSDS was shifted forward with no corresponding onboarding of new statistical issues, challenges and trends
2. Existence of a Statistics Unit at Secretariat	2. Small staff complement at and lack of visibility of the SADC Statistics Unit
3. Well defined institutional framework for statistics	3. Insufficient awareness about the RSDS and the NSDSs in Member States
4. Existence of National Statistical Systems that are a source of SADC regional statistics	4. Lack of alignment between RSDS and NSDS in Member States
5. Existence of NSDS in some Member States	5. Most NSDSs designed by Member States are not sector-inclusive
6. Guidelines for production of harmonized regional statistics in various areas in place	6. Some RSDS implementation structures (e.g. thematic working groups and SADC focal points) did not work as planned
7. Expertise in various statistics areas at both Secretariat and Member State levels	7. Inadequate statistical advocacy both at SADC secretariat and in Member States
8. Infrastructure for basic statistical services in most Member States for: censuses and large-scale sample surveys; basic demographic, social and economic statistics	8. Inadequate funding for SADC statistical programme and National Statistical Systems by governments of Member States
9. Existence of basic human resources at National Statistical Offices (NSOs), some government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (e.g. Central Banks).	9. Instability in leadership of some NSOs of Member States
10. A SADC website for dissemination of regional statistics. Interactive and user-friendly data portals in Member States for data dissemination and data exchange.	10. Lack of an interactive open data portal for dissemination SADC regional statistics
	11. Over-dependency on development partners funding especially for censuses and surveys
Opportunities	Threats
1. Well defined statistical function in the SADC processes	1. Failure by member states to implement agreed activities
2. Diverse policy areas and agenda at national, regional, continental and international level that call for new statistical outputs and approaches	2. Inadequate funding of statistical budgets at all levels

3. Existence of international and continental frameworks to guide improvement and development of statistics	3. Uncoordinated development partners interventions which lead to duplication of effort
4. Possibilities to establish partnerships with various organizations in statistical development	4. Over-dependence on development partners funding
5. Advances in ICT that bring about possibilities to improve data collection, management and dissemination	5. Inadequate coordination of National Statistical System
6. Possibilities to use non-traditional data sources to improve official statistics and fill data gaps	7. Inadequate regional analyses based on SADC data

CHAPTER 3: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESSOR RSDS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the strategic framework which is the core of the RSDS. The thrust of the successor RSDS is transformation and modernization of the SADC regional statistics to address basic and emerging data challenges in a robust manner and consistent with international frameworks and guidelines. The framework presents the strategic foundations (vision, mission and core values) and the strategic direction (strategic intervention areas, objectives and initiatives).

The following considerations were taken into account in the design of the successor RSDS:

3.1.1 Evaluation of RSDS (2015-2020)

The RSDS (2015-2020) was evaluated and results from the evaluation are presented in the last chapter including relevance of RSDS; institutional framework for RSDS implementation; achievements of the RSDS including efficiency, sustainability and impact; challenges; lessons learnt; and SWOT analysis. This evaluation provided a useful starting point in designing this successor RSDS.

3.1.2 Alignment to development agendas

Alignment of statistical programmes and operations to development agendas at national, regional, continental and global levels is one way of demonstrating the relevance of statistics and their impact on development. It is also one way to ensure sustainability of statistical programmes and operations in the region. The RSDS is explicitly anchored in regional development agendas, mainly Vision 2050 and RISDP (2020-2030) and is aligned to continental and international development agendas – Africa Agenda 2063 and agenda 2030 on sustainable development.

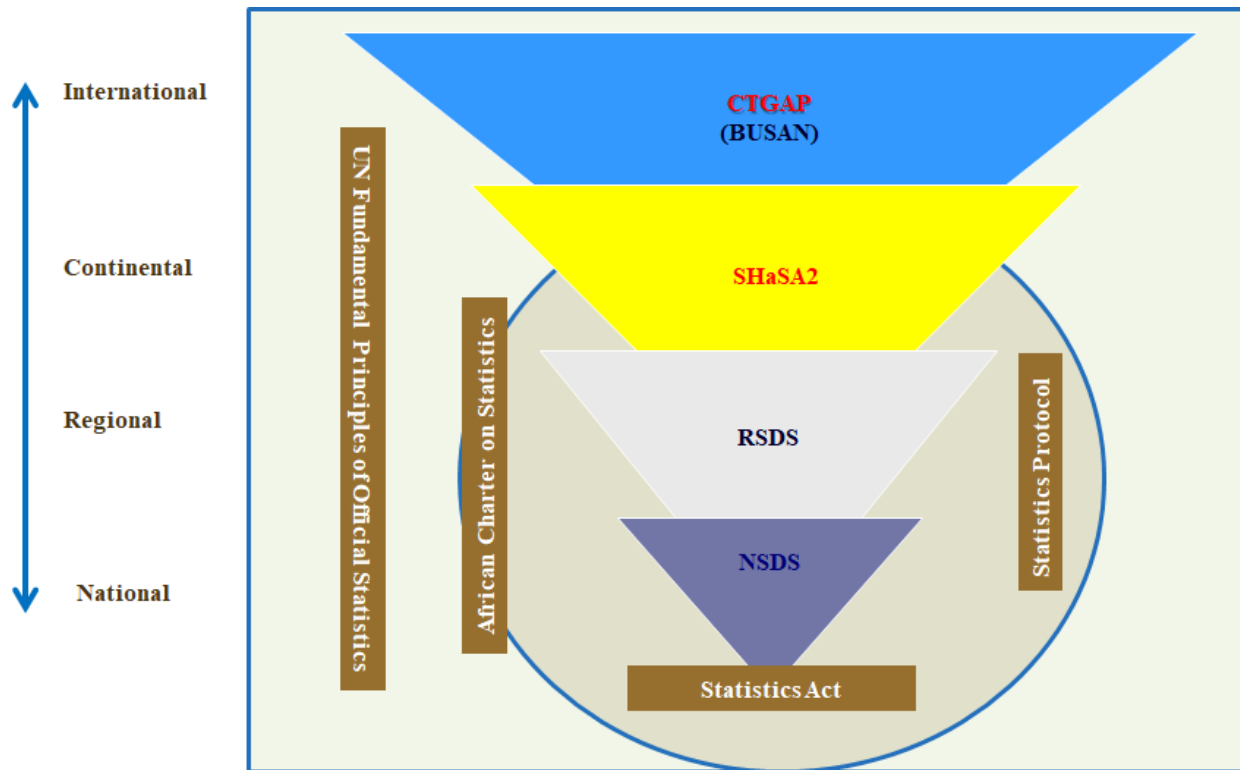
The RSDS will promote mainstreaming of statistics into other regional development programmes to support their monitoring and evaluation. The RSDS will also promote mainstreaming of statistics into National Development Plans and other development agendas of the Member States.

3.1.3 Alignment to regional and international statistical principles and frameworks

The regional statistical system is a part of wider continental and international statistical systems and its development is impacted by statistical developments at these various levels. It is, therefore, crucial to appreciate and develop the regional statistical system in the context of these systems, taking advantage of opportunities they present for knowledge transfer, peer learning and benchmarking on best practices. The following figure presents the alignment of the RSDS to

statistical principles, frameworks and strategies as they cascade from the international level, to continental and finally to regional level.

Figure 3.2: Statistical principles and frameworks at different levels



CPGAP - Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data
SHaSA2 - Second Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa
RSDS - Regional Statistical Development Strategy
NSDS - National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

The figure shows that:

a) Statistical principles cascade from the UN Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics at international level, to the African Charter on Statistics at continental level to the SADC Protocol on Statistics at regional level and finally to NSDS at national level. The UN Fundamental Principles for Official Statistics are the overarching standards for official statistics across countries and for the global statistical system. The Principles were adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in 1994 and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in January 2014. They provide a compass and point of reference for all official statistical work and operations in all countries. At continental level, there is the African Charter on Statistics, which was endorsed by the 12th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in February 2009. The

Charter, which builds on the Fundamental Principles, works as a tool for statistical advocacy at the highest level of government and commits African countries to develop statistics in a manner consistent with best practice and international standards; to use statistics for policy development, planning and decision-making at all levels; and for African governments to scale up support to statistics. At SADC level, there is a Protocol on Statistics that provides a legal framework and underpins the regional statistical system. The Protocol on Statistics is aligned to both the African Charter on Statistics and the UN Fundamental Principles. And at national level there are Statistics Acts which are aligned with the UN Fundamental Principles, African Charter on Statistics and will need to be aligned to the SADC Protocol on Statistics.

Statistical frameworks cascade from the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data (CTGAP) at global level to the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA2) at continental level to the Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) at regional (SADC) level. The CTGAP is an international framework that provides direction for statistical development in the world with a special focus on strengthening NSSs so that they can be most responsive to statistical needs to achieve the 2030 Agenda and beyond. It was adopted at the 48th Session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2017 and updates the priorities of the Busan Action Plan for Statistics (2011-2017) which aimed to fully integrate statistics in decision-making, promote open access to statistics and increase resources for statistical systems. SHaSA2 was adopted by the African statistical community as the general framework for statistical development on the continent. It aims to provide harmonized and quality statistics for the design and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of integration and development policies in Africa. It was endorsed in 2010 by the Joint Conference of African Ministers for Finance and Economy. At regional level, the RSDS has been formulated to support regional integration by making available relevant, timely and accurate regional statistical information to be used for policy formulation, planning and protocol monitoring and decision-making. It is aligned to both SHaSA2 and the CTGAP.

In addition to the above principles and frameworks, there are statistical bodies at global, continental and regional levels whose decisions impact statistical development in the region. The bodies are:

b) The UN Statistical Commission (UNSC), which was established in 1947 as the highest body of the global statistical system. It brings together the Chief Statisticians from Member States from around the world. It is the highest decision-making body for international statistical activities especially the setting of statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national and international level. The SADC Statistics Unit will seek observer status so that it can attend meetings of the Commission. It will also encourage Member States to actively participate in the meetings and activities of the Commission.

c) The Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) which is the apex inter-governmental body established by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and

Economic Development in 2006 to oversee and coordinate statistical development in Africa. It comprises Heads of National Statistical Offices from African countries. Statistics Units of Regional Economic Communities are invited to attend meetings of the Commission. The SADC Statistics Unit will endeavor to attend meetings of this Commission and also participate actively in the work of the Thematic Working Groups of the Commission. It will encourage Member States to do likewise.

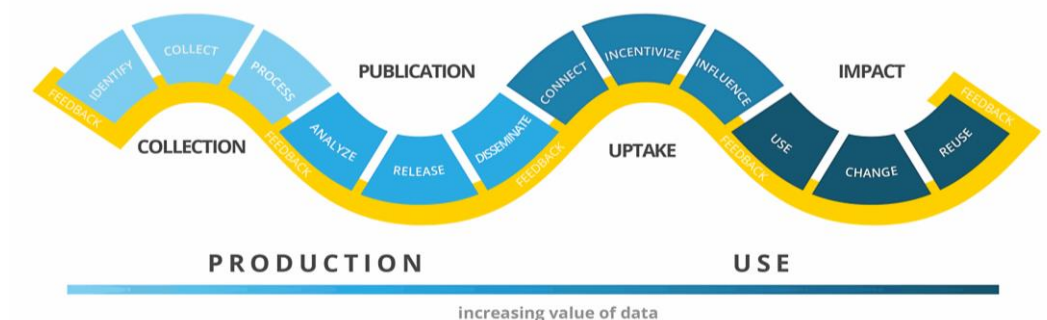
d) The Sectoral Committee on Statistics, as mentioned above, is responsible for the provision of policy and strategic guidance regarding development of statistics in the region. The Committee comprises Heads of National Statistics Offices in Member States.

3.1.4 Data value chain

A data value chain describes the process of data creation and use from first identifying a need for data to its final use and possible reuse – its is about moving from data production to impact. Open Data Watch(2018) has elaborated the data value chain which highlights the increasing value of data as it moves through the production cycle into analysis, and ultimately as evidence to inform policy, planning and decision-making processes and their impact. Its essence is creating a process to transform raw data into actionable information. According to Open Data Watch (*ibid*), data production should involve four major stages (depicted in the following figure), namely:

- collection stage (identify, collect, and process),
- publication stage (analyze, release, and disseminate),
- uptake stage (connect, incentivize, and influence),
- impact stage (use, change, reuse).

Figure 3.3: Data value chain



However, historically, statistical development has placed a strong emphasis on the upstream stages of the data value chain – data collection through dissemination – with a focus on addressing skills

gaps and, to a lesser extent, financing shortfalls that shape data production⁶. It is critical to mention that improving data production is a necessary but insufficient condition to encourage uptake, use and realise impact. When upstream stages remain isolated from demand, inefficiencies emerge and a ‘broken link’ between data producers and users compromises trust in data products and weakens incentives to improve them, limiting their potential to inform development decision-making⁷.

3.1.5 Changing statistical landscape

The statistical landscape across countries and regions is changing. On the demand side, there are new development areas on which data are needed - areas such as green economy, digital economy, governance, human rights, environment, etc. There is expanding and diversifying data ecosystem involving new data users, data producers and sources of data. There are also new trends in statistical organization and management around the areas of data innovation, modernization and transformation. In addition, there is renewed emphasis on partnerships for statistics. On the negative side, Covid-19 pandemic has made data collection difficult because of social distancing. There is, therefore, a need for the regional statistical system to respond appropriately to these changes

3.2 Strategic foundations

Vision: A robust and responsive regional statistical system to underpin regional integration processes, including measurement of progress and impact.

Mission: To provide evidence pipeline by producing and disseminating relevant, reliable, timely, disaggregated and harmonized regional statistics, consistent with international principles and standards, required to achieve peace, security and democratic governance in the SADC region, attain African integration and international development goals.

Core Values:

User focus	Keeping internal and/or external data users in mind at all times and proactively striving to address their concerns and needs.
Integrity	The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. Having integrity means doing the right thing in a reliable way.

⁶ Kiregyera, B. (2013). The Dawning of a Statistical Renaissance in Africa. Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development (AED).

⁷ Development Gateway (2017). Increasing the Impact of Results Data. Policy Brief. Washington, D.C.: Development Gateway (DG).

Accountability	The obligation of an individual to account for his/her activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner.
Transparency	A lack of hidden agendas or conditions, accompanied by the availability of full information required for collaboration, cooperation, and collective decision-making.
Professionalism	Upholding internationally acceptable laws, ethics, conventions and standards of the statistical profession in order to produce quality statistics

3.3 Strategic direction

The strategic direction is underpinned by strategic intervention areas, strategic objectives and initiatives. The strategic intervention areas which are aligned to RISDP 2020-2030 priority areas include the following:

- Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics
- Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS
- Harmonization of regional statistics
- Digital transformation of regional statistics
- Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use
- Quality of regional statistics

It was ensured that the above priority areas are aligned with the CTGAP and SHaSA2. The following tables map out RSDS strategic intervention areas against CTGAP strategic areas and SHaSA2 strategic themes.

Table 3.1 RSDS versus CTGAP

CTGAP strategic areas	RSDS strategic intervention areas
1. Coordination and strategic leadership on data for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS
2. Innovation and modernization of the NSSs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS • Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use
3. Strengthening of basic statistical activities and programmes with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS

CTGAP strategic areas	RSDS strategic intervention areas
particular focus on addressing the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use • Harmonization of regional statistics • Digital transformation of regional statistics
4. Dissemination and use of sustainable development data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use • Quality of regional statistics
5. Multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS • Harmonization of regional statistics
6. Mobilize resources and coordinate efforts for statistical capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS

Table 3.2 RSDS versus SHaSA2

SHaSA2 strategic themes	RSDS strategic intervention areas
Produce quality statistics for Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS
Coordinate the production of quality statistics for Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS • Harmonization of regional statistics
Develop sustainable institutional capacities of the African statistical system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS • Digital transformation of regional statistics
Promote a culture of quality policy and decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use • Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS • Quality of regional statistics

It can be seen from the two tables that the six strategic areas of the CTAP and the four themes of SHaSA2 are covered by various RSDS strategic intervention areas. Therefore implementation of the RSDS will contribute toward the attainment of the CTGAP and SHaSA2 strategic objectives.

For each RSDS strategic intervention area, a number of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time- bound) strategic objectives (SOs) have been identified and some of these are identical to the SHaSA2 strategic objectives. For each RSDS SO, a number of initiatives are elaborated. In addition, the RSDS results chain is charted with outputs, output key performance indicators (KPIs) and expected outcomes for each strategic objective are presented in a tabular form.

3.3.1 Strategic intervention area 1: Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics

A policy framework is essential for promoting and improving appropriate behavior, managing activities, achieving consistency and efficiency, and reducing organisational and system risks. Under this strategic area, the following strategic objectives will be pursued:

SO1.1: Develop and implement RSDS (2020-2030)

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.3: Results chain for SO1.1

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics	Develop and implement strategic frameworks for regional statistics	Regional Strategy for Development of Statistics, 2020-30 produced	RSDS 2020-30 produced and approved in 2021	Better policies, plans and decisions on regional integration and development based on better statistics
		Mid-term review report of RSDS 2020-30 and revised RSDS 2025-30	Mid-Term review report and revised RSDS produced and approved in 2026	
		Final Evaluation of RSDS 2020-30 undertaken	Final Evaluation of RSDS 2020-30 undertaken in 2030	
		Post-2030 RSDS developed and approved	Post 2030 RSDS developed and approved in 2030	

This strategic objective will be achieved by implementing the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Supervision of the production of RSDS 2020-30

The SSC Task Force comprising four Members States of Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania - and the SDC Statistics Unit will supervise production of RSDS 2020-30 including its validation, ensuring that it conforms to international standards and guidelines. The SSC and the SADC Statistics Unit will then oversee its implementation including ensuring that:

- annual reports on RSDS implementation are produced and approved,
- a mid-term review is undertaken in 2025,
- the RSDS is evaluated in 2030, and
- a post-2030 RSDS is designed.

Initiative 2: Create visibility and awareness about the RSDS (2020-30)

Visibility and awareness are critical aspects of the successful implementation of RSDS. Accordingly, the RSDS will require enhanced visibility and awareness as a means to trigger and maintain the interest and awareness as well as securing buy-in, support and participation of SADC Member States, SADC secretariat and external stakeholders .

To effectively create RSDS visibility and awareness, a communication programme will be developed and implemented on an ongoing basis. Its overarching objective will be to mobilize support for the RSDS, educate statistical stakeholders about it and its objectives, and provide for feedback about its implementation. The communication programme will use different communication mechanisms including seminars and workshops, brochures and bulletins, electronic media (Internet, Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

Initiative 3: Implementation of RSDS (2020-2030)

The RSDS will need to be effectively implemented. Implementation will involve mobilization of drivers of strategic success – institutional and organizational development, people development, process improvement and innovative ICT. RSDS implementation will be done at both Member State level and SADC secretariat level. Member States will be encouraged to incorporate relevant RSDS activities into their NSDS and statistical programmes.

Needless to say, RSDS implementation will need to be monitored and reported on.

Initiative 4: Undertake a Mid-term Review of RSDS (2020-30) in 2025.

The purpose of the RSDS mid-term review will be to ensure that the RSDS is still relevant and on course. It will be undertaken by an independent body and will recommend changes in both the

initiatives, work programmes and resource allocation where these are needed and justified. The mid-term review will be undertaken in 2025 and the review report will be considered by the SADC Statistics Committee and reported to the Council of Ministers.

Initiative 5: Evaluation of RSDS (2020-30) and design of the post-2030 RSDS

This evaluation of the RSDS (2020-2030) will be undertaken in 2030 by an independent body to assess the most significant constraints, the most successful activities and generally, how well the strategic objectives will have been met. The emphasis of the evaluation will be on lesson learning for post-2030 RSDS. Indeed based on the findings of the evaluation, recommendations will be made for the design of post-2030 RSDS.

It will help a lot if the evaluation of the RSDS 2020-2030 and the design of post-2030 RSDS are undertaken as complementary processes to achieve synergy.

SO1.2: Operationalization of the SADC Protocol on Statistics

It was mentioned earlier that this Protocol was designed as a legal framework to underpin the SRSS. It provides for institutional, organizational and technical development of statistics in the region leveraging international statistical frameworks, guidelines and best practices. In particular, it provides for a strategy to develop statistics, legislative measures, data sources including innovative sources, adherence with international standards and best practice, geospatial information, data disaggregation, production of various statistics relevant to the RISDP (poverty, industrial, trade, infrastructure, agriculture and food security; environment; climate change and disaster risk reduction, tourism; demography, health and education; employment and labour; governance, peace and security; science, technology and innovation; gender), data quality, data transmission, data dissemination, institutional arrangements, financial provision, relationship with other states and organizations, settlement of disputes and ratification of the Protocol. The Protocol will be ratified when two-thirds of Member States have signed it.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.4: Results chain for SO1.2

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics	Operationalization of the SADC Protocol on Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol on Statistics ratified • Statistical legislations of Member States aligned to the Protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol ratified by 2025 • Statistical legislations of all Member States aligned to the Protocol by 2030 	SRSS underpinned by a legal framework

This strategic objective will be achieved through the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Ratify and promote the SADC Protocol on Statistics

The SADC Statistics Unit will work closely with NSOs of Member States to have the Protocol ratified. The Protocol shall enter into force thirty (30) days after the deposit of instruments of ratification by two-thirds of Member States. For this to be well and consistently done, a programme for ratification and promotion of the Protocol will be formulated and implemented. This programme will target political leaders and policy makers as well as statisticians in NSOs of Member States.

Initiative 2: Promote alignment of statistical legislations of Member States with the Protocol

All Member States have a statistical legislation as a framework to regulate national statistical activities and operations. These legislations vary depending on the form of government, the kind of administrative arrangements in force and legislative and administrative conventions in individual Member States. In some Member States, these legislation are being updated. Under this initiative, statistical legislations of all Member States will be reviewed against provisions of the Protocol with a view to aligning them to the Protocol and create a harmonized SRSS in which harmonized regional statistics are produced. The SADC Statistics Unit will promote the said review and alignment.

SO1.3: Develop sectoral statistical strategic frameworks for regional integration

The design of the RSDS takes cognisance of the strategic priorities of the RISDP 2020-2030 which include:

- Industrial Development
- Market Integration
- Infrastructure Development in Support of Regional Integration
- Social and Human Capital Development
- Crosscutting Issues: Gender, Youth, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management

In support of these priorities, sectoral statistical strategic frameworks on each of the above priority areas will be developed to support production of data specific to the priority area.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

-----Table 3.5: Results chain for SO1.3

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics	Develop sectoral statistical strategic frameworks for regional integration	Strategies for development of statistics for strategic priorities of the RISDP 2020-2030 developed and implemented	Strategies for strategic priorities of the RISDP 2020-2030 developed and approved by 2022	Improved policies and decisions on Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy in the region

Development of the above strategic frameworks will be intermediated by the the following initiatives.

Initiative 1: Establishment of a Technical Working Group on Sectoral Statistics

A dedicated TWG on sectoral statistics will be established to support the development and use of sectoral statistics in the region. The TWG which will comprise experts in various areas of sectoral statistics will work with data users in different sectors to develop strategies for statistical production for priorities of the RISDP 2020-2030.

Initiative 2: Building partnerships for sectoral statistics

To undertake initiative 1 (above) effectively, the SADC Statistics Unit will build and/or strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships at national, regional and international levels as recommended by the Cape Town Global Action Plan to create frequent and periodic opportunities to consult and cooperate on the production and use of sectoral statistics. Partnerships will help to access non-official data held by the private sector and civil society organizations .

SO1.4: Promote the design and updating of NSDS in Member States

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) is recommended internationally as the best framework for building national statistical capacity as it covers the entire National Statistical System (NSS) and is designed to, *inter alia*,

- better coordinate the NSS,
- address data limitations,
- mobilize and prioritise use of resources for statistics (national and international),
- integrate statistics within national policy, planning and budget processes, and
- introduce change in statistical organization and management (including the data revolution).

While many SADC Member States are implementing or updating their NSDSs, most of these NSDSs are not sector-inclusive and largely focus on the NSO rather than the NSS⁸. Neither are they aligned to the RSDS. As such the NSDSs fail to provide a framework for improving administrative data which are important for monitoring and reporting on development progress at various levels; they also fail to provide a framework for effective implementation of RSDS activities in Member States.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.6: Results chain for SO1.4

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics	Promote the design and implementation of NSDS in Member States aligned to regional, continental and global agendas	NSDS designed or updated and implemented by Member States	All Member States have designed or updated and implemented an NSDS by 2030	Coherent and effective NSSs in Member States

Under this strategic objective, the following initiatives will be undertaken:

Initiative 1: Establishing a Thematic Technical Working Group on NSDS

Given the challenges of designing and implementing NSDSs, a TWG on NSDS will be established. This TWG will be responsible for producing guidelines on NSDS design, implementation and evaluation to ensure that resulting NSDSs are country owned, country specific and stakeholder-driven; reviewing the state of NSDS design and implementation in Member States; promoting peer reviews on NSDS; and promoting training on NSDS. Also a community of practice for NSDS coordinators in Member States will be established to share knowledge and experience on what works and why and what does not work and why; and organizing regular meetings for them.

Initiative 2: Creating partnerships for NSDS design and updating

The SADC Statistics Unit will work with partners such as AfDB, PARIS21 and the World Bank to assist Member States design or update their NSDSs, ensuring that they are sector-inclusive and aligned to their National Development Plans, the RSDS 2020-2030, and continental and global

⁸ AfDB, Workshop on NSDS for SADC countries, November 2015 (unpublished report)

statistical frameworks and trends. It is expected that partners will provide technical assistance and/or some funding to support this initiative.

3.3.2 Strategic intervention area 2: Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS

Institutional and organizational issues determine the extent and pace of statistical development. Institutional issues relate to the environment that impacts statistical production such as priorities of SADC secretariat and governments of Member States (e.g. whether resources are allocated to statistics), policies and decision-making structures (are they based on evidence and data?), rules and laws (whether they are respected and there is no political interference), culture (voice, participation, consultations, responsiveness to information, etc.) and drivers of change (what are key drivers of change - social, technological, economic or political?).

Organizations on the other hand are groups of players who come together for a common purpose to achieve specific objectives. They adapt their organization according to externally defined rules and regulations “rules of the game”. Organizations usually have discrete boundaries, a budget and a structure. Organizational issues mainly relate to structure, infrastructure (office, statistical and IT) and capabilities (systems, classifications and methodologies, resources including staff). To achieve statistical development, there has to be a balance in addressing both institutional and organizational issues, hence this strategic intervention area.

Under this strategic intervention area, the following strategic objectives will be met:

- Create greater visibility for and awareness about statistics
- Enhance data uptake and use
- Enhance governance of the SRSS
- Strengthen legal framework for NSS
- Promote coordination of data users and producers in the region
- Undertake risk management of the SRSS
- Strengthen the role of SRSS in continental and global statistical systems

SO2.1: Create greater visibility for and awareness about importance of statistics

Greater awareness about statistics is essential for making a business case for statistics in terms of visibility of statistics, data use and investment in their production. It will be created through statistical advocacy at both national and regional levels especially among policy and decision-makers is essential. This notwithstanding, inadequate statistical advocacy and awareness creation about the role and importance of statistics was identified as a major challenge to statistical development in the region. The consequence of low statistical advocacy has been low profile of some NSOs, failure to mainstream statistics into national policy and planning processes,

underfunding for statistics, inadequate statistical infrastructure and capacity, inadequate data quality especially from administrative data sources, etc.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.7: Results chain for SO2.1

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Create greater visibility for and awareness about importance of statistics	Statistical advocacy programme developed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of regional and national statistical advocacy activities implemented by 2030 • Reports on statistical literacy activities • Number of NDPs that mainstream statistics • Number of partnerships for statistics developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher profile for statistics at SADC secretariat and in Member States • Greater investment in statistical production and development • Greater use of statistics for policy, planning and decision making at all levels

In order to achieve this strategic objective, the following initiatives will be implemented in the region.

Initiative 1: Develop and implement a regional statistical advocacy programme

For statistical advocacy to be effective, it will need to be appreciated as a strategic issue and undertaken on an ongoing basis with appropriate tools, messages, channels and associated budget. Accordingly, a regional statistical advocacy programme will be developed and implemented throughout the RSDS implementation period.

The programme will have two parts, one relating to the successor RSDS and the other relating to general statistical awareness. Creation of RSDS awareness among the workforce in NSOs and external stakeholders in Member States as well as at SADC secretariat is essential for effective strategy implementation. This is the more important given that most initiatives for improving regional statistics will be implemented at the level of Member States and will therefore need to be incorporated into NSDSs of Member States. This awareness was insufficiently done for the RSDS 2015-2020. This time round, this aspect of RSDS implementation has been provided for in the RSDS implementation plan.

The second part of awareness creation relates to general statistical awareness that will need to be undertaken at national and regional levels basically to raise the profile of statistics, enhance data demand and use as well as investment in statistical production and development – putting statistics in front ranks of political priority. It is about making a business case for statistics and statistical activities.

Initiative 2: Develop partnerships for statistical advocacy

In view of limited capacity for statistical advocacy, partnerships will be built with institutions which are better endowed with capacity to advocate for statistics. In particular, partnerships will be built with the International Statistical Institute (ISI) and PARIS21.

Partnership with ISI

The International Statistical Literacy Project (ISLP) is the only international programme dedicated exclusively to the promotion of statistical literacy. It was started in 1991 by the International Statistical Institute (ISI) and its goals include putting more emphasis on action and active engagement in statistical literacy activities in the different nations while maintaining and expanding the rich web site of resources created in the early years of the project. Many NSOs across the world participate in the project which organizes periodic competitions among participating countries. In addition, the project produces a newsletter, several publications, has a web site, and a presence at many international meetings to let many know about international resources in statistical literacy that are not promoted elsewhere. A partnership will be developed with the ISI on promotion of statistical literacy in the SADC region.

Partnership with PARIS21

In the past, some SADC Member States (e.g. Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, etc.) have benefited from partnerships with PARIS21⁹ to produce general statistical advocacy brochures and other statistical advocacy materials. Partnerships for statistical advocacy will therefore be created with PARIS21 to develop appropriate advocacy tools and messages to make statistical advocacy in the region impactful.

Initiative 3: Mainstreaming statistics into NDPs

Member States will be assisted to advocate for mainstreaming statistics into public policy and development processes and especially the NDPs as indeed it has been done for SDGs and RISDP

⁹ PARIS21 is a global partnership of national and international statisticians, development practitioners, policymakers, analysts, and other users of statistics who are committed to making a difference in the contribution of statistics to development processes.

(2020-2030). In particular, advocacy will aim to have NDPs of Member States identify statistics as a development area and target it for development like other development areas such as gender, environment, health, education, etc. Specifically, this will focus on building statistical infrastructure, systems and capacity. The advocacy effort will mainly be directed at policy and decision-makers in Member States.

Initiative 4: Advocate for more funding for statistical production and development

Statistical advocacy is also about creating awareness about the importance of funding for statistics and relying less and less on donor funding for production of core statistics for Member States. In particular, attention of Member States will be drawn to:

- a) the recommendation by both the African Charter on Statistics and the SHaSA2 to all African Countries to establish a Statistics Fund; and
- b) the African Union Executive Council decision on implementation of SHaSA2 urging African countries “ *to allocate 0.15% of their national budgets to finance statistics*” (ShaSA2).

SO2.2 Enhance data uptake and impact

There has been little discussion among data producers about the last two stages of the data value chain elaborated earlier, namely data uptake and impact where data value is realised in practice. The RSDS will promote wide scale use of data value analysis to conceptualise data as an asset, where value is incrementally enriched through use; conceptualising data as an asset to drive efforts to finance statistical development and demonstrate value-for-money in data production; and to align demand-led data production to evidence-based policy and decision-making¹⁰. This will revolutionize statistical production processes.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.8: Results chain for SO2.2

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Enhance data uptake and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data user producer engagements undertaken • Increased data uptake • User Satisfaction Surveys undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on data user producer engagements • Number of data users accessing the portal • Data user satisfaction score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied data users • Evident-based policies, plans and decisions

¹⁰ The Data Value Chain: Moving from Production to Impact, Open Data Watch, N.Y

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on User Satisfaction Surveys 	

This strategic objective will be underpinned by the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Increase data uptake

Data uptake involves three activities: connecting data to users; incentivizing users to incorporate data into the decision-making processes; and influencing them to value data. Connections to users will be will take many forms including¹¹:

- promoting a culture that values evidence-based policies and accurate accounting of outcomes by training data users how to access data, make sense of data and building competency to use the data especially for policy, planning, decision-making and reporting on development progress; supporting data producers to compile and publish data to make them readily accessible;
- encouraging data users to incorporate data into their decision making and management practices, and influencing them to adopt new habits of data use;
- increasing engagement with data producers to value and demand development data as this is likely further improve the quality and relevance of the data;
- ensuring that data collection methods and quality controls are as transparent as trust in the quality of the data is a crucial pre-requisite to incentivize users to use data;
- providing metadata which help data users to understand what the data are measuring and how they have been collected and managed;
- building and operationalizing an open data platform to facilitate access, exchange, sharing and use of harmonized statistical data at all levels (see later);
- demonstrating a high degree of professionalism as data uptake will depend on perceptions of autonomy or lack of political interference, combined with trust, relevance, and quality.

Initiative 2: Increase data impact

Data impact involves three activities: using the data to understand a problem or make a decision;

¹¹ *Ibid*

changing the outcome of a project or improving a situation; and reusing the data by combining them with other data and sharing them freely. Data impact will be increased by:

- promoting a data use culture by creating data-savvy policy makers, planners and decision-makers;
- encouraging data use for decisions and tracking tangible behavioural change;
- using technology to connect to users;
- reprocessing data for new insights;
- reducing cost of data use;
- encouraging perception of data value.

Initiative 3: Increase data user satisfaction

Data users are the clientele of data production systems and clearly the most important component of statistical systems. Statistics are produced because they are demanded and it is widely acknowledged that demand for data is essential for sustainability of statistical systems. In addition, some of the data users especially policy and decision-makers are responsible for dispensing resources. It is, therefore, important that users are satisfied with the data they are getting in terms of relevance, scope, quantity, consistency, quality, disaggregation and timeliness. It is also critical that data users are retained.

This initiative involves:

(a) Scaling up engagement with data users

Data users are usually consulted when a new data collection like a survey or census is to be undertaken and when the results of such collection are being disseminated. Data users are so central to statistical systems that they should not be just consulted; they should be engaged and encouraged to play proactive roles in the development of statistical systems. Activities to be undertaken under this initiative include:

- establishing mechanisms for ongoing engagement with data users (also covered below under statistical coordination). These will enable data producers to better assess and track changing data needs, monitor user expectations, and get users to appreciate statistical processes and indicators as well as challenges that are faced in data production.
- providing user support to access, understand and better use data.
- designing and prominently displaying a Service Charter that outlines commitment to providing quality service to data users and specifies what can be expected when request is made for statistical or other information through any of service channels.
- providing channels for feedback and taking necessary and timely action on feedback. This is critical as it will continually assist in improving the development and provision of quality official statistics.

(b) Undertaking User Satisfaction Surveys

Data user satisfaction is used to measure how products or services supplied meet or surpass users' expectations. Such satisfaction (or lack of it) is established by undertaking a User Satisfaction Survey that provides a metric that can be an important input into improving data production, management and dissemination to users. The specific objectives of the survey is to:

- determine the level of user satisfaction with the statistical products and services currently provided by the NSS,
- determine the degree of importance to users of the statistical products and services currently provided by the NSS,
- identify particular areas of dissatisfaction and where improvements can be made, and
- gather data that could be used in future years to enable longitudinal analysis.

The RSDS will promote undertaking this survey in SADC Member States every other year and possibly in the same year. SADC secretariat will also undertake the survey at the same time. The survey will cover main users of a range of statistical information produced by the regional statistical system including reports, publications, statistical data and information, and services like support provided to data users to access, understand and use data and information..

Initiative 3: Develop and operationalize an Open Data Portal for regional statistics

In order to facilitate dissemination, access, exchange, sharing and use of accurate regional statistics on a wide range of socio-economic indicators in a user-friendly manner and at all levels, the SADC Secretariat will develop and operationalize an open data portal. This data portal will be promoted as the first point of call for SADC regional statistics. The data portal will be designed in such a way that it allows for easy and user-friendly access and analysis of data through tables, graphs, reports and maps options. In particular, the portal will:

- enable automation of data collection from SADC Member States. All Member States have in place open data portals which were installed with assistance from AfDB. So the SADC open data portal will have connectivity with portal of Member States such that when Member States update data on their platforms, the SADC portal will seamlessly, securely and automatically be updated. This will have the advantage of reducing the reporting burden on Member States and the effort by SADC secretariat.
- allow grouping of indicators in different frameworks, domains and sectors, by themes (poverty, disparities, etc), by institutions, by sources, etc.
- provide updated time-series as well as multiple estimates from various sources, disaggregated by domains of interest,
- allow the creation, modification and merging of indicator databases without the need for specialized programs or technical support.

SO2.3: Enhance governance of the SRSS

Governance is a critical organizational issue in statistical development. Basically it determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voice heard and how accountability is rendered. This strategic objective is about enhancing the governance of the SRSS. It is important to emphasize that statistical governance cascades down from global level (UN Statistical Commission) to continental level (Statistical Commission for Africa) to regional level and finally to national level. Here we present statistical governance at regional level.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.9: Results chain for SO2.3

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Enhance governance of the SRSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual statutory meetings held• TWGs formed• Annual reports of NSS governance produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reports of Annual statutory meetings approved• Reports of TWGs approved• Annual reports of NSS governance shared	Well-governed SRSS

In order to achieve this strategic objective, the following initiatives will be implemented in the region.

Initiative 1: Undertake meetings of SADC Statistics Committee

The SADC Statistics Committee is a statutory committee established by the SADC Council of Ministers to provide policy, strategic, and professional guidance for the development and execution of regional statistics programmes. The committee which comprises Heads of NSOs of Member States meets every year in regular session. Meetings of the Committee will continue to be convened, ensuring that they are well attended by actual Heads of NSOs. This is important for maintaining continuity and giving force to decisions and recommendations of the Committee. In particular, all meetings will be scheduled well in advance and communicated to Member States. As much as possible, the meetings will be made informative, interesting and productive.

Initiative 2: Strengthen the role of thematic Technical Working Groups

Thematic Technical Working Groups (TWGs) have been established by the SSC on a number of statistical development domains. Each TWG has specific and clear terms of reference and the SADC Statistics Unit ensures that the TWGs function well. For effective implementation of the RSDS, TWGs on the following statistical domains will be established or strengthened:

1. Institutional issues that include statistical advocacy, legal frameworks, statistical coordination, etc
2. Statistical planning (RSDS, NSDS, sectoral statistical frameworks)
3. Data harmonization
4. SDG and Agenda 2063 indicators
5. Digital transformation
6. New data sources
7. Data transmission and dissemination
8. Gender statistics
9. Emerging issues (e.g. data revolution, open data initiative, transformative agenda for official statistics, big data, etc.).

Initiative 3: Promoting governance of NSSs

A number of activities will be undertaken to promote good governance of NSSs. These will include preparation of guidelines on good governance of NSSs and regional training in statistical leadership and management. Member States will be encouraged to implement the guidelines and prepare annual reports on governance of their NSSs for sharing with peers.

SO2.4: Strengthen statistical legislations of Member States

It was mentioned earlier that all Member States have statistical legislations that underpin their statistical operations and development. The legislations are aligned to the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. However, some of the legislations are outdated and are in need of updating. It is also the case that many of the legislations pre-date the African Charter on Statistics and all of them are yet to be aligned to the SADC Protocol on Statistics. All the statistical legislations will, therefore, need to be updated.

The results chain for this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.10: Results chain for SO2.4

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Strengthen statistical legislations of Member States	Updated national statistical legislations and regulations in place	All Member States have up-to-date national statistical legislations and regulations by 2030	Supportive legal environment for statistical production and development in Member States

This strategic objective will be achieved by undertaking the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Updating the statistical legislations

Updating of the statistical legislation will be preceded by an assessment of the completeness of the legislation in comparison with the 2016 Generic Law on Official Statistics by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). This Generic Law provides a model that should be adjusted to national circumstances. The Law has been designed to provide a stable basis for a national statistical law that does not need to be revised often.

There are 38 articles each with a set of sub-articles on elements pertaining to the Generic Law. The purpose of the Generic Law is to provide a strong reference for developing a solid legal basis for the functioning of a NSS and the production of high quality official statistics. In terms of coverage and rating of the good practices, each of the articles in the statistical legislation will be scored as either “fully aligned”, “partially aligned” or “not aligned at all” to the Generic Law. Then the statistical legislations will be updated to match world standards for quality statistics, their demand and use.

In addition, the updating of the statistical legislations will take on board provisions of the African Charter on Statistics, the SADC Protocol on Statistics and new trends in statistical production, organization and management.

Initiative 2: Promote preparation of regulations

Usually statistical legislations provide for issuance of regulations by the Minister responsible for statistics to give effect to the legislation. However, in many African countries, these regulations have not been issued and this has made it difficult to handle grey areas during operationalization of their statistical legislations. This initiative is about promotion of guidelines and will involve preparation and promotion of guidelines on regulations.

SO2.5: Promote coordination of data users and producers in the region

The essentiality of coordination to statistical development was elaborated earlier. Coordination between data users and producers enables data producers to dialogue with data users to ensure that they understand better the needs of users – what data are needed, when they are needed and how they are needed. It is now realized that for the said dialogue to be effective, it should be ongoing and institutionalized rather than the hitherto widely used ad hoc and intermittent (e.g. one-off workshops for data users) approaches. It has also been realized that assessment of user needs should not be piecemeal but rather coordinated to achieve best results. In addition, data producers are being urged to acquaint themselves with national, regional and international development agendas to be able to better assess data needs at every level. It is, therefore, imperative that dialogue between data producers and data users is developed, nurtured and institutionalized.

The results chain for this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.10: Results chain for SO2.5

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Promote coordination of data users and producers in the region	Data User-Producer Forum established at regional level	Meeting of Data User-Producer Forum undertaken biennially	Enhanced dialogue between data producers and users at regional level
		Data User-Producer Forums established in Member States	Reports of annual meetings of Data User-Producer Forums in Member States	Enhanced dialogue between data producers and users in Member States

This strategic objective will be realized through the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Establish data user-producer forum at regional level

SADC does not have an established forum that brings data users and producers together to discuss statistical needs, development and use. Therefore dialogue between data users and producers tends to be adhoc and intermittent, with statisticians largely talked to each other. Under this initiative, such a forum will be established in form of a biennial conference of planners/decision-makers who

are end data users, statisticians and demographers to be held under the aegis of the SADC Statistics Committee. It will have clear membership and terms of reference.

Initiative 2: Establish data user-producer forums in Member States

In some Member States, ad hoc data user-producer committees have been established to enable a dialogue to take place between the two groups. The experience gained shows that these committees have not functioned well i.e. have not held regular meetings because they are ad hoc. Under this initiative, guidelines will be prepared and promoted to help Member States institutionalize data user-producer dialogue in a consistent and ongoing manner. The guidelines will include how to launch a dialogue, how to create effective governance for the process (data user-producer committees with clear membership and terms of reference), and how to ensure the outcome is embedded within the broader national and regional statistical systems.

SO2.6: Implement results-based planning, monitoring & evaluation of progress of the SRSS

Results-based planning requires that strategy/plan implementation is closely monitored and eventually evaluated. Monitoring is about ensuring that stated objectives are being achieved; tracking inputs, activities and outputs; and determining if implementation is on course or not. While evaluation is about assessing the most significant constraints, the most successful activities and generally, how well the strategy/plan will have met set objectives.

The results chain for this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.11: Results chain for SO2.6

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Implement results-based planning, monitoring & evaluation of progress of the SRSS	Annual Operational Plans developed and implemented	Annual Operational Plans approved and implemented	Better performance and accountability of the SRSS

This strategic objective will be realized by designing and implementing annual operational plans. The annual operational plan outlines the specific tasks to be taken, when and by whom in order to achieve RSDS objectives within a budgetary and resource framework. It also provides targets to be met. The idea is to achieve operational excellence through system-wide transformation and

innovation. It is important to choose the appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs). It is critical that all personnel involved in the implementation of the RSDS understand why particular KPIs were chosen, how they will help to achieve stated objectives, and what each personnel's role is in working towards the stated objectives. This points to the need to communicate the operational plan well to secure buy-in and feedback. This can be done through a dashboard, regular meetings, or some other mechanism.

SO2.7: Undertake risk management of the SRSS

Risk is about uncertainty. By identifying and managing a comprehensive list of risks, unpleasant surprises and barriers can be reduced in the implementation of the RSDS, hence the need for risk management. The risk management is a continuous process of identifying, analysing, prioritising and mitigating risks that threaten the likelihood of success of a strategy in terms of cost, schedule, quality, safety and technical matters.

The results chain for this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3. 12: Results chain for SO2.7

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Undertake risk management of the SRSS	Risk management framework for the SRSS developed and implemented	Risk monitoring and evaluation reports produced annually	SRSS with low risk posture

Under this strategic objective, risk management will be kept dynamic throughout the whole implementation RSDS life cycle. In particular, the following initiatives will be undertaken:

Initiative 1: Maintaining a risk register

A risk log of all the unresolved problems and risks associated with the problems which may arise during RSDS implementation will be maintained in order to keep them tracked and maintain control over them. Residual risks and/or their changes in terms of probability of occurrence and magnitude of impact will be kept updated while new risks will continuously be identified, analyzed and recorded into a risk register.

Initiative 2: Promote business continuity plans in Member States

A business continuity plan is a practical document that outlines how a business will continue operating during or after an incident or crisis disrupts service. The plan covers a range of incidents (e.g. natural disasters, computer problems, staffing issues). It is more comprehensive than a disaster recovery plan and contains contingencies for business processes, assets, human resources and business partners – every aspect of the business that might be affected. Plans typically contain a checklist that includes supplies and equipment, data backups and backup site locations. Plans can also identify plan administrators and include contact information for emergency responders, key personnel and backup site providers. Plans may provide detailed strategies on how business operations can be maintained for both short-term and long-term outages. A business continuity plan describe how to identify and prevent risks where possible, prepare for risks that can't controlled and respond and recover if a risk (e.g. an incident or crisis) occurs.

A business continuity plan includes among others:

- Plans, measures and arrangements to ensure the continuous delivery of critical services which permits the organisation to recover its facility, data and assets.
- Identification of necessary resources to support business continuity, including personnel, information, equipment, financial allocations, infrastructure protection and accommodation.

This initiative, therefore, is about promoting business continuity planning in Member States. This will involve preparation of guidelines and creating awareness about risks and how to plan in advance to handling them when they arise.

SO2.8: Strengthen the role of SRSS in continental and global statistical systems

It was pointed out earlier that the SRSS is part of wider continental and international statistical systems and its development is impacted by statistical developments at these levels. The RSDS therefore aims to develop the SRSS in context of these wider statistical systems, playing its appropriate role in them and taking advantage of opportunities they present for knowledge transfer, peer learning and benchmarking on best practices.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.13: Results chain for SO2.8

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Institutional strengthening, enhancement and sustainability of the SRSS	Strengthen the role of SRSS in continental and global statistical systems	Annual progress report on regional statistics for continental integration and common positions on statistical standards at global level produced and approved	Number of continental and global statistical statutory meetings attended	SRSS as an integral part of continental and global statistical system

Under this strategic objective, the following initiatives will be undertaken.

Initiative 1: Ensure that SADC fully participates in continental and global statistical conferences and meetings

Under the RSDS, it will be ensured that as much as possible SADC participates in relevant continental and global statistical activities. In particular, SADC will improve her participation in meetings of two UN statutory bodies, namely the Statistical Commission for Africa and the UN Statistical Commission. It will also participate in meetings of the Committee of Directors General (CoDGs) of the African Union. Annual reports will be prepared on SADC participation in continental and global statistics activities.

The Statistical Commission for Africa is the apex inter-governmental body established by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2006 to oversee and coordinate statistical development in Africa. It comprises Heads of National Statistical Offices from African countries and meets every two years. In the years when the commission is not meeting, meetings of the Committee of Directors General (CoDG) of NSOs will be convened. The CoDG was established by the African Union to support statistical development in Africa. The UN Statistical Commission on the other hand is one of ten functional commissions of the UN Economic and Social Council. The Statistical Commission is the global apex inter-governmental organ on statistical policy and coordination for all UN member states. It is the highest decision making body for international statistical activities especially the setting of statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national and international level. The Commission is unique because of its high level of professional representation. It is attended by heads of NSOs of UN member countries and international organizations.

3.3.2 Strategic intervention area 3: Harmonized regional statistics

The RSDS will promote harmonization of statistical methodologies and tools in order to produce comparable, accurate and up-to-date statistics to inform the process of regional integration and development. The statistics in Member States are often not comparable due to divergence in methods of compilation, computation of indicators and capacity to manage the data production processes. Such harmonization will be important not least for monitoring macroeconomic convergence in SADC region.

The RSDS aims to achieve the following strategic objectives under this strategic intervention area:

- Develop technical manuals and guidelines for production of harmonized regional statistics
- Undertake trainings on harmonized standards and procedures

SO3.1 Develop technical manuals and guidelines for production of harmonized regional statistics

This strategic objective is about developing appropriate tools or updating them for the harmonization of regional statistics in priority statistical areas particularly, Consumer Price Index, National Accounting, Population and Housing Census, Poverty and External Trade. Basically, all the working parameters are defined in order to ensure appropriate coordination of activities within the framework of the statistical harmonization agenda. It is important to underscore the fact that in most of its priority statistical areas, SADC has already prepared technical guidelines which have been adopted or are about to be adopted by its Member States. It is also worth mentioning here that the execution of some of these harmonization programs have experienced delays, mainly due to the lack of resources.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.14: Results chain for SO3.1

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Harmonization of regional statistics	Develop technical manuals and guidelines for production of harmonized regional statistics	Practical guidelines for production of harmonized social statistics developed	Number of technical manuals and guidelines prepared for production of social statistics by 2030	Harmonized regional statistics relevant to RISDP priorities
		Practical Guidance Notes on compilation of regional	Practical Guidance Notes on compilation of regional	

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
		harmonized poverty statistics developed	harmonized poverty statistics developed by 2022	
		Technical statistical methodological guidelines on harmonized statistics for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy developed	Technical statistical methodological guidelines on harmonized statistics for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy developed by 2030	
		Guidelines for accessing Administrative Data and from innovative data sources including Big Data developed	Guidelines for accessing Administrative Data and from innovative data sources developed by 2024	
		Practical guidelines for preparation, undertaking and dissemination of data from censuses and surveys produced	Practical guidelines for preparation, undertaking and dissemination of data from census and surveys produced by 2025	

The SADC Secretariat will follow a well laid out process in achieving this objective that includes:

Initiative 1: Draft or update technical manuals and guidelines for the compilation of harmonized data

Working with TWGs on particular areas and other organizations such as COMESA, AfDB and the World Bank, the SADC Secretariat will draft or update technical manuals and guidelines for the compilation of harmonized data in priority areas.

It will be ensured that the technical manuals and tools are aligned to international standards, methodologies and classifications. They will include, among others:

- Practical guidelines for production of harmonized social statistics
- Practical Guidance Notes on compilation of regional harmonized poverty statistics
- Technical statistical methodological guidelines on harmonized statistics for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy

- Guidelines for accessing Administrative Data and from innovative data sources including Big Data.
- Practical guidelines for preparation, undertaking and dissemination of data from censuses and surveys

Initiative 2: Document review and comment

The draft documents will be subject to review by Member States (NSOs, Customs, Central Banks, etc.) and other experts as appropriate. Guidelines for document review and comment including timelines will be prepared and shared with reviewers.

Initiative 3: Organize meetings of thematic TWGs

After receiving comments on the draft documents from Member States and other experts, the SADC secretariat will organize meetings of relevant regional TWGs to adopt the manuals and guidelines.

These manuals and guidelines will then be used in various trainings throughout the RSDS implementation period and will be updated as and when need for doing so arises.

Initiative 4: Undertake trainings on harmonized standards and procedures

It is not enough to have in place standards and procedures. Capacity has to be built on how to use them to produce good quality and harmonized regional statistics throughout the RSDS implementation period. This is the more important given that a number of NSOs in SADC continue to experience high levels of staff attrition which affects continuity and sustainability of statistical programmes and activities. This will be done through regional trainings on harmonized standards and procedures and mobilization of partners to provide support for regional trainings on harmonized standards and procedures

3.3.3 Strategic intervention area 4: Digital transformation of regional statistics

Digital transformation is about revolutionizing business processes to take advantage of digital technologies, with the goal of making the processes more efficient, scalable and products accessible. It involves extensive use of information technology solutions across the entire data supply value chain – from data collection through data management, dissemination and use. This is done by integrating digital technology into all areas of a business, fundamentally changing how you operate and deliver value to data users/stakeholders. It is also about cultural change that requires organizations and systems to continually challenge the status quo, largely focused on improving the data user experience; leveraging digital technologies to change how data users interact with statistical systems and its products; and improving how the systems serve their stakeholders.

To be clear, digital transformation is not just about making minor incremental improvements as new technologies become available, but radically changing how things get done facilitated by new methodologies and the digital solutions making this possible.

Under this strategic intervention area, the following two strategic objectives will be pursued:

- Harness technology for data production
- Improve data dissemination and access

SO 4.1 Harness technology for data production

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.15: Results chain for SO4.1

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Digital transformation of regional statistics	Harness IT innovations and solutions for regional statistical production and transmission	Reports on automation of data processes in the region produced	Reports on automation of data processes in the region produced annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency in statistical production • Enhanced data transmission and sharing across the SRSS
		Harmonized data transmission procedures and standards developed and implemented	Reports on harmonized data transmission procedures and standards produced annually	
		SDMX data transmission protocols designed and implemented	SDMX data transmission protocols designed and implemented by 2025	

Initiatives that will be pursued under this SO include the following:

Initiative 1: Automation of data processes in the region

With each technological leap replacing a repetitive, manual process with an automated digital one, data producers will accomplish more with their time and resources. These technological leaps free up time for growth, creativity and innovation while often reducing ongoing expenses. And in data-rich environments, a digital transformation will unlock entirely new opportunities that were not feasible beforehand. Already automation of data processes is gaining traction in Member States with use of tablets and online solutions to collect data, building databases and portals, etc. This initiative will give impetus to the automation of data processes in the region, with greater awareness created about data automation solutions.

Initiative 2: Harness data transmission procedures and standards

It was mentioned that current data transmission by Member States to SADC secretariat uses Excel templates which take time to fill, is prone to errors and is not efficient. Under this initiative, a portal that uses the same platform as portals that have been established in all Member States with assistance from AfDB as part of the Africa Information Highway Initiative will be developed and operationalized at the SADC secretariat. It will be used to reduce the reporting burden on Member States and the effort by the secretariat. As soon as SADC Member States update their portals all

the data linked to SADC will also be automatically updated on the SADC portal thereby improving transmission procedures and standards.

Initiative 3: Design and operationalize Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange transmission protocols.

Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) is an international initiative that aims at standardising and modernising the mechanisms and processes for the exchange of statistical data and metadata among international organisations and their member countries. SDMX data transmission protocols set technical standards and content-oriented guidelines, together with an IT architecture and tools, to be used for the automated exchange and sharing of statistical data and metadata. SDMX has several different data and metadata formats: for time-series data, for cross-sectional data, for describing the structures of data sets ("structural metadata"), for independent metadata sets (termed "reference metadata"), and for describing the structures of independent metadata sets (another form of "structural metadata"). Under this initiative, extensive use of SDMX will be promoted in across the SRSS.

SO 4.2 Harness IT innovation and solutions for dissemination of regional statistics

Statistical data and information are of no value unless they can reach those who need them, can be easily understood and are usable. It is, therefore, of crucial importance that statistical information are widely disseminated and accessible to users. Data dissemination and communication also serves to justify the existence of the statistical system because if the outputs of the system are widely used and found to have impact, governments will get more inclined to continue to fund statistical production and development. But even more crucially, since data are produced at public expense, the public has a right to expect and access data for various purposes. It has been argued that data dissemination acts as a vital barometer of the statistical system's efficiency and effectiveness. So if the data from the statistical system are used and to good purpose, this demonstrates their worth.

The above notwithstanding, there has been a tendency in the past to focus too narrowly on the collection and production side of the data value chain under the assumption that whatever was produced would be accessed and used. But it has been shown that a "build it and they will come" mentality is obsolete in today's data age. It should also be mentioned that collecting and publishing data alone does not ensure they will be used or lead to positive impacts. More attention is needed on their communication, uptake and use, which the data value chain unpacks and illustrates as the report by AidData on "*Avoiding Data Graveyards*" shows¹².

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

¹² Custer, S. & Sethi, T. (Eds.), *Avoiding Data Graveyards: Insights from Data Producers & Users in Three Countries*. Williamsburg, VA: AidData at William & Mary, 2017.

Table 3.16: Results chain for SO4.2

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Digital transformation of regional statistics	Harness IT innovations and solutions for dissemination of regional statistics	Data dissemination policies formulated and operationalized at SADC secretariat and in Member States	Annual reports on data dissemination policies at SADC secretariat and in Member States prepared and approved	More and better access to regional statistics
		Integrated Trade Statistics Database developed and operationalized	Integrated Trade Statistics Database developed and operationalized by 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and better access to regional statistics • Increased usage of regional statistics • Better policies, plans and decisions on regional integration and development
		Agricultural Information Management System developed and operationalized	Agricultural Information Management System developed and operationalized by 2025	
		Open Data Portal for regional statistics developed and implemented	Open Data Portal operational by 2025	
		Web-based regional statistical databases and publications on gender, energy, labour market, disaster risk reduction and other regional integration domains produced and disseminated	Number of updated web-based regional statistical databases and publications produced	

Under this strategic objective, the following three initiatives will be undertaken:

Initiative 1: Promote the design and implementation of data dissemination policies

This initiative will promote the design and implementation of data dissemination policies among data producing institutions with the aim of providing information in the form and timeframe that meets users' needs. It will ensure that data dissemination is done in a user-friendly manner, making it easy for users to understand what story is being told by the data. The trend now is to improve availability

and use of spatially-enabled information at different levels. This includes developing geo-spatial databases and thematic datasets as well as online applications and services to support regional planning and development interventions. The trend also includes use of data visualization technologies to assist users appreciate the story the data are telling.

The policy will be designed to meet four different objectives:

- disseminate as widely as possible the statistics collected and elaborated by the regional statistical system, adopting high quality standards to facilitate their accessibility and interpretability;
- enhance the credibility of the statistical system as a source of high quality statistics reflecting economic, environmental and social developments in the region;
- reinforce data importance and objectivity, and make them interesting, understandable and usable; and
- contribute to the development of a culture of “informed decision-making” at Member State and SADC levels.

In designing data access and dissemination policies, a number of things will be taken into account including the open data initiative as part of the Africa Information Highway Initiative which is promoted in Africa by the AfDB, data dissemination standards, enabling role of ICT (e.g. data visualization technologies to explore, understand, describe and better communicate statistics) and data dissemination media including data portals, social media, annual statistical bulletins, etc.

Initiative 2: Develop and operationalize an Integrated Trade Statistics Database

International trade statistics aim to satisfy the information needs of various user groups, ranging from international trade policymakers and commodity market analysts to compilers of balance of payments and national accounts. A key to the usefulness of trade statistics is its broad dissemination. It is recommended that trade statistics be accessed through the electronic dissemination databases maintained by the responsible agency. Therefore under this strategic objective, a SADC Integrated Trade Statistics Database will be established following international guidelines and recommendations, and promoted as the first point of call on SADC trade statistics. The database will not only provide data but also adequate metadata to guide users - metadata provide detailed explanatory note describing the scope, coverage and quality of a datasets. Every thing possible will be done to create user awareness about the database. This database will also use the SADC open data platform (see below).

Initiative 3: Develop Agricultural Information Management Systems

The central and strategic role of agriculture in Africa including SADC region makes the sector the key to economic growth, increased incomes, raising the standards of living of households, poverty eradication and increased food security. This in turn requires sustained availability of

comprehensive, reliable and consistent statistical data in a timely manner and in a form that renders them intelligible and usable. Unfortunately, agricultural statistical systems and data are in a sorry state in many African countries– the systems are weak, uncoordinated, insufficiently resourced and essentially unsustainable. And their outputs are wanting in terms of quantity, quality and dissemination.. The situation has been exacerbated by new data requirements to inform policy on emerging development issues such as food vs. bio-fuels, global warming, environment, and food security. Given that this state of agricultural statistics is shared with other developing regions of the world, the UN Statistical Commission endorsed a Global Strategy for Improving Rural and Agricultural Statistics in 2010. This strategy includes, *inter alia*, integrationg agricultural data sustems to achieve synergy and cost-effectiveness. This initiative aims to build stronger Agricultural Information Management Systems in SADC Member States.

Initiative 4: Develop and operationalize an Open Data Portal for regional statistics

It is not enough to post regional statistics on a website. To enhance data access (make it seamless) and effective data use for better policies, plans and decisions on regional integration and development, there is a need for a dedicated and interactive open data portal that acts as the first point of call for and authentic source of regional statistics that:

- allows for user-friendly analysis of data;
- allows grouping of socio-economic and environmental indicators;
- provides updated time-series as well as multiple estimates from various sources;
- allows the creation, modification and merging of indicator databases without the need for specialized programs or technical support; and
- contains a wizard that provides step by step orientation for these tasks.

The open data portal will comprise web-based statistical databases and publications on regional integration domains and RISDP priorities. Such a portal has already been established in all pan-African institutions and regional organizations as well as in all Member States by AfDB as part of the Africa Information Highway Initiative. The SADC data portal will, therefore, be revived and used to more effectively disseminate regional statistics on all domains of regional integration and development including industrial development, market integration, infrastructure, gender, energy, labour, environment, disaster risk reduction, etc. It will also be proactively promoted among stakeholders and users of SADC regional statistics.

Initiative 5: Produce SADC Facts and Figures

Historically, the Secretariat’s main statistical product has been the annual Facts and Figures to support the main statistical requirements of the Secretariat. This product presents basic statistics of the region at a glance and covers major socio-economic indicators. Economic indicators include Gross Domestic Product, Tax Revenue, Inflation, Fiscal Balance, Government Debt and

Trade (Import and Export) while social indicators include Life Expectancy, HIV Prevalence Rate, Labour market (Employment) and Gender.

Under this initiative, the scope of Facts and Figures will be expanded and its production will be made more regular and timely.

3.3.4 Strategic intervention area 5: Capacity for data collection management, dissemination and use

It was mentioned earlier that assessments of statistical systems and development in Africa have and continue to point to statistical capacity deficits and gaps as a major impediment to statistical development in the continent. The evaluation of RSDS 2015-2020 showed that there is inadequate statistical capacity across the data value chain in some SADC Member States. Therefore under this strategic intervention area, issues related to statistical capacity on specific areas of f interest to SADC such as Real and External Sector Statistics, Trade in Services Statistics, Harmonized Consumer Price Index, etc. are addressed. So too is the issue of basic statistical training which is in high demand in Member States.

Under this strategic intervention area, the following strategic objectives will have to be met:

- develop and implement a regional statistical project on data sources and collection techniques
- create a fund for statistical training in the region
- promote statistical training in Member States

SO 5.1 Develop and implement a regional statistical project on data sources and collection techniques

It was stated earlier that there has been unprecedented increase in data demand following adoption of various development agendas at all levels – national, regional, continental and global. The traditional data sources (surveys and censuses) and data collection methods have proved to be unable to cope with the said increase in data demand. They have been perceived as too slow, too inflexible, and too expensive. Therefore increasingly data innovation is taking place nationally and internationally to, among other things:

- combine traditional with new or non-traditional data sources “to reframe issues and shed new light on seemingly intractable problem. Because combining data sources can provide more complete, more timely, and/or more granular information about an issue, data innovation can open opportunities for more cost- effective interventions, as well as provide entirely new insights that may have been overlooked through traditional approaches”¹³.

¹³ UNDP, A Guide to Data Innovation for Development: From Ideas to Proof of Concept, Version 1, December 2016.

UNDP data innovation teams have concluded that “alternative sources of data can and should play a role in pursuing development outcomes and, as such, hold great promise for fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals - both from the perspective of pursuing the outcomes as well as enabling (close to) real-time monitoring and evaluation” (*ibid*).

- improve census and survey methods for data collection and management across the data value chain including migrating from paper-based methods to use of mobile technologies such as hand-held computer devices and mobile phones.

New data sources

These new data sources include: social media, cellular phones, satellite images, sensors, online transactions, crowdsourcing and trails of internet searches (see picture below).



Data from these sources are called “Big Data” which are an accumulation of data that is too large and complex for processing using traditional database management solutions. Big data is characterized by three^ viz. volume, velocity and variety, and countries have been urged to exploit it to improve official statistics. Big Data can be mined using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and complex algorithms to gain insights and real time information on patterns of human experiences with significant implications for sustainable development processes and is emerging as an important opportunity for evidence-based policy making. In particular, Big Data can improve timeliness and granularity of data for policy making, which is especially relevant to reach those most in need.

New generation of surveys

There are challenges of both timeliness and frequency with which survey data are traditionally produced in Africa. These include lack of adequate capacity, inadequate budgetary resources and main methods for data collection – face-to-face interviews - often using long and complicated paper questionnaires, etc. These challenges constrain and/or delay decision making by governments and development partners to target responses especially to the vulnerable groups in a timely and effective manner where help is needed most. There has thus been a call for re-engineering traditional surveys to make them faster, more frequent and cost-effective. In particular,

there is huge demand for high frequency data among decision-makers for monitoring development situations, programme managers for getting a feedback on the success of their activities, NGOs for advocacy for improved service delivery, even the statisticians would benefit from this data to for instance estimate changes in employment or validate GDP estimates, etc. Innovative surveys that offer precise and timely information about well-being, service delivery, income, security, health and other topics, also called high frequency surveys, are seen as the answer. This new generation of surveys takes advantage of connectivity revolution (wireless technology) to capture required information in real time.

Data collection techniques

All the Member States are migrating from traditional census and survey data collection methods (use of paper-based methods) to use of mobile technologies such as hand-held computer devices and mobile phones.

- There is increasing use of Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) which combines powerful functions for data capture on tablets, with tools for survey management and cloud data aggregation. There are many benefits that accrue to using CAPI vis-à-vis Paper Assisted Personal Interviewing (PCAPI) data collection. They include the following:
 - improvement in quality of field data
 - cost-effectiveness in data production and management
 - timeliness in data release
 - improved control and flexibility of field work, and safer storage and backup.
- While conducting surveys by phone is standard practice in developed countries, African countries could not use this practice on account of low telephone ownership and penetration especially in rural areas. However, this is changing fast and cell phone ownership and access is now widespread even in rural areas. Therefore, a wide range of data can now be collected on household welfare at high frequency and low cost. This was given greater impetus by covid-19 pandemic which precluded face-to-face interviews in household and other surveys to prevent the spread of the pandemic.. It is, however, important to point out that mobile phone surveys are not meant to replace comprehensive household surveys, but they can offer valuable information about what's happening at that moment in people's lives.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.17: Results chain for SO5.1

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use	Develop and implement regional statistical capacity building programmes	Regional statistical project on data sources and collection techniques using CAPI and others techniques designed and implemented.	Annual progress reports of regional statistical project on data sources and collection techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competence in production and management of regional statistics Competence in use of data for policy, planning and decision-making in the region
		A data science laboratory established and operational	Reports of activities of the data science laboratory	
		Regional statistical capacity building project on harmonizing surveys for producing regional poverty statistics designed and implemented	Annual reports on harmonizing surveys for producing regional poverty statistics	
		Regional statistical capacity building project on harmonizing censuses designed and implemented	Reports on the project for harmonizing censuses produced every five years	

This objective will be achieved through implementation of the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Regional statistical project on new data sources and data collection techniques

Under this initiative, awareness will be created about new data sources and use of these new sources will be promoted by:

- identifying and removing barriers to use of new data sources, including registries and administrative data and other data from new and innovative sources, and coordinating efforts to incorporate them into mainstream statistical programmes through, *inter alia*, confidence and trust-building measures, legal reforms, better funding and capacity building.
- developing guidelines on the use of new and innovative data generated outside the official statistical system, into official statistics (that is, principles on using new data sources and

other data for official statistics) following guidelines endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission on the subject.

- developing partnerships for the development of new data sources especially with the private sector companies which hold much of the Big Data in Member States. Such data is proprietary and is held in confidence, meaning that it cannot be easily shared. Using those data is therefore directly linked to the relationship of trust between the companies and their customers and there are legal impediments to accessing them. That is why it is necessary to establish partnerships with companies holding the data to facilitate their access.
- acquiring new knowledge, skills and competences in data science in the region because of the importance data science has assumed in the era of complex or Big Data that was presented above. Data Science is about extracting actionable insights from large and ever-increasing volumes of data and applying the insights to solve problems. It is an interdisciplinary field that uses scientific methods, processes, algorithms and systems to extract knowledge and insights from structured and unstructured data, and applies knowledge and actionable insights from data across a broad range of application domains. Data science encompasses preparing data for analysis and processing, performing advanced data analysis, and presenting the results to reveal patterns and enable stakeholders to draw informed conclusion.
- establishing a Regional Data Science Laboratory equipped with advanced technology and expert staff in one of the SADC Member States to provide a venue and infrastructure to build capacity and promote data science, data innovation and data analytics in the region. Specifically, the laboratory will aim to:
 - ✓ develop outreach initiatives to build awareness of the data revolution
 - ✓ demonstrate the relevance of data science and big data analytics to decision-making
 - ✓ develop and deliver training courses in data science methods and programming languages
 - ✓ build partnerships with similar laboratories across the world and develop projects on data science and related areas. In particular, partnerships will be built with World Bank African Centres of Excellence in Data Science in southern and eastern regions of Africa that encourage collaborative partnerships between academia, government and the private sector in using big data and data analytics to solve development challenges.

Greater awareness will be created on the CAPI and other data collection techniques and their use in collecting needed data.

Initiative 2: Regional statistical capacity building project on harmonizing surveys for producing regional poverty statistics

The SADC vision 2050 states that “By 2050, SADC is to attain higher levels of peace and stability, enabling the further prioritisation, pursuit, and achievement of its objectives of socio-economic development, poverty eradication, and regional integration”. This necessitates harmonization of indicators on poverty as well as data collection methodologies across the region. Household surveys are the main data source for poverty estimates in all Member States. However, due to lack of internationally agreed unique methodology on data collection to measure poverty, Member States use a variety of approaches involving different methods of data collection (diary vs recall and using different reference periods). As a result, poverty estimates are not comparable on account of differences in survey design, including survey coverage, questionnaires used, methodology for collection, poverty lines, timing of surveys and survey periodicity. Ultimately this makes it difficult to compile meaningful regional poverty statistics.

This initiative aims to harmonize surveys for producing regional poverty statistics. The starting point will be to undertake a comprehensive assessment of how data on poverty statistics are collected and compiled into national poverty statistics in the region. Guidelines will then be developed, tested, agreed and promoted for production of harmonized poverty statistics including use of common definitions and harmonized methodologies, and a set of common survey questions to harmonize their data collection on poverty for data collection and poverty measurement by all Member States. This may call for undertaking a common poverty survey across the region.

Initiative 3: Regional statistical capacity building project on harmonizing censuses

For some time, SADC Statistics Committee has pursued the idea of harmonizing national Population and Housing Census in the region. Indeed as the focal point on censuses, South Africa in collaboration with SADC Secretariat organised and funded a number of activities including establishment of task forces to deal with specific issues on censuses including harmonization of the Population and Housing Census. In particular, a core set of common questions were developed for inclusion in census questionnaires of Member States to produce harmonized census data. Discussions have also been carried out about holding the Population and Housing Census around the same time across SADC.

These ideas will be revisited more vigorously to ensure that the next census round produces harmonized data across SADC Member States.

SO 5.2 Create and operationalize a fund for statistical training in the region

One of the statistical challenges faced by the SRSS is low and unpredictable funding for statistical activities including statistical training. This invariably affects the quantity and quality of data produced and made available to data users. Statistical training is critical for building statistical capacity across the entire statistical value chain.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.18: Results chain for SO5.2

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use	Create a fund for statistical training at t regional levl	Reports on Regional Statistics Training Fund	Annual reports on Regional Statistics Training Fund approved	Competence in production and management of regional statistics

Member States will be encouraged to establish national statistics funds as recommended by the SHaSA2 and at SADC level, a fund will be established for statistical training. This fund will make it possible to instruct and train personnel from Member States on how to use handbooks, manuals and guidelnes. It will be used for the development and implementation of the regional statistical capacity building programme.

Partnerships will be established with the East African Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources (AGROST) established at the UN Economic Commission for Africa under the aegis of the Statistical Commission for Africa to coordinate various initiatives on statistical training in Africa, the African Training Centre on Statistics (ATSC) established by the African Union to build capacity of African professionals working in the production of statistics and students, and other stakeholder institutions to establish and operationalize the statistics training fund.

SO 5.3 Promote statistical training in Member States

A lot of manuals and guidelines will be prepared to support improvement of the SRSS to support both national and regional integration and development. These will need to be taught and explained at both regional and national level. Much of the training at regional level has been elaborated above. This strategic objective is about statistical training that will be promoted at the level of Member States.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.18: Results chain for SO5.3

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Quality of regional statistics	Promote statistical training in Member States	Training in official statistics done at Universities and other tertiary institutions in the region	Number of personnel trained in official statistics at Universities and other tertiary institutions in the region	Increased competences in production and management of official statistics in Member States
		Guidelines on establishment of In-Service Statistical Training Centres in Member States produced and promoted	Number of NSOs of Member States with functional In-Service Statistical Training Centres	
		Use of the SADC Harmonized Statistical Training Syllabus promoted in Member States	Number of NSOs of Member States using the harmonized training syllabus for training	

This strategic objective will be met by undertaking the following initiatives:

Initiative 1: Promote training in official statistics at Universities and other tertiary institutions

One of the challenges of statistical training in the region is that statistical training at professional level tends to be theoretical and indeed, there are few practical-oriented statistical training programmes at Universities in the region. By and large official statistics is not yet a mainstream course at many Universities in the region. It is highly desirable that universities and tertiary institutions teach official statistics and produce practical-oriented and turnkey statisticians who will not need much orientation to function well on taking up jobs especially in the public sector. A course on official statistics would be taught from the data demand rather than supply side and would cover such topics as index numbers, industrial statistics, trade statistics, agricultural statistics, education statistics, etc.

Teaching of official statistics will be promoted at Universities and other tertiary institutions in the region with the more highly qualified and experienced staff of NSOs encouraged to teach some practical-oriented statistics courses at national Universities.

Initiative 2: Promote establishment of In-service Training Centres in Member States

The Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF)¹⁴ which was endorsed by the Conference of African Ministers for Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2007 recommended establishment of Statistical Training Centres at the NSOs in Africa. These Centres were to facilitate building minimum capacity for data collection and compilation across the public sector institutions and anchor NSSs. Few Member States have been able to establish such centres and even those which have established them, the centres are not strong enough to achieve the objectives for which they were established in the first place. This strategic objective aims at promoting the establishment of the In-Service Statistical Training Centres in Member States with the following objectives:

- (i) train and support data users on how to access and use data especially for policy, planning and decision-making
- (ii) build minimum skills and competencies in government institutions with the aim of improving the state of administrative data in the country;
- (iii) impart technical skills in traditional areas such as IT, GIS, data management, data analysis, data communication, etc.
- (iv) impart new knowledge, skills and competences in non-traditional areas such as data science and data analytics, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), data visualization, governance and human rights, etc.
- (v) impart soft skills (or life skills) in the NSS such as communication, presentation, report writing, etc.

The Centres will also be expected to organize regular professional seminars and periodically organize short courses and seminars especially in various areas of statistics. In addition, the Centres will be required to identify external training opportunities (short courses and long-term training) and promote Continuing Professional Development (CPD) especially among personnel of the NSOs.

SADC secretariat will encourage Member States to establish In-Service Statistical Training Centres if they do not already exist and strengthen them if they already exist. This will involve advocating for the establishment of the Centres and preparing guidelines for their establishments based on international frameworks and best practice. This will be done in close collaboration with the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC). The EASTC has over the years offered training in applied statistics at diploma level for statistical personnel from Member States. It now offers degree training in official statistics.

¹⁴ UN Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank and the World Bank (2007): Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF), Addis Ababa, 2007

The SADC secretariat will also organize annual meetings for heads of the In-Service Statistical Training Centres to exchange experiences and good training practices, peer learn from each other, network and impart on them knowledge on latest innovations in teaching and learning. These meetings may also enable NSOs to explore opportunities for staff exchange and attachment to those NSOs that are doing well in specific areas.

Initiative 3: Promote use of SADC Harmonized Statistical Training Syllabus

In 2005, SADC secretariat developed and produced a Harmonized Statistical Training Syllabus with support from European Union (EU) as part of EU's support to the SADC statistical development programme. The syllabus aimed at supporting efforts to build statistical capacity in SADC by increasing statistical skills and the understanding of basic statistics among statisticians and students of statistics in NSSs and statistical training institutions in Member States. Unfortunately, the uptake on this syllabus was very low among SADC Member States.

In 2007, the above syllabus was turned into a SADC Training Pack by the Statistics Services Centre at the University of Reading in U.K again with support from EU. The Training Pack is at three levels - Basic, Intermediate and Higher – corresponding to statistical professional training levels of the Royal Statistical Society of U.K. and is distributed as an Open Educational Resources throughout the world. It is offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and re-use for teaching purposes, learning and research. They can be freely copied and distributed.

The approach adopted in developing the Training Pack is mainly problem based. This means that the training starts with the specification of a relevant problem and he/she is challenged to find suitable answers to the problem. The process of finding those answers is supported by the training materials which direct the trainee towards the relevant statistical concepts and techniques that are needed in solving the problem. This initiative aims to promote use of the SADC Training Pack in training statistical personnel in the region.

3.3.5 Strategic intervention area 6: Quality of regional statistics

The issue of data quality is critical to the production of official statistics. Data have quality if they are “fit for purpose” and there is broad consensus in the international statistical community that data quality:

- enhances the credibility of data and the credibility of the organization producing them,
- increases their potential use and the benefits to be derived from them, and
- is a multi-dimensional concept that goes beyond the traditional view that equates quality with accuracy. It includes the dimensions of relevancy, consistency, disaggregation and timeliness.

Under this strategic intervention area, three strategic objectives will be pursued:

- Adapt international statistical standards, methodologies and classifications to conditions of the region
- Develop and implement regional statistical methodology review frameworks on pillars of regional integration
- Undertake peer review of the SRSS

SO 6.1: Adapt international statistical standards, methodologies and classifications to conditions of the region

As the highest decision making body for international statistical activities, the United Nations Statistical Commission sets international statistical standards and develops concepts, methods and classifications. These are then promoted at national and international level which enables data quality to be enhanced and comparisons between national data and other country data to be made as well as inclusion of national data into global statistics.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.19: Results chain for SO6.1

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Quality of regional statistics	Adapt international standards, methodologies and classifications to conditions of the region	Review reports on use of international standards, methodologies and classifications in compilation of regional statistics	Number of review reports on use of international standards, methodologies and classifications in compilation of regional statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency in statistical production • Enhanced data transmission and sharing across the SRSS

Under this strategic objective, the following initiatives will be undertaken:

Initiative 1: Awareness creation about the international statistical standards, methodologies and classifications

Awareness will be created about the motivation behind the adoption and use of international statistical standards, methodologies and classifications by the RSS. To be emphasized will be the fact that:

- they provide consistent, coherent and relevant statistical information about the region

- enable production of information according to sound, internationally agreed-upon established approaches and best practices with regard to concepts, data sources and methods;
- allow comparability within and between countries and regions; and
- fostering interoperability and greater integration in official statistics by using a common statistical production architecture.

Thus the use of standards is essential to maximize the effectiveness of statistical outputs and the efficiency of the production process in terms of inter-temporal, national and international comparability. It is key to the coherence and integration of statistics over time and across statistical programs and the region. This will be done through communications, TWG discussions and training workshops.

Initiative 2: Adaptation of statistical standards, methodologies and classifications

It is important to appreciate that the said standards, methodologies and classifications are universal in nature and do not always suit all country and regional contexts. They thus have to be adapted to national and regional specificities and local conditions. Where adaptation is not possible, the SRSS will prepare its own standards, methodologies and classifications but within the framework of international standards, methodologies and classifications. TWGs will play a big role in identifying where adaptation is required and how it should be undertaken.

SO 6.2: Develop and Implement regional statistical methodology review frameworks on pillars of regional integration

It is important that appropriate methodologies are developed and used in a transparent manner in the production of regional statistics. This is because the methodology can and usually determines the quality of the data produced. And data which are trusted to be objective and reliable are more likely to be used. It is therefore critical that there is openness and transparency in the development and use of data production methodology, following international standards and guidelines.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.20: Results chain for SO6.2

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Quality of regional statistics	Develop and implement regional statistical systems and processes review frameworks on pillars of regional integration	Review frameworks on statistical systems and processes on pillars of regional integration developed	Number of review frameworks on pillars of regional integration developed and approved by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency in statistical production • Enhanced data transmission and sharing across the SRSS

Under this strategic objective, the following initiatives will be undertaken:

Initiative 1: Prepare and promote a framework on reviewing statistical systems and processes for data production

This initiative is about undertaking internal review of processes for data production in the region. The review aims to identify strong and weak points in statistical systems and related processes, weaknesses or areas of non-compliance with international quality standards and guidelines, and formulates proposals for continuous improvement. The recommendations made are shared with institutions being reviewed for improvement action. Usually such reviews have two parts – internal review part and external review part. Internal reviews are conducted by internal teams that are not involved in the process/product under review to ensure independence of the process. On the other hand, external reviews are conducted by selected external experts or bodies that have interest in the systems and processes. Each part uses its own tools. The reviews are conducted against review reference documents related to statistical systems and processes (procedures and/or working instructions) or products (specifications).

Under this initiative, Member States will be encouraged to subject their statistical systems and processes (censuses, surveys and administrative records) to periodic reviews conducted to:

- Present an evidence-based report on the quality of statistical systems and processes and their level of compliance with international standards and guidelines,
- Make proposals on how improvements can be made in the statistical systems and processes based on findings from (a),
- Prepare relevant documentation for the statistical processes and outputs, and
- Inform official statistics certification process.

SADC secretariat will promote this initiative by preparing guidelines on how Member States can effectively have the review undertaken. In doing so, experiences of some Member States that use this approach for certification of statistics will be used.

Initiative 2: Build partnerships for reviewing statistical systems and processes for data production

SADC secretariat will build partnerships with various institutions for purposes of producing guidelines for undertaking a review of statistical systems and processes for data production in Member States and for training personnel from the Member States on these guidelines.

SO6.2: Undertake peer reviews of the SRSS

The African Peer Reviews of NSSs were launched in 2003 by the UN Economic Commission for Africa which recommended that African countries, supported by PARIS21, should carry out peer reviews to ensure that good practice passes from country to country, based on the first-hand experience of peers, to help accelerate the development of NSSs¹⁵. Peer reviews are increasingly used to evaluate a national statistical system, an official statistical body, or an NSDS. They are a friendly exercise relying mostly on mutual trust between countries and a common confidence in the process. They are conducted by “peers,” in other words by NSS managers who collaborate with their counterparts in another country. Peer reviewers share experiences of what solutions have worked in their own countries and elsewhere in the continent; and through their advocacy, peers can help to facilitate change in the processes of government and their relations with development partners¹⁶.

The methodological framework can be the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics or their equivalents at the continental or regional level: European Statistics Code of Practice, African Charter on Statistics, etc. The peer review evaluates the functioning of all aspects of an NSS (institutional, organisational, statistical production mechanism, etc.), identifies strong and weak points, makes recommendations on improving performance, and helps share good practices. Peer review evaluation reports are in principle made public. Peer review suggests that the evaluators are NSS managers, which means that they are generally statisticians. Yet, the point of view of other stakeholders is strongly needed in an evaluation, and users should be involved in the process to diversify the points of view, including users from outside the NSS¹⁷.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

¹⁵ Samuel Blazyk, Guest Charumbira, Lamine Diop, Mary Strode, and Tony Williams: The African Statistical Journal, Volume 10, May 2010

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ PARIS21, NSDS Guidelines, Paris, France, April 2018

Table 3.21: Results chain for SO6.3

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Quality of regional statistics	Undertake peers review of SRSS undertaken	Peer review of SRSS undertaken every three years	Improved SRSS	Internationally recognized SRSS

Under this strategic objective, two initiatives will be undertaken.

Initiative 1: Participation in peer reviews of NSSs of SADC Member States

Peer reviews of NSSs continue to be undertaken by UN Economic Commission for Africa, African Union, PARIS21 and the African Development Bank. SADC secretariat will partner with these and other stakeholders to ensure that the NSS of each SADC Member State is peer reviewed by 2030. International guidelines for the process will be used for the said purpose. The reports of the peer reviews will be presented to the SADC Statistics Committee.

Initiative 2: Undertake peer review of the SRSS

This initiative will aim to escalate the aforementioned peer review of NSSs to peer review of SRSS. The review will aim to evaluate the functioning of all aspects of the SRSS in terms of institutional and organisational arrangements (legal framework, coordination, statistical production mechanism, etc.), statistical capacity, digital transformation; identify strong and weak points; make recommendations on improving performance; and help sharing of good practices.

In partnership with pan-African institutions and PARIS21, Statistics Units of some Regional Economic Communities in Africa will be invited to peer review the SRSS.

SO6.3: Promote design and implementation of a Code of Practice in Member States

As stated earlier, data ecosystems in Member State is expanding and diversifying to include new data users, data producers and data sources. In addition to already many data producers in the public sector (NSOs and government Ministries, departments and agencies), a lot of data are now generated by the private sector and civil society (e.g. citizen-generated data). The data are produced from different sources including non-traditional data sources. All this constitutes the new data ecosystem. It is, therefore, important that these data ecosystems are appropriately guided to produce better quality and harmonized statistics for the SRSS. Therefore under this initiative, each Member

State will be encouraged to prepare and operationalize a national Code of Practice. The Code of Practice sets professional and ethical standard for developing, producing and disseminating official statistics in a country. Basically the Code of Practice builds on the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and establishes common standards that all data producers need to observe to ensure production and dissemination of coherent and trustworthy official statistics. It also helps to promote the application of best international statistical principles, methods and practices by all data producers to enhance the quality of their products and services. As such, the Code of Practice is a good tool for technical coordination and for maintaining quality in official statistics.

The results chain under this strategic objective is presented in the following table.

Table 3.22: Results chain for SO6.3

RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Quality of regional statistics	Promote design and implementation of a Code of Practice in Member States	Code of Practice developed and implemented in Member States	Number of Member States with operational Code of Practice	Effective data ecosystems in Member States

Guidelines on how to design the Code of Practice will be prepared and promoted in the region. Member States which have already produced their Code of Practice will be requested to share their knowledge and experience in designing and implementing their Code of Practice.

CHAPTER 4: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is important that once the RSDS is designed, it is properly implemented and that implementation should be periodically monitored. When the RSDS ends, it should be evaluated for impact and lesson learning. This chapter presents arrangements for undertaking RSDS implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

4.1 Strategy implementation

There is no point in designing a strategy that will not be implemented. Strategy implementation therefore becomes a critical stage when planned benefits and results are delivered. It is therefore important that strategy implementation is well planned for and efficiently done.

4.1.1 What does plan implementation involve?

Strategy implementation involves, among other things, mobilization of drivers of strategic success, viz.

- (a) institutional and organizational enhancement including:
 - creating strategy awareness,
 - stakeholder management,
 - creating appropriate environment for RSDS implementation, and
 - establishing appropriate structures for delivering the strategy.
- (b) people development and motivation including,
 - Empowering staff, recognizing them and demonstrating that they are valued, sharing with them the vision and strategic objectives of the RSDS, providing them with information on and involving them in decision-making, delegating to them authority, and providing them feedback.
 - developing staff through training, skilling and reskilling.
- (c) processes improvement including:
 - improving existing processes,
 - investing in new processes, and
 - innovating to create value (*produce new value-added products and services*)
- (d) harnessing innovative technologies to improve data quality, achieve timeliness in data dissemination and cut down on cost of data collection.

4.1.2 Risk management

A strategic objective on risk management was presented earlier. It is critical that risks which may hinder or otherwise affect achievement of the RSDS objectives are identified and mechanisms to mitigate them are established. Some of the risks that may stand in the way of implementation of the RSDS and their associated level of severity (L – low, M-Medium, H-high) include:

- unwillingness of players in NSSs of Member States to be coordinated (M).
- lack of alignment between the RSDS and NSDSs in Member States (M).
- inadequate funding for the regional statistical system (M).
- data insecurity, inadequate data back-up and recovery (M).
- political interference in statistical processes (M by H for administrative data)
- production of poor quality real sector statistics in Member States (H).

Risk management will include maintenance of a risk register and designing of a business continuity plan. Other action to be undertaken include, among others:

- Create effective awareness on the importance of statistical coordination
- Strengthening coordination mechanisms
- Awareness creation in Member States about the RSDS
- Support updating of the NSDSs to align them to the RSDS
- Undertake extensive awareness creation across SADC about the RSDS
- Mainstream statistics in policy and development plans at SADC secretariat and in Partner States
- Create partnerships with various partners (national and international)
- Promote archiving, back-up and recovery programmes in Member States and at SADC secretariat including establishing off site data recovery centres
- Wide promotion of the Statistics Acts in Member States , emphasizing the importance of data integrity
- Wide promotion of the SADC Protocol on Statistics across Member States
- Design and promote standards for real sector data collection and management in Member States
- Promote the standards across real sectors
- Build capacity in statistical production across real sectors

Related to managing the above risks, the RSDS implementation will leverage the following critical success factors:

- (a) effective leadership of the regional statistical system provided by the SADC Secretariat and the NSOs in Partner States;
- (b) sufficient awareness creation about the successor RSDS especially in Member States;
- (c) stakeholder participation in the implementation of the RSDS;
- (d) leveraging strategic success drivers – institutional and organizational enhancement, people development (*empower, develop, skill and reskill and motivate*), processes improvement

(improve existing processes, invest in new processes), innovation to create value (produce new value-added products and services) and harnessing innovative technology (digital infrastructure, etc.);

- (e) mindset change among statistical personnel to be more creative, innovative and be able to produce more with fewer resources – avoid “business as usual” attitude;
- (f) mainstreaming statistics into policy and planning processes at every level;
- (g) undertaking periodic monitoring, evaluation and reporting on RSDS outcomes, outputs and activities;
- (h) commitment of SADC leadership, Member State governments and support of development partners.

4.1.3 Operational plans

An Implementation Plan has been designed. For each SADC Vision strategic objective and RISDP 2020-2030 strategic outcome and output, it presents an RSDS 2020-2030 strategic intervention areas with corresponding strategic objectives, outputs, output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and expected outcomes. This plan is presented in the Annex. The Implementation Plan will be actualized through operational plans. The purpose of the operational plans is to present highly detailed information specifically to direct people to perform the day-to-day tasks required in the running of the organisation. It is a management tool that facilitates the co-ordination of the organisation's resources (human, financial and physical) so that the objectives of the RSDS can be achieved. The Operational Plan provides the what, who, when and how much:

- what - the strategies and tasks that must be undertaken
- who - the persons who have responsibility of each of the strategies/tasks
- when - the timelines in which strategies/tasks must be completed
- how much - the amount of financial resources provided to complete each strategy/task

Thus on annual basis, the SADC Statistics Unit will prepare an operational plan. For each intervention area and objective, it will present the measure of success of the objective, targets to be met, initiatives (project) for meeting the targets, time frame in which the initiatives will be undertaken, associated budget and responsibility centre for undertaking the initiatives. The operational plan will be the basis for budgeting and implementation of the RSDS.

4.2 RSDS monitoring, evaluation and reporting

4.2.1 RSDS monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring

It is critical that strategy implementation is monitored. Monitoring is essential to:

- i) ensure that stated objectives are being achieved,
- ii) track inputs, activities and outputs,
- iii) determine if implementation is on course or not,
- iv) alert on potential problems before the situation becomes critical, and
- v) take corrective actions to ensure that performance conforms to strategy or that the strategy is revised in light of new experiences.

Mid-term review

A mid-term review will be undertaken in 2015 to ensure that the RSDS is still relevant and for agreeing on changes in both strategic objectives and work programmes, where these are needed and justified. In addition, the mid-term review will reallocate resources according to performance and needs. This review will be undertaken by an independent body and the mid-term report will be presented to the SADC Committee on Statistics for action.

End-term evaluation

It is best practice to undertake end-term evaluation of a strategy. Accordingly an end-term evaluation will be undertaken in 2030 to assess the most significant constraints, the most successful activities and generally, how well the set objectives of the RSDS will have been met. Evaluation works best when the emphasis is on learning for the future. The evaluations will very much take this into account in preparation for post-2030 RSDS. The evaluation will be carried out again by an independent body and the evaluation report will again be presented to the SADC Committee on Statistics for action.

Monitoring and evaluation framework

A monitoring and evaluation framework will be formulated and used to measure progress in the development of regional statistics. As part of this framework, each NSS will be required to internally track own progress based on the action plans in their NSDS and report regularly to SADC secretariat. These reports will be consolidated by the SADC secretariat. In addition, using the Action Plan (see above) the SADC secretariat will measure progress in implementation of the RSDS and prepare reports as per the table below.

Report	Narrative
Annual Monitoring Report	Annual monitoring and reporting on RSDS implementation will be done. The report will be presented to the SADC Statistics Committee which is held on annual basis.
Mid-term Review report	A Mid-term Review will be undertaken in 2025 to ensure that the strategic objectives are still relevant. The review will also be expected to recommend changes in the strategy, work programmes and budget, where these are

Report	Narrative
	needed and justified. This review will be undertaken by an independent body and the report will be presented to the SADC Statistics Committee.
Terminal Review	The RSDS will be evaluated in 2025. The evaluation will be undertaken by an independent body and the report will be presented to the SADC Statistics Committee for action.

The overall statistical capacity of member states will be measured by the new Statistical Performance Indicator (SPI) which builds on the Statistical Capacity Index (SCI) that the Bank regularly published between 2004 and 2021. The SPI framework covers several of the same dimensions as the SCI, such as statistical methodology, data, and periodicity, but expands into new areas as well. The goals of introducing the SPI are: to offer a forward looking framework, to measure all statistical systems – from less mature to highly advanced, to cover the entire national statistical system - not just the NSO, and to provide countries incentives to build modern statistical systems¹⁸.

4.2.3 Indicative budget and financing plan

Budget

The estimated budget required for successful implementation of SADC RSDS 2020-30 was undertaken under the broader costing exercise of RISDP 2020-30 as directed by SADC Council of Ministers in June 2021 and based on the RISDP 2020-30 Implementation Plan. The costing exercise relates to Regional Coordination Costs pertaining to the implementation plan of RISDP 2020-30 and covers primarily costs pertaining to programme activities. Since Statistics is one of the regional integration domains under cross-cutting issues in the RISDP, the costing exercise by default included the sector into the task. The estimated costs for Statistics over the 10-year period worked to \$20 million, representing a share of 5% of the total Regional Coordination Costs for RISDP implementation. The estimated costs were validated by SADC Senior Officials Meeting in December 2021 and formally endorsed by SADC Council of Ministers in March 2022.

Financing arrangements

The financing mechanisms involves primarily funding from annual Member States budgets for roll-out of activities supported by donor funded projects and cooperation with Pan-African institutions on harmonization of statistics.

¹⁸ Measuring the statistical performance of countries: An overview of updates to the World Bank Statistical Capacity Index, SPI team, March 2021.

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ANNEX: RSDS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
Robust and responsive regional statistical system to underpin regional integration processes, including measurement of progress	Enhanced Statistical infrastructure, systems and capacity across the region for production and effective use of harmonised regional statistics	Regional statistical policy frameworks developed	Policy frameworks for development of regional statistics	Develop and implement strategic frameworks for regional statistics	Regional Strategy for Development of Statistics, 2020-30	RSDS 2020-30 produced and approved in 2021	Better policies, plans and decisions on regional integration and development based on better statistics
					Programme for statistical visibility and awareness created	Reports on statistical visibility and awareness activities produced and approved	
					Mid-term review report of RSDS 2020-30 and revised RSDS 2025-30	Mid-Term review report and revised RSDS produced and approved in 2026	
					Final Evaluation of RSDS 2020-30 undertaken	Final Evaluation of RSDS 2020-30 undertaken in 2030	
					Post-2030 RSDS developed and approved	Post 2030 RSDS developed and approved in 2030	
				Operationalization of the SADC Protocol on Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol on Statistics ratified • Statistical legislations of Member States aligned to the Protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol ratified by 2025 • Statistical legislations of all Member States aligned to the Protocol by 2030 	SRSS underpinned by a legal framework

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
				Develop sectoral statistical strategic frameworks for regional integration	Strategies for development of statistics for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy developed and implemented	Strategies for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy developed and approved by 2022	Improved policies and decisions on Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy in the region
				Promote the design and implementation of NSDS in Member States aligned to regional, continental and global agendas	NSDS designed or updated and implemented by Member States	All Member States have designed or updated and implemented an NSDS by 2030	Coherent and effective NSSs in Member States
			Institutional strengthening and sustainability of the SRSS	Create greater visibility for and awareness about statistics at regional and national level	Statistical advocacy programme developed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of regional and national statistical advocacy activities implemented by 2030 • Reports on statistical literacy activities • Number of NDPs that mainstream statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher profile for statistics at SADC secretariat and in Member States • Statistics mainstreamed into policy and planning processes at all levels

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of partnerships for statistical development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater investment in statistical production and development Greater use of statistics for policy, planning and decision making at all levels
				Enhance data uptake and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data user producer engagement undertaken Increased data uptake User Satisfaction Surveys undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports on data user producer engagements Data user satisfaction score Reports on User Satisfaction Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfied data users Evident-based policies, plans and decisions
				Enhance governance of the SRSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual statutory meetings held TWGs formed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports of Annual statutory meetings approved Reports of TWGs approved 	Well-governed SRSS

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
				Strengthen legal framework for NSS	Up-dated national statistical legislations and regulations in place	All Member States have up-to-date national statistical legislations and regulations by 2030	Supportive legal environment for statistical production and development in Member States
				Promote coordination of data users and producers in the region	Data User- Producer Forum established at regional level	Meeting of Data User-Producer Forum undertaken biennially	Enhanced dialogue between data producers and users at regional level
					Data User- Producer Forums established in Member States	Reports of annual meetings of Data User-Producer Forums in Member States	Enhanced dialogue between data producers and users in Member States
				Implement results-based planning, monitoring & evaluation of progress of the SRSS	Annual Operational Plans developed and implemented	Annual Operational Plans approved and implemented	Better performance and accountability of the SRSS
				Undertake risk management of the SRSS	Risk management framework for the SRSS developed and implemented	Risk monitoring and evaluation reports produced annually	SRSS with low risk posture
					Risk registers for SRSS	Risk recommendations	

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
					developed and implemented	implemented annually	
				Strengthen the role of SRSS in continental and global statistical systems	Annual progress report on regional statistics for continental integration and common positions on statistical standards at global level produced and approved	Number of continental and global statistical statutory meetings attended	SRSS as an integral part of continental and global statistical system
		Statistical standards and procedures harmonized	Harmonization of regional statistics	Develop technical manuals and guidelines for production of harmonized regional statistics	Practical guidelines for production of harmonized social statistics developed	Number of technical manuals and guidelines prepared for production of social statistics by 2030	Harmonized regional statistics relevant to RISDP priorities
					Practical Guidance Notes on compilation of regional harmonized poverty statistics developed	Practical Guidance Notes on compilation of regional harmonized poverty statistics developed by 2022	
					Technical statistical methodological guidelines on	Technical statistical methodological guidelines on harmonized	

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
					harmonized statistics for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy developed	statistics for Industrial development, Market Integration, Infrastructure and blue economy developed by 2030	
					Guidelines for accessing Administrative Data and from innovative data sources including Big Data developed	Guidelines for accessing Administrative Data and from innovative data sources developed by 2024	
					Practical guidelines for preparation, undertaking and dissemination of data from censuses and surveys produced	Practical guidelines for preparation, undertaking and dissemination of data from census and surveys produced by 2025	

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
		ICT - enabled regional statistical data production and dissemination tools developed	Digital transformation of regional statistics	Harness IT innovations and solutions for regional statistical production and transmission	Reports on automation of data processes in the region produced	Reports on automation of data processes in the region produced annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency in statistical production • Enhanced data transmission and sharing across the SRSS
					Harmonized data transmission procedures and standards developed and implemented	Reports on harmonized data transmission procedures and standards produced annually	
					SDMX data transmission protocols designed and implemented	SDMX data transmission protocols designed and implemented by 2025	
				Harness IT innovations and solutions for dissemination of regional statistics	Data dissemination policies at SADC secretariat and in Member States	Data dissemination policies at SADC secretariat and in Member States	More and better access to regional statistics
					Integrated Trade Statistics Database developed and operationalized	Integrated Trade Statistics Database developed and operationalized by 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and better access to regional statistics • Increased usage of regional statistics
					Agricultural Information Management	Agricultural Information Management	

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
					System developed and operationalized	System developed and operationalized by 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better policies, plans and decisions on regional integration and development
					Open Data Portal for regional statistics developed and implemented	Open Data Portal operational by 2025	
					Web-based regional statistical databases and publications on gender, energy, labour market, disaster risk reduction and other regional integration domains produced and disseminated	Number of updated web-based regional statistical databases and publications produced	
		Statistical capacity building programmes for regional integration developed	Capacity for data production, management, dissemination and use	Develop and implement regional statistical capacity building programmes	Regional statistical project on data sources and collection techniques using GIS, CAPI and others designed and implemented.	Annual progress reports of regional statistical project on data sources and collection techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competence in production and management of regional statistics Competence in use of data for policy, planning and

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
					Regional statistical capacity building project on harmonizing surveys for producing regional poverty statistics designed and implemented	Annual reports on harmonizing surveys for producing regional poverty statistics	decision-making in the region
					Regional statistical capacity building project on harmonizing censuses designed and implemented	Reports on the project for harmonizing censuses produced every five years	
					Regional statistical capacity building project on statistics for industrial development, blue economy, infrastructure, energy, agriculture and social development designed and implemented	Reports on regional statistical capacity building project on statistics for industrial development, blue economy, infrastructure, energy, agriculture and social development designed and implemented by 2030	

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
				Build technical capacity of the SADC Statistics Unit for designing and undertaking statistical capacity building programmes	Annual reports on statistical training for SADC Statistics Unit staff produced	Number of staffs trained annually	More competent SADC Statistics Unit
				Create a fund for statistical training the region	Reports on Regional Statistics Training Fund	Annual reports on Regional Statistics Training Fund approved	Increased competences in production and management of official statistics in Member States
				Promote statistical training in Member States	Training in official statistics done at Universities and other tertiary institutions in the region	Number of personnel trained in official statistics at Universities and other tertiary institutions in the region	
					Guidelines on establishment of In-Service Statistical Training Centres in Member States produced and promoted	Number of NSOs of Member States with functional In-Service Statistical Training Centres	Increased competences in statistical production and management in Member States
					Use of the SADC Harmonized Statistical Training Syllabus	Number of NSOs of Member States using the harmonized training syllabus for training	Cadre of competent statistical personnel following harmonized

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
					promoted in Member States		statistical training.
				Build capacity in data science	Big Data pilot project developed and implemented	Number of personnel receiving training on Big Data	Knowledge of and competence in Big Data Analytics
		Data quality assessment frameworks for real sector statistics developed	Quality of regional statistics	Adapt international standards, methodologies and classifications to conditions of the region	Review reports on use of international standards, methodologies and classifications in compilation of regional statistics	Number of review reports on use of international standards, methodologies and classifications in compilation of regional statistics	High quality data that is “fit for purpose”
				Develop and implement regional statistical systems and processes review frameworks on pillars of regional integration	Review frameworks on statistical systems and processes on pillars of regional integration developed and approved	Number of review frameworks on pillars of regional integration developed and approved by 2030	
				Peer review of SRSS undertaken	Peer review of SRSS undertaken every five years	Improved SRSS	

Vision 2050 -Strategic Objective	RISDP - Strategic Outcome	RISDP 2020-2030 Outputs	RSDS 2020-30 Strategic Intervention Areas	RSDS Strategic Objective	RSDS 2020-30 Outputs	Output Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Expected Outcomes
				Peer review reports of NSSs of Member States	Peer review of SRSS undertaken every three years	Improved SRSS	
				Code of Practice designed and implemented in Member States	Code of Practice developed and implemented in Member States	Number of Member States with operational Code of Practice	