



Statistical Capacity Building

The Basics

Statistical capacity is a nation's ability to collect, analyze, and disseminate high-quality data about its population and economy.

Timeliness, accuracy, and relevance of data are dependent upon the capacity of a nation's statistical system, often comprised of several organizations and offices.

WHY is Building Statistical Capacity Important?

Quality statistics are essential for all stages of evidence-based decision-making, including:

- Monitoring social and economic indicators, including progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Allocating political representation and government resources
- Guiding private sector investment
- Informing the international donor community for program design and policy formulation

WHAT is the U.S. Census Bureau's Role in International Assistance?

The Census Bureau, through the International Programs Center for Technical Assistance (IPCTA) of the Population Division, provides capacity building-oriented technical assistance and training to national statistical offices. IPCTA has been working with other national statistical offices for more than 60 years.

- The staff consists of demographers, statisticians, project management specialists, economists, social science analysts, data processing experts, geographers, and software engineers, all with extensive international experience.
- With an emphasis on realistic long-term results, the Census Bureau works with current and future leaders within statistical organizations to develop sustainable and dynamic institutional capacity.

The U.S. Census Bureau works with international assistance partners, such as the USAID Office of Population and Reproductive Health and bilateral and international organizations, to provide training and technical assistance to countries.

For inquiries and additional information, contact:

International Programs
Population Division
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, D.C. 20233
Email: ipcta@lists.census.gov
www.census.gov/population/international

WHERE Does the Census Bureau Work?

The Census Bureau has worked in over 100 developing countries and, as such, is uniquely endowed with experience in every major region of the world. More than 10,000 individuals from developing countries have participated in its training programs, both in Washington, D.C., and in host countries.

HOW Does the Census Bureau Strengthen Statistical Capacity in Developing Countries?

Throughout its history, the Census Bureau has been a leading global innovator in statistics, including censuses, surveys, sampling, mapping, and computer processing activities.

- *“Sharing our expertise globally”* is part of the Census Bureau’s mission.
- The Census Bureau leverages the wide-ranging capabilities of the entire agency in its international assistance initiatives.
- Assistance to any country generally begins with a request from a statistical office to a donor agency for assistance with particular statistical needs. Typically, this involves a three-way partnership between the donor agency, the national statistical office, and the Census Bureau in setting objectives, designing a strategy and work plan for capacity building, and monitoring progress toward objectives.

Statistical Capacity is a key component of a nation’s knowledge infrastructure.

This is one in a series of fact sheets introducing the Census Bureau and the assistance it provides to countries around the world. The Census Bureau helps countries improve their national statistical systems by engaging in statistical capacity building activities that aim to enhance competencies in several areas in sustainable ways.

Topics in this series include:

- Statistical Capacity Building
- Population Census
- Socioeconomic and Demographic Surveys
- Population Estimates and Projections
- The Tool for Assessing Statistical Capacity (TASC)
- CSPro – Processing Census and Survey Data
- Demographic and Economic Analysis
- Geographic Information Systems
- Courses and Workshops

