

Advocacy Toolkit

for Enhancing the Use and Sharing of **Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes**









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Collaborative on Administrative Data: Advocacy Toolkit for Enhancing the Use and Sharing of Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes

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Collaborative on Administrative Data United Nations Statistics Division UN Women Africa UN Women Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

1 Introduction, objective of the toolkit, and key terms

1.1 Summary

This toolkit is designed to help National Statistics Offices (NSOs), policymakers, and other stakeholders advocate for the use of administrative data in statistics. It provides clear, actionable steps for anyone struggling to access or champion the benefits of using administrative data for statistical purposes.

Unlike other advocacy guides, this toolkit is designed specifically to support advocates to highlight the value of using and sharing this type of data, and how it can help to produce better, more accurate statistics and insights for decision-makers. In this guide, you'll find a step-by-step approach designed to support you to define your advocacy objectives, identify key stakeholders and understand their needs and concerns, craft compelling advocacy messages, and recognize strategic opportunities to approach data holders in the most effective way.

1.2 Background

The production of this toolkit was initiated by the Collaborative on Administrative Data (CAD), which is led by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), United Nations (UN) Women, and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (Global Partnership).

The CAD is a multi-stakeholder community of practice aimed at enhancing the capacity of countries to utilize administrative data for statistical purposes. It serves as a platform for sharing resources, tools, best practices, and experiences, thereby raising awareness of the benefits of combining administrative sources to improve the quality, timeliness, coverage, and disaggregation of statistics. The CAD's Task Team 1, which focuses on institutional frameworks, coordination, and partnerships,

played a key role in creating this advocacy toolkit. Its development and publication was spearheaded by UN Women and the Global Partnership.

The CAD was formed to address the need to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems to leverage the use of administrative data for statistical purposes: to fill gaps in the data available for monitoring progress and implementing the SDGs and to address emerging challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since its inception in 2020, CAD members have voiced challenges in securing access to administrative data sources. Convincing national stakeholders remains a key concern, especially for countries exploring new administrative data sources. CAD members have expressed a need for guidance in advocacy and awareness-raising efforts. At the same time, some members have successfully advocated for the use of administrative data, providing valuable examples for others. This presents an opportunity, unique to the CAD, to share common advocacy challenges and ways to overcome them among members and with the broader statistical community.

This toolkit compiles the extensive experience among CAD members who have advocated for access to and use of administrative data. It applies principles of advocacy in the context of accessing administrative data and outlines practical steps in the advocacy process, with guidance on defining goals, identifying stakeholders, building relationships, finding strategic entry points, and creating advocacy materials.

¹ Collaborative on the use of Administrative Data for Statistics - United Nations Statistics Division. Available at: https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/admin-data/

1.3 What is administrative data?

Administrative data is collected or created by governments and service providers in the course of day-to-day operations. Examples include: birth and death registration data collected by local registrars under the Ministry of Home Affairs; school enrollment data collected by educational institutions under the Ministry of Education; and tax return data from companies and individuals collected by tax authorities under the Ministry of Finance. This data, which is not collected for statistical purposes, offers considerable benefits for statistics production to bridge key data gaps for monitoring Sustainable Development Goals and to provide timely and detailed information to national decision-makers.

Traditional sources of statistical data such as surveys and censuses are more expensive to produce, are deployed less often (every ten years, for example, for censuses), and often only provide information on a sample of the population. Administrative data sources provide information on a more regular basis and at a greater level of detail for a larger part of the population. This data, when incorporated into official statistics alongside traditional sources, can create a more accurate picture for policymakers of public services and quality of life and lead to better decisions and outcomes for communities.



Figure 1: This diagram, from the SARA /AED Advocacy Training Guide, illustrates how advocacy fits into the bigger picture of creating change in policies and programs.2

1.4 What is the objective of this toolkit?

Advocacy is a key ingredient when aiming for change, as Figure 1 illustrates. This toolkit is designed to inspire and guide efforts to drive meaningful change, such as improving policymaking through better use and sharing of administrative data. The focus is on sharing and using administrative data between data holders, statistics producers, national statistical systems, and the international community for better statistics and evidence-based policies. Its primary goal is to introduce advocacy strategies centered on administrative data, offering practical insights to help you take the first steps. The toolkit provides a collection of actionable ideas, strategies, and country case studies to support the planning and execution of advocacy and awareness-raising activities. all aimed at increasing access to, use of, and sharing of administrative data for statistical purposes. The toolkit also provides concrete examples of materials that countries have successfully used in their own advocacy work around promoting the sharing and use of administrative data for statistical purposes.

1.5 Who will find this toolkit useful?

This toolkit is useful for advocacy and awarenessraising purposes both internally within National Statistics Offices (NSOs), to convince staff and management at different levels of the organization of the value of administrative data. and externally to raise awareness among data holders and policymakers who form part of the national statistical system (NSS). In practice, the intended users of the toolkit are first line technical and managerial staff of NSOs, as well as statisticians in line ministries. Nongovernment data and statistics stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs) and international development agencies, may also find this toolkit useful in informing their advocacy for the use of administrative data alongside existing data sources, given the potential for improved coverage of vulnerable groups and cost constraints of traditional sources.

















² Sharma, R. An Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide. Available at https://www.ngoconnect.net/sites/default/files/ resources/An%20Introduction%20to%20Advocacy%20-%20Training%20Guide.pdf

1.6 How to use this toolkit

This toolkit offers a step-by-step process for advocating for the increased use and sharing of administrative data for statistical purposes, where each step is intended to build on the one before. It is designed to support you to take action from an informed perspective, so that you have a clear understanding of your aims and audience before reaching out to stakeholders. The goal is to support you to feel empowered and well-equipped to promote the value of sharing and using administrative data for better statistics, and to address data holders' needs and concerns.

Effective advocacy requires a strong foundation. You will start by defining your advocacy objective, before moving on to identifying the key stakeholders involved in achieving your objective and understanding their needs and hesitations around using and sharing administrative data. For example, data holders may have concerns around data privacy and legal frameworks, or what the project will demand in terms of time and resources. It's important to identify these concerns up front and create a plan for how you will address them.

Once you have a clear idea of stakeholders' motivations and perspectives, is it time to work on how you will approach them by identifying strategic entry points, crafting compelling messages, and planning your outreach activities.

Keep in mind that advocating for the increased use of administrative data can take time and requires flexibility and care. It often starts with building strong relationships and trust, which is a process that can take months or even years. This toolkit will support you to take a methodical, long-term, and considered approach. You may not be able to follow all the steps meticulously, and that's OK; even if time and resources are limited, the toolkit provides useful tools, examples, and inspiration.



2 Advocacy – the basics

2 3 4 5 6 6 7 8 9 9

2.1. Defining advocacy

Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing policies, practices, and decision-making within institutions and among key stakeholders. It involves identifying a target audience to be reached, then building awareness, generating support, and mobilizing resources to achieve specific advocacy goals.3

In the context of promoting administrative data for statistical purposes, advocacy focuses on demonstrating the value of this data for statistical production, addressing barriers to its use, and encouraging support from higher levels of government and collaboration between data holders and the NSO, both on data sharing and data quality improvements.

The key components of advocacy are:

- Awareness: Raising awareness among stakeholders about the importance and potential of using administrative data for statistical purposes.
- Engagement: Connecting with stakeholders to identify current barriers and concerns, as well as benefits and opportunities (e.g. through conferences, engagement with media, bilateral meetings on technical and managerial levels, newsletters, and other channels).
- Influence: Inspiring key stakeholders to shape policies, practices, and attitudes to support the integration of administrative data into statistical production.
- Sustainability: Ensuring long-term commitment to the project, and embedding practices that support the use of administrative data for the production of official statistics into institutions (ideally also constantly improving the quality of the sources).

Effective advocacy relies not only on thorough preparation and analysis but also on welldeveloped soft skills. Knowing how to cultivate strong, collaborative relationships is crucial to success4. Timing is also a factor and seizing the right moment can greatly help your cause, for example by introducing your topic at a time when it resonates with the audience's current priorities (more on this in Chapter 4: Identifying strategic advocacy entry points). However, these opportunities can only be leveraged if the groundwork has been laid, ensuring you know what to pitch, when to pitch it, and to whom. In summary, while luck can play a role, preparation and refined soft skills are the true essentials for success.

In addition to really knowing the audience, as well as patience and persistence, countries' successful administrative data advocacy efforts have also included the other elements shown in Figure 2, which will be discussed in more detail in this guide.

It is important to emphasize that there is no single advocacy recipe that works universally for increasing the use of administrative data in statistical production. This toolkit aims to offer a range of examples that have proven successful in specific country contexts and thematic areas. These examples are intended to inspire, providing ideas and approaches that can be tailored to meet your unique needs and circumstances.

³ Sharma, R. An Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide. Available at https://www.ngoconnect.net/sites/default/files/ resources/An%20Introduction%20to%20Advocacy%20-%20Training%20Guide.pdf

⁴ Brown-McBride S. Systems Advocacy. Available at: https://resourcesharingproject.org/resources/systems-advocacy/



Figure 2: Basic advocacy elements adapted from SARA /AED Advocacy Training Guide

2.2 Identifying the advocacy objective

The first step in this process is to clearly identify the objectives of your advocacy. What change are you seeking to achieve? Having a clear objective and breaking this down into smaller or intermediate steps will focus your campaign and direct all of your efforts that follow.

In advocating for administrative data, a long-term objective might be: "To increase the sharing and use of administrative data for better statistics and, with it, evidence-based policymaking." Medium or short-term goals that could lead to this might include gaining access to a specific administrative data source to produce a specific statistical product.

While long-term goals are important to keep in mind, intermediate or short-term goals are helpful because they are, ideally, achievable in a limited timeframe. More specific short-term goals allow you to identify a manageable group of stakeholders to connect with, instead of focusing on the overall group involved in pursuing the long-term objective.

Intermediate and short-term goals can also be used as building blocks on the way to achieving the long-term objective. For example, gaining access to a specific administrative data source and producing improved statistics as a showcase can help to garner further support for this type of endeavor.

Think about including measurable indicators of success for each objective, so you can more accurately track progress against your objectives. For example, what does "improve access to administrative data" look like in practice? Perhaps this means an MoU is signed between data partners as an intermediate goal. The more specifically you can set your objectives, the easier identifying indicators of success will be.

An advocacy objective aims to change the policies, programs, or positions of governments, institutions, or organizations. Your advocacy objective is what you want to change, who will make the change, by how much, and by when. An objective is an incremental and realistic step toward a larger goal or your vision; it is not a general goal.⁵

⁵ Sharma, R. An Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide. Available at: https://www.ngoconnect.net/sites/default/files/resources/An%20Introduction%20to%20Advocacy%20-%20Training%20Guide.pdf

NAMIBIA

Namibia's investment in building rapport with data holders

In Namibia, the NSO is working on gaining access to administrative data sources from the different public institutions. As a step toward achieving this long-term goal, a team under the economic statistics directorate of the National Statistics Agency (NSA) has been working on gaining access to livestock data from the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the National Meat Board. Livestock is an important source of income and employment in Namibia, and this data is important to improve livestock statistics.

In both processes, there was engagement over a long period of time at both the technical and the management levels of the NSA and the two data holders. Tools mentioned in this toolkit, including strategic meetings and high-level events, build support and buy-in among data producers, while addressing their needs and concerns.

The NSA invested time in dialogue with the data holders to learn about their interests and concerns. Only through research and dialogue early on in the process did the NSA learn that the Meat Board could be an important source of livestock data. After roughly a year of contact, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the NSO and the Ministry of Agriculture, which made the first exchanges of data possible. This then allowed for analysis of the data for improved statistics and for the NSA to give back to the Ministry, for example, in the form of a report describing the data quality and potential areas of improvement.

CAMEROON

Understanding homicide rates in Cameroon

In Cameroon, finding one unified figure for the number of homicides in the country has been a challenge. The NSO had the vision to change this through cooperation and data sharing between the national police, the gendarmerie, and the NSO. This also includes the Ministries of Justice and the Interior, as these organizations are involved in the reporting and responsible for the mentioned authorities.

To tackle this, INS collaborated with the UNSD and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) starting in 2021. The two UN agencies facilitated round-table discussions with key stakeholders, including the NSO, National Police, Gendarmerie, and Ministry of Justice, to establish a dialogue and address the data gaps. Through a series of workshops and a high-level event, held from December 2022 to July 2023, participants worked on understanding the current challenges and agreeing on solutions. They also linked the task to Cameroon's international reporting requirements for the SDGs, in this case specifically for SDG 16.1.1.

These workshops led to a comprehensive technical assessment, identifying the need for more joint work. As of mid-2024, both the National Police and Gendarmerie had shared data with the NSO for quality assessment and cleaning. Challenges with information primarily being collected on paper in the regions delayed the process, but continued commitment from the national stakeholders has helped keep the momentum. In the end, the combination of various advocacy efforts proved to be successful.6



















⁶ Addressing Homicide: How Cameroon is Closing the Data Gap - United Nations Statistics Division: https://unstats.un.org/ UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/stories-blog-details/how-cameroon-closing-data-gap

3 Identifying and mapping key actors and stakeholders and understanding their motivations and needs

To prepare for advocacy efforts, it's essential to understand the key actors, including both supporters and those who need convincing. Identify important groups for your advocacy strategies, address them through targeted activities, and seek allies to increase the use of administrative data for statistical purposes. Recognize champions of the benefits, skeptics needing persuasion, and those who hold the keys to success.

A thorough stakeholder analysis, described in this section, is a crucial step. In this situation, stakeholders may include those who do not traditionally fit within the definition of affected groups, and so this toolkit employs the term "key actors" to encompass direct stakeholders as well as those who are targets of advocacy but not necessarily stakeholders in the project. In either case, it's important to identify and understand key actors who influence or are affected by the use of administrative data. This enables you to tailor your advocacy strategies to their specific interests, concerns, and influence levels.

Mapping key actors

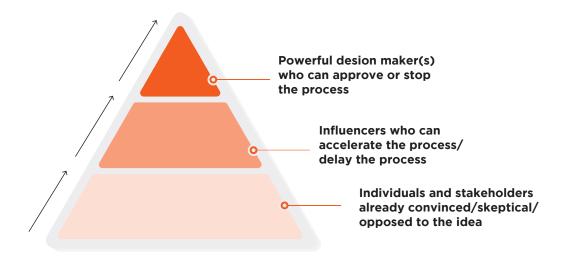


Figure 3: The hierarchy of decision makers: from a broad support base, to the difficult to reach peak.

(10)

The important actors in administrative data systems will vary by country and context, on existing structures relationships. Advocacy work is closely linked to user engagement by statistics producers. Many key users of official statistics are in ministries, departments, and government agencies, which often collect and hold administrative data. Understanding their needs and interests is essential. Successful advocacy often relies on building personal relationships that are later formalized through MoUs and data-sharing agreements.

Your institution's communication coordination unit may have already mapped main interest groups. User engagement activities can also inform your analysis and advocacy efforts. Country experiences show that building relationships and direct contact with interest groups are crucial for success.

Unexpected successes can occur, such as finding a policymaker with a statistical or academic background who understands the benefits of using administrative data. Over time, even the fiercest opponents of data sharing can become allies.

GHANA

Increasing buy-in for the use of administrative data

Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) has worked extensively since 2017 to raise awareness of and advocate for the increased use of administrative data among politicians, decision-makers, and government institutions. GSS has invested a lot of time in building relationships with decisionmakers and contacts in line ministries. Building trust and relationships has not been easy or quick. GSS began to see positive results after three years of consistent efforts. One way of building relationships involved inviting partners from ministries to collaborate on projects, including on international visits. This work has been carried out in parallel to the actual statistical production.

Key to GSS' success was being ready to act at the right time. The increased demand for data through the SDGs made national politicians more receptive to understanding the need for more and better data. This also came at a crucial time, with Ghana rolling out a national identification card to all its citizens.

Concrete actions have included conferences with a high number of parliamentarians present, high-level events with international support for the cause, as well as media coverage of successes. GSS has also strategically made use of international partners to advocate for the use of administrative data and shared information through social media. The work has been going on at many levels, from the technical level to senior management.

The work so far has been a great success, with an increased level of understanding and support among decision-makers and data holders for the importance and benefits of sharing and using administrative data for statistics.

Watch a video from GSS on the role and profile of Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) in informing national decision making at https://youtu.be/cRiAFI2Hx6s?feature=shared

3.1 Identifying key actors and groups of interest

In this section all steps of an analysis of key actors and other groups of interest are systematically listed. The extent of work you put into the analysis depends on the time and resources you have available, as well as what work has been carried out already that you can use

Identify the key actors and groups of interest

This first step is to map the playing field. Who are the different players—agencies and/ or individuals within them—that should be considered in your advocacy efforts? Who are the groups that support the idea, and which groups are opposed? By making a list or using a mind map (see Figure 4), you can document the relevant parties and indicate how strongly affected or involved they are in creating the desired outcome:

 Primary actors and stakeholders are directly affected by or contribute to the change you are seeking. These may include: National Statistical Offices (NSOs), data holders, government agencies, and policymakers

Example: If you want access to the school enrollment register from the Ministry of Education, your primary stakeholders would be the colleagues at the NSO who are working with education statistics. This includes the top management and the technical staff who are responsible for collecting and processing this data at the ministry, as well as potentially the minister and sitting government, as they may have a specific focus on higher school enrollment within their education plans.

 Secondary actors and stakeholders may not be directly affected by the changes you are seeking, but still have an interest in it. They include international organizations, donors, civil society organizations, academia, and the media.

Example: An international organization is responsible for collecting data on the school enrollment levels of all countries, and has so far not been able to get any data from your country. There are also two major donors with a focus on primary and secondary education projects. They have been asking for better and more timely data for years, to be able to plan their funding portfolios more effectively.

 Tertiary actors and stakeholders include broader groups who may be indirectly impacted, like the general public or private sector organizations.

Example: Tertiary actors could include parents interested in accessing information on the status of the government's promise to increase enrollment levels, or private sector businesses producing and selling school materials and uniforms.

Finally, you also need to identify who among your stakeholders are skeptical or against the use of administrative data for statistical purposes and who will support your cause.

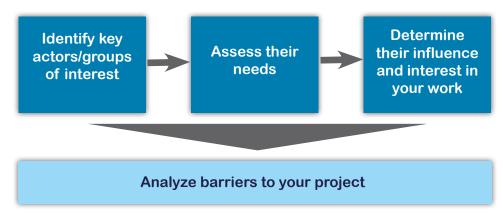


Figure 4: Steps in mapping and analyzing key actors











EXAMPLE

Understanding potential stakeholder groups in advocacy for administrative data

In comparison with other types of advocacy, the stakeholder groups across contexts may be similar in advocating for administrative data, though whether they are primary, secondary, or of lower priority will be determined by your specific advocacy objectives. Advocating for administrative data may also include actors outside of the government system. For example, when the needs of the NSO and private sector align, could a company with interest in a particular statistical product be a helpful ally in seeking access to the data necessary to produce it?

Here's how one NSO and member of the Collaborative on Administrative Data (CAD) has categorized their stakeholders in advocating for administrative data:

Primary stakeholders include data holders who are directly involved in data collection, management, or policy decisions such as government agencies, regulatory bodies, quasi-public sector entities, and institutions responsible for administrative data collection. They may also include: data users, or those who influence data use and advocacy but are not directly responsible for data management such as NSOs, policymakers, researchers, development organizations, and CSOs; regulatory bodies or legislators and legal institutions overseeing data governance, privacy, and security; and funders and development partners, including international agencies.

Secondary stakeholders can be categorized as media and public advocacy groups who can help amplify [your] advocacy efforts; academic and research institutions, which often analyze and provide credibility to data-driven policymaking; and technology and infrastructure providers such as organizations that manage digital data platforms, IT systems, and interoperability solutions.

Tertiary stakeholders are indirectly connected but have an interest in administrative data use and advocacy outcomes. These include: (1) Private sector and industry associations that require government data for business intelligence and economic forecasting. They can provide technical expertise or infrastructure to support data sharing, motivated by their interest in gaining business insights, complying with regulations, or identifying new partnerships. (2) Professional associations and statistical societies that serve as a source of knowledge and capacity-building for statisticians, data scientists, and policymakers. They can provide resources and help advocate for data standardization and best practices. (3) Trade Unions and labor groups that use data for labor rights advocacy, wage negotiations, and employment statistics are also interested in gaining accurate labor market data. And (4) Non-profit organizations and philanthropic organizations that support initiatives that increase data access for development programs such as poverty reductions.

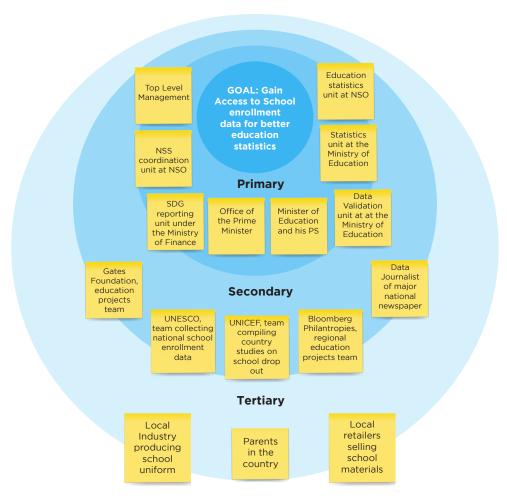


Figure 5: Stakeholder maps can show how impacted or involved people are in achieving the desired outcome.

2. Assess the stakeholders'/groups' interests

After creating an overview of all groups relevant to your advocacy goal, this second step focuses on learning more about them. For each stakeholder, individual or group, seek to understand their specific interests and concerns. Are they in support, neutral, or opposed to the idea, and what are their reasons? Look to identify potential conflicts or synergies between stakeholders' goals and the objectives of your advocacy campaign.

To understand your key actors and stakeholders better, think through the following questions for each group to interrogate their interests and concerns:

- What do they already know and understand about administrative data (and statistics in general)?
- What are their positions on the sharing and use of administrative data?
- · What concerns do they have regarding the sharing and use of administrative data?
- What do they see as possible advantages or disadvantages of sharing and using administrative data (interest analysis)?
- What are their main objectives and goals and (how) can administrative data sharing bring them closer to these goals?
- Which of the groups might form alliances?⁷

⁷ Adopted from https://www.hfgproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Policy-Toolkit-for-Strengthening-Health-Sector-Reform-September-2000.pdf (hfgproject.org)

The following two images are examples of how you might organize information about each of your stakeholders for further analysis.

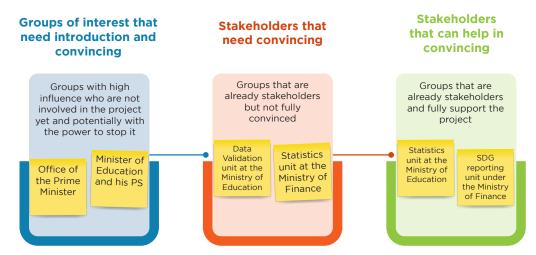


Figure 6: Example of stakeholder analysis by level of support for your advocacy goals

Table 1: A second example of how you might organize information about your stakeholders from the mapping exercise.`

Important stakeholders that have been identified:	Their view on: • Admin Data • Advantages of Admin Data • Main Concerns/disadvantages	Interest / Influence
Within the Ministry of Education: • Minister of Education	 Not much knowledge Very interested in faster information on enrollment and performance Concerned about the accuracy and completeness of the data 	• Medium / High
Head of education statistics	 Very interested in learning more and exploring the options because of the pressure to provide more information faster Concerned about the quality of the data and cooperation of the local and regional staff 	• High / Medium
Technical staff in both units	 Know how much information there is and are excited about the possibilities Concerned about top level management support and having the right agreements to allow them to share 	• High / Low

(10)

Important stakeholders that have been identified:	Their view on • Admin Data • Advantages of Admin Data • Main Concerns/disadvantages	Interest / Influence
With the Office of the Prime Minister • Prime Minister	 Has heard about administrative data in connection with SDG reporting and census operations and is very interested in exploring the options Is concerned about how quickly this can be realized in order for the country to be a front-runner in the region 	• High / High
Principal secretary to the Prime Minister	 Has heard about the benefits of it too but also the time it takes to set up the systems and technical requirements Concerned about the costs and also the resources needed to train staff in all relevant institutions 	• Medium / High
Within the Ministry of Finance: • Minister of Finance	 Not much knowledge, main concerns are extra costs Concerned that data sharing could violate confidentiality of the businesses and individuals 	• Low / High
Head of Ministry of Finance Statistical Unit	 Knows about it but concerns because of conflicting legal frameworks Aware of the benefits in the form of more and timely statistics. Main concerns are confidentiality and the quality of the data 	• High / Low (Medium)
Statistics expert in Ministry of Finance	 Aware of some of the benefits Has some more knowledge on how to mitigate quality issues and get analysis from NSO 	• High / Low
Within the Ministry of Planning and Development: • Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Planning and Development	 Interested in more detailed information on the population and also on SDG progress; believes that statistics are often outdated and not granular enough Interested in hearing more about the potential of using administrative data for this purpose Concerned about confidentiality and IT security, as well as the risk of misuse when having a lot of sensitive information in one place 	• Medium/Medium

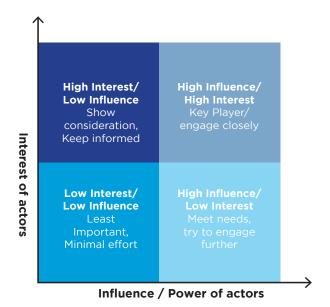


Figure 7: Power/ Interest model

3. Determine key actors and stakeholders' interest in your work and their level of influence

Once you know who you are dealing with and what their interests and concerns are, you're ready to look at the level of influence and support they might have for your campaign. One way to categorize the different stakeholders is to use a Power/ Interest model.8 Evaluating how much interest inand influence over—your cause stakeholders have helps to understand who can potentially support or hinder you in reaching your goal.

In the grid below (see Figure 7), the x-axis represents influence or power of stakeholders, while the y-axis indicates level of interest in your advocacy campaign's objective. Those with high power and high interest could be great allies. For example, a Minister of Planning who really wants to increase use of administrative data for more granular and timely decision-making would be a 'high power, high interest' stakeholder who could help your campaign. This group can also be helpful in convincing stakeholders who are high power but low interest. The Minister of Planning could, for example, support you in pilot projects that can be used to practically demonstrate the benefits of administrative data. Those with high power and low interest in your cause should be carefully engaged with to ensure they do not put up roadblocks to the project and that any barriers to them supporting the project are carefully addressed.

This approach can help you to identify the stakeholders that hold the power to support or block your goals. This process is especially valuable when there are limited resources for your work, and decisions about where to prioritize capacities need to be made, as is often the case.

With the help of this model you can evaluate the level of influence and power each stakeholder has in decision-making processes related to administrative data and statistical purposes. You can then design your advocacy work based on the insights from this model.

While the top right corner is your strong ally and worth engaging with closely, the bottom right group should not be neglected, as mentioned in the introduction of this section. Managing to spark interest in one or two high-influence key actors and stakeholders could be all that is needed to tip the overall scale in your favor.

10

It is important to highlight that using time and resources on the top and bottom right corners of the matrix is not the only way to success. Having successful pilot projects with stakeholders that are not too influential but very interested in the work can also be highly effective. Through a successful pilot project, you have evidence that this is working and beneficial: a proof of concept.

The results of this collaboration can be used to demonstrate the value of sharing and using administrative data to others and can help increase the interest of stakeholders in the bottom-right corner.

Technical Prime Statistics staff in expert Minister both units High Interest/ High Influence/ Low Influence **High Interest** Head of Show consideration, education Keep informed statistics nterest of actors of MoF Statistical Principal Pricipal Minister of Unit Secretary of Secretary to the PM Education the Ministry of Planning and Development

Influence / Power of actors

High Influence/

Low Interest

Meet needs.

try to engage further

Minister

Finance

Example filled in using the information from Figure 6 in section 3.1

Low Interest/

Low Influence

Minimal effort

⁸ HFG Project (2000) Policy Toolkit for Strengthening Health Sector Reform. Available at: https://www.hfgproject.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/02/Policy-Toolkit-for-Strengthening-Health-Sector-Reform-September-2000.pdf (hfgproject.org)

3.2 Analyzing barriers

Before identifying strategic entry points and crafting advocacy messages, conducting a barrier analysis for each group of interest is crucial. With a clear understanding of who the they are, and what their interests and concerns are centered around, you can delve deeper into the reasons behind their actions or inaction (e.g., reluctance to share administrative data or engage in dialogue with the NSO). This analysis will help you to uncover the underlying factors that influence their behavior and guide the development of effective strategies.

- Why are they not buying into sharing and using administrative data?
- What needs to be put in place to remove these barrier(s) or change their minds?
- How can your messaging and work with influencers help to change their perspective?

For example, if the data holder is worried this process will expose the weaknesses and errors in their data system, specific points will need to be included in your advocacy message to explain to them why this will not be a problem.

If there is a lack of awareness around the benefits of sharing administrative data and its potential to improve data quality, your advocacy message will need to address this.

The extent of the analysis (for example, whether you will conduct interviews or focus groups, and if so, with how many people) will depend on the resources (staff, time, budget) you have available. Various resources and examples for a full barrier analysis, as well as excel templates, are available for free online (see examples in References).9



4 Identifying strategic advocacy entry points

The next step is to identify strategic entry points, i.e. an opportune moment, event, or circumstance that can be used to effectively engage stakeholders. In the context of advocating for the increased use and sharing of administrative data, a strategic entry point might arise when stakeholders are particularly receptive to collaboration or change; for example, during policy reviews, the introduction of new data-sharing frameworks, or public debates on improving evidencedecision-making. These offer a chance to align advocacy efforts with stakeholders' interests, priorities, or pressing challenges, making it easier to build support, address concerns, and initiate meaningful dialogue. Identifying and leveraging these entry points allows you to maximize the impact of your efforts.

To identify strategic entry points for advocacy, build on your understanding of stakeholders, their needs, engagement methods, obligations, and potential concerns or barriers. Additionally, be aware of current national and international political priorities.

4.1. National entry points

1. National plans and strategies

When looking at successful examples of advocacy for increased access to administrative data, this was often aligned with the creation of national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDS), including reforming legislation, and national development plans.

The process of formulating national strategies can reveal reporting gaps, as well as the need for more precise, timely, and disaggregated data to monitor and evaluate the strategies. Increased administrative data use can be presented as a possible measure for better data availability in this context.

For example, developing an NSDS may reveal a number of areas where data is needed, as well as potential new data sources during discussions with all members of the NSS. This awareness of reporting gaps and potential unexplored sources provides an ideal opportunity to advocate for using administrative data.

2. Topics of high national political importance

Topics that are currently of high political importance can also offer an effective entry point for your advocacy efforts. If migration is a topic of high interest, the likelihood that you will be heard when speaking about the potential to improve migration data is much higher than if your messages are focused on another area, such as agricultural or education data.

Indeed, when it comes to advocating for the increased use of migration administrative data, CAD members have reported that this message was only heard once the topic became of political importance.

By choosing strategically to highlight the value of sharing and using administrative data with topics that are of high political interest, potential support can be generated faster. If migration or unemployment are currently topics of high interest, it will help to connect your advocacy messages to these issues, for example, by highlighting how administrative data can be useful for receiving more timely and accurate information about migration or the labor market if public institutions work together in sharing the data.

3. Events of national importance

Aligning your advocacy with events of national importance, such as the census, can also be useful. A number of NSOs have received requests/orders from their governments to use administrative data in their future censuses to save money and to gain a more reliable picture of the population. This interest from the government can be used in negotiations with the data holders that are reluctant to share data or change their processes. If senior government ministers are asking for the use of administrative data, this can go a long way towards getting data holders on board.

4. National reporting requirements

Sharing administrative data can also help various ministries to meet the national reporting requirements and indicator frameworks set for them by the government; this can be a useful benefit to highlight when speaking to various government departments. For example, if the government is aiming to double maritime GDP by a certain deadline, the relevant ministry would need access to accurate maritime GDP figures. These can only be compiled with data from a large number of data holders.

















VIETNAM

Enhancing statistical quality through a multi-pronged approach in Vietnam

Vietnam's General Statistics Office (GSO) has made significant strides in improving data accessibility and statistical quality by advocating for greater access to administrative data. Today, GSO has signed 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with ministries, universities, and corporations and has four more in progress. But initially, GSO faced challenges in obtaining detailed datasets. Instead, it received only aggregated reports, limiting its ability to conduct quality checks and in-depth socio-economic analyses.

To address this issue, GSO implemented a multi-faceted strategy. It engaged key stakeholders, including government ministries and data-producing agencies, to strengthen cooperation through data-sharing agreements. Additionally, GSO conducted capacity-building initiatives such as workshops and training programs to enhance statistical standards and best practices. Efforts were also made to harmonize data collection and processing through the General Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and integrate IT solutions into statistical production. Furthermore, GSO worked closely with policymakers to establish legal frameworks to support systematic and secure data sharing.

These efforts have yielded significant results. Thanks to improved collaboration with agencies like the Tax and Customs Departments, GSO now receives administrative data monthly, allowing for the timely production of economic statistics. The use of administrative data has enhanced the relevance and efficiency of statistical reporting while also reducing costs. Additionally, GSO's advocacy has contributed to the development of a national data-sharing ecosystem, aligning with Vietnam's e-government initiatives and ensuring sustainable, cross-agency data access.

Key lessons from this initiative highlight the importance of fostering trust among stakeholders, addressing technical and legal barriers, and ensuring adequate training for data providers. Continued efforts in strengthening cooperation, enhancing technological capacity, and learning from international best practices will be crucial for the long-term success of Vietnam's integrated statistical system.

By improving access to high quality data, GSO has not only enhanced the quality of its statistics but also reinforced data-driven policymaking, ultimately supporting national development and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

4.2. Countries' international ambitions and obligations

Advocacy for the use of administrative data for statistical production must be grounded in a thorough understanding of the policy landscape, not just nationally but also of the region and worldwide. This includes analyzing relevant international policies, regulations, and frameworks that impact data collection, sharing, and use.

Similar to the national context, knowing the international monitoring and reporting requirements and more specifically high priority obligations, can support the process of finding good advocacy entry points. Being aware of these and their relative importance to decision-makers will increase the chances of the advocacy messages being heard.

Agenda 2030 is a great entry point, as it is a high priority for most governments and involves reporting requirements. Along with Agenda 2030, there could also be relevant topic-specific obligations related to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, treaties on human rights, disability, and more that can be leveraged. The use of administrative data can help to provide disaggregated information on sub-groups of the population that may be difficult or expensive to reach through surveys.

The country may also be a member of a regional body that has certain reporting requirements for its members. Some of these requirements can potentially be fulfilled by using administrative data sources. The country may have signed international frameworks on human rights, disability, and other areas with reporting requirements. In this case, administrative data can provide the level of granularity needed to report on the issues, particularly when survey budgets are decreasing.

The country may also want to become a member of an international body like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). To achieve this, there are requirements regarding the legal frameworks and international reporting, but also around the statistics framework, including the sharing of administrative data. This ambition can be leveraged when advocating for the relevant national institutions to support the sharing and use of administrative data for statistical purposes.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Shaping data-driven disaster resilience in the Dominican Republic

The National Statistics Office of the Dominican Republic (ONE) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) collaborated to address gaps in environmental data, for disaster risk reduction. This is crucial for small island countries, where storms, hurricanes, and droughts have significant impacts.

To do this, ONE explored different administrative data sources. The data that were most feasible for use in the short term were from the Emergency Operations Center (COE) and the Office of Civil Defense. In the longer term, their goal is to align and link the different data sources on environmental disasters, which eventually could be a game-changer for the government's climate adaptation policies.

In support of the overall process, a high-level seminar and a four-day workshop were organized to promote collaboration among government institutions. More than 45 participants from 30 government institutions attended, covering topics such as legal frameworks, data quality, interoperability, and IT security. The workshop culminated in various commitments for future collaboration.

The initiative led to significant progress, including the evaluation of three key administrative records related to natural phenomenon events and environmental compliance by the private sector. Statistics on extreme events were published in 2023-2024, based on data from the different sources.¹⁰

¹⁰ Shaping data-driven disaster risk resilience in the Dominican Republic - United Nations Statistics Division: https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/stories-blog-details/shaping-data-driven-disaster-risk-resilience-dominican-republic

^{II} Moving beyond traditional censuses: Chile's collaborative approach to administrative data - United Nations Statistics Division: https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/data-for-now/story-details/chile-collaborative-approach-to-administrative-data



5 Developing key messages

5.1 Key components of advocacy messages

To develop strong advocacy messages, the insights you've gained from the previous sections of this toolkit are essential. Now that you have a solid idea of who your main stakeholders are, their barriers and needs, and what political and global issues are most important to them, you can begin to craft relevant advocacy messages.

As well as using the insights into your stakeholders to inform your communications, there are some key things to consider when developing advocacy messages:

Effective messages are the core of your advocacy efforts. They should be clear, compelling, and tailored to your target audience. After working through the previous sections of this toolkit, you should now be well-prepared to develop compelling messages.

The goal is to communicate the benefits of sharing and using administrative data for statistical purposes in a way that resonates with your specific stakeholders' interests and concerns.

Clarity and simplicity

- Ensure your messages are easy to understand, avoiding technical jargon.
 - » Test the message on a friend or family member. If they do not understand the idea you're intending to communicate, there is more work to do.
- Use concise language that clearly conveys your main points.

Relevance

- Tailor your messages to address the specific concerns and priorities of different stakeholders.
 - » For example, you might emphasize cost savings for government agencies, or improved data quality and timeliness for policymakers.

Evidence-based arguments

 Support your messages with data, case studies, and examples that demonstrate the tangible benefits of using administrative data for statistical purposes and the benefits of sharing for all parties.

Call to action

Clearly define what you want your audience to do as a result of your advocacy. Whether it's
signing MoUs and data sharing agreements, conducting a joint quality assessment of a data
source, or starting a process to revise a statistical legal framework, make the next steps explicit.

Emotional appeal

- Where appropriate, incorporate emotional or human-interest elements to make your messages more impactful.
 - » Highlight with a concrete example how better data can lead to improved public services and social outcomes for a specific group/person.

5.2 Examples of advocacy messages

Of course, advocacy messages also need to be tailored to your specific national context and main audiences. To help visualize what these messages could look like, here are some examples for different audiences/groups generally, followed by more specific examples for individuals/roles.

For policymakers:	"Using administrative data produces accurate, timely statistics, informing better policy decisions and improving public services while saving resources." "Using administrative data is crucial internationally and important for OECD membership."
For government agencies:	"Integrating administrative data into statistics reduces costs and improves efficiency, allowing you to achieve more with existing resources." "Using administrative data across institutions improves data quality and provides accurate information for decision-making."
For international organizations:	"Incorporating administrative data in national statistics aligns with global commitments to data-driven decision-making and SDG monitoring."
For the media:	"Better data means better decisions. Utilizing administrative data on healthcare, education, and social care from institutions such as hospitals and schools, can save time and reduce costs."

Specific examples:

For the Minister of Education:	"Sharing administrative data provides timely information on school enrollment nationwide, broken down by region, gender, and other variables."
For the Head of the statistics unit of the Ministry of Finance:	"Long-term cooperation with the NSO improves data quality and decision-making, allowing resources to be allocated more effectively."
For the Head of the monitoring unit of the National Planning Commission:	"Administrative data on school enrollment is valuable for national education statistics and produces timely indicators for SDG monitoring."
For a parliamentarian whose main area of interest is school enrollment	"Sharing information between agencies ensures timely, reliable school enrollment data, responsible use of resources, and minimizes duplicated efforts."

PALESTINE

Strengthening partnerships to improve access to administrative data in Palestine

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) has worked to overcome significant, interconnected challenges in accessing and utilizing administrative data from government institutions. These challenges included inconsistent data quality, lack of standardization, technological limitations, and concerns over privacy and confidentiality. A lack of awareness among stakeholders about the benefits of data sharing, coupled with insufficient capacity and resources within partner institutions, and political instability led to deprioritizing initiatives related to data sharing and statistical integration.

To address these issues, PCBS has adopted a multi-pronged strategy. It engaged key stakeholders—government ministries, international organizations, and research institutions—to foster collaboration through formal agreements. The bureau introduced standardized frameworks for data collection, processing, and integration, aligning with international statistical standards. Capacity-building initiatives, including workshops and training sessions, were conducted to enhance data holders technical expertise and awareness of the benefits of administrative data. Additionally, PCBS leveraged technology, using web-based platforms to assess administrative records and streamline data-sharing processes.

These efforts have led to significant improvements. Through formalized agreements and legal advocacy, PCBS secured more consistent access to administrative data, reducing duplication and enhancing efficiency. Standardization efforts increased data quality, making it more reliable for policy making. Strengthened collaboration with stakeholders fostered trust and improved data-sharing mechanisms. Additionally, administrative data was successfully used to generate reports on key sectors such as health and education, supporting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and informed decision-making.

Despite these advancements, challenges remain. Resistance from institutions over data ownership, limited resources for IT infrastructure, high staff turnover in partner organizations, and political instability continue to hinder progress. However, PCBS's experience highlights key lessons: demonstrating mutual benefits to stakeholders, investing in leadership and capacity-building, upgrading technological infrastructure, and implementing monitoring mechanisms to ensure data quality can provide incremental advances in accessing administrative data for statistics.

Through these efforts, PCBS has laid the foundation for a more integrated and sustainable statistical system in Palestine. By fostering institutional partnerships and leveraging technology, the bureau has strengthened the role of administrative data in policymaking, ultimately contributing to more effective governance and national development.



6 How to present administrative data - clearly addressing benefits and concerns

In the previous chapter, you learned why it's important to keep your audience top of mind when crafting your advocacy messages. Likewise, when trying to convince the data holders of the merits of sharing and using administrative data, it's a good idea to approach it from their point of view. Instead of explaining why this would be useful for you, try to combine all the knowledge you have acquired through the previous steps. Focus on addressing their concerns and highlighting the benefits for them

The following section lists some of the advantages of using administrative data for statistical purposes, along with common concerns and how to address them.

6.1 Benefits of sharing and using administrative data

The use of administrative data for statistical purposes brings significant benefits, not only to statistical producers but also to data holders such as government agencies.

Once everything is in place, sharing administrative data can help to reduce the duplication of data collection across organizations and departments. Rather than conducting separate processes, existing records can be leveraged to generate accurate, timely, and cost-effective statistics. This reduces the administrative burden and optimizes the use of resources within government agencies. Moreover, by contributing to official statistics, data holders enhance the visibility and impact of their data, ensuring that it is used in ways that support evidence-based policymaking.

Sharing administrative data fosters collaboration and builds trust between agencies, leading to a more coordinated approach to data governance and a stronger, more efficient national statistical system. Ultimately, this partnership benefits all stakeholders by improving the quality and relevance of statistics while ensuring that government data is used to its fullest potential.

Below are some of the main advantages of sharing administrative data:

Timeliness: Administrative data can offer relevant, timely information to inform policy and practice in fast-moving situations in areas such as health—for example, in the case of an epidemic or pandemic or in areas such as crime, by offering insight into offences such as gender-based violence where survey or other traditional forms of data may not be immediately available.

Reduced costs and administrative burden: By sharing existing administrative data, data holders can minimize the need for separate data collection efforts across departments, saving time, costs, and resources.

Improved data utilization: Administrative data contributes to official statistics that support evidencebased policymaking, increasing the visibility and value of the data collected by the agency.

Stronger collaboration: Sharing data with statistical producers fosters stronger inter-agency collaboration and coordination, promoting a more efficient and integrated approach to data governance.

Enhanced data quality: Working with statistical producers can help improve the standard of the source data, with statistical analysis tools providing detailed information on quality issues. The more the data is used, the more potential issues are caught and quality improves greatly over time.

Stronger policy and decision-making: As a complementary data type, administrative data offers insights and perspectives from a wider pool, leading to more informed policies and decision-making. Data holders contribute to the creation of high-quality official statistics, which inform policymaking and improve government accountability.























NORWAY

Norway's institutions jointly develop an electronic system for national employment statistics

Statistics Norway has produced register-based employment statistics since 1983. Until the end of 2014, these statistics were built on various public registers; the most important was the Register of Employers and Employees (Ee-register), produced by The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organization (NAV). From 2015 onwards, a new joint reporting solution called the a-ordningen gathers the reporting from employers to the Ee-register, as well as some reports to the Tax Administration and Statistics Norway.

With the new system, the production time has been significantly reduced. It provides better data compared to the Ee-register, as it is more accurate on the individual level, in addition to covering a greater number of employment details. Furthermore, it provides more frequent statistics for wage earners and will supply highly detailed figures on the development of the labor market. These include numbers of employees on the municipal level by age and industry. It can also provide statistics on how different groups and regions fare in the Norwegian labor market.

Ahead of the combined solution ending with the a-ordningen, much focus was on how to simplify and coordinate the information that all businesses in Norway had to provide to several different authorities. A close and comprehensive meeting schedule, on various levels in the three organisations: The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organization (NAV); Statistics Norway; and the Norwegian Tax Administration, was established. One big challenge was to coordinate and ensure that all providers of payroll and personnel systems (around 35 at the time) would be able to deliver the required information on the same platform. It turned out to be a huge advantage to get all35 providers on board early on in the process.

Through extensive meeting activity between the relevant register holders, it became clear to all involved that there was much to be gained from collaboration, and that this would not only benefit and reduce the burden for all private and public businesses considerably, but would make it possible to obtain far more data-of much better quality-for both the reporting businesses and the authorities using the data for administrative purposes, as well as improving the production of official statistics.

The most important lesson learned was that, through this extensive process over several years, all parties involved benefited from this coordination of data flow.

6.2 Potential concerns about sharing and using administrative data, and how to address them

Administrative data holders may have understandable concerns about sharing their data with National Statistical Offices (NSOs), often stemming from issues related to data confidentiality, legal constraints, data quality, the potential misuse of their information, and the additional workload that may be required to do this.

Addressing these concerns requires a combination of transparent communication, robust legal frameworks, and collaborative approaches that build trust. Below is a list of common concerns, and potential ways to address them:

Data privacy: The data holder may be concerned that data is confidential and therefore cannot be shared. Losing the trust of the entities and individuals whose data they are holding is a common, and valid, concern. Data holders may also have questions and concerns around how the data will be used.

Mitigation: Having access to individuals' and businesses' data comes with a huge responsibility. Upgrading systems and procedures may be a prerequisite for gaining access, as well as working on becoming a national champion in data protection and processes that ensure confidentiality and data security. It is important to use secure IT systems and anonymization techniques to protect sensitive information. Once these measures are in place, be sure to inform the data holder, businesses, and public about your measures to protect their data and minimize their concerns. Also, clearly communicate how the data will be used and the benefits of its integration for policymaking and public good.

Legal provisions: Data holders often have a legal framework that prevents or limits them from sharing data, and may be concerned about potential consequences for sharing. They may also have concerns about the impact of personal data protection laws on data sharing.

Mitigation: It's essential to thoroughly check the statistical legal framework to be sure this allows for access to administrative data, and ideally also encourages the other institutions to share. If it is not up to date, a revision or renewal process is advised. The example of Kyravzstan below shows how this can be done effectively. It is also helpful to know which other legal frameworks could potentially contradict the statistical one. Whether there's a legal framework that allows for sharing or not, it is always a good idea to establish clear agreements with the data holder that outline data-sharing protocols, timelines, roles, and responsibilities.

Extra workload: Data holders may be worried that sharing data will create a lot of extra work for them, particularly if they are already pressed for time and resources.

Mitigation: Simplify the data-sharing process and, especially in the beginning of the cooperation, accept what is available and adjust expectations on your end to make the process as simple as possible for the data holder. Additionally, providing technical support, predefined templates, and automated systems to reduce the extra workload for data holders may be greatly appreciated and could help to secure their agreement for the collaboration.

Data quality: Data holders may be anxious about the quality of their data. For example, they may fear that it has gaps or does not meet the expected quality requirements, and may be embarrassed at the prospect of another institution double-checking the data and finding flaws.

Mitigation: It can be helpful to emphasize the extensive benefits of better data, and that identifying any issues with the data will make everyone's work stronger in the end. You may also want to highlight that issues with data are common, and that sharing and cooperating is a great way to increase data quality over time, together. In the long run, you can explain the benefits of working collaboratively to align data collection and processing standards, ensuring mutual benefits from shared datasets.

One-way sharing: Data holders may be reluctant to share their data without receiving anything in return. For example, frustration may arise if the data holder has asked the statistics producer for some data in exchange, and then finds this request is denied.

Mitigation: Be clear from the outset about what is possible and what is not, and explain upfront that, as the statistics producer, it is not possible to share disaggregated data from other institutions. You may also want to offer alternative benefits - this could be reports about the quality of the data that they share. support with statistical analysis, or other resources that could be valuable for the data holder.

By addressing these concerns proactively, statistics producers can foster healthy partnerships with administrative data holders and, in the long run, create a stronger foundation for reliable and impactful datadriven decision-making.

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- 10

Outreach strategies and tools

The activities in this section aim to inspire concrete advocacy actions to encourage the sharing and use of administrative data. Based on previous discussions, they are designed to engage stakeholders, build awareness, and ultimately impact policy changes by promoting the use of administrative data for statistical purposes.

This selection of strategies and tools is based on experiences with and from countries that have succeeded in accessing and using administrative data for statistical purposes. This is not an exhaustive list and there may be additional activities that are valuable in your specific context.



1. High-level advocacy meetings

- Description: Arrange meetings with high-level policymakers, such as ministers, government officials, and heads of statistical agencies, to advocate for the sharing of administrative data and its integration into the statistical system.
- Objective: Secure political commitment and resources for increased sharing of administrative data and cooperation around quality improvements
- Example activity: A meeting with the Minister of Finance to discuss the cost-effectiveness of administrative data and its potential to enhance economic and social statistics.



2. Stakeholder engagement workshops (working groups/technical working committees)

- Description: Organize
 workshops that bring together
 key stakeholders, such
 as government agencies,
 policymakers, statisticians,
 civil society, and international
 organizations. These workshops
 should focus on the benefits
 of using administrative data,
 to jointly discuss and address
 potential challenges and
 solutions
- Objective: Build consensus, share knowledge of benefits, and identify roles and responsibilities for advancing the use of administrative data.
- Example activity: A half-day workshop where stakeholders discuss case studies of successful administrative data use and collaborate on creating a roadmap for integrating administrative data into national statistics



3. Strategic use of international experts

- Description: Reach out to international experts on the topic you are focusing on and ask them to support your cause, for example by speaking at a high-level event or a stakeholder engagement workshop.
- Objective: Offer inspiration and direction through the experience of a respected international expert, and showcase international best practice to encourage national adoption.
- Example activity: If you are working on building a population register with administrative data, plan a workshop with all of the major institutions involved and invite international experts on population statistics to co-facilitate and speak on the importance and benefits of the project.



4. Pilot projects



5. Capacitybuilding programs

- **Description:** Conduct training managers, and government officials on how to use and statistical purposes.
- **Objective:** Build the technical capacity needed to understand and improve administrative data systems and ensure that stakeholders understand their roles in the data life-cycle.
- **Example activity:** A series of workshops and online courses that cover topics such as analyzing the legal frameworks, mapping of data sources, data quality assurance, cooperation and data sharing agreements, as well as the data integration needed to make administrative data use for statistical purposes



6. Policy briefs and fact sheet



3

4

Description: Develop concise and visually appealing policy briefs and fact sheets that highlight the advantages of using administrative data, including cost savings, improved data quality and availability, and reduced burden on respondents.



Objective: Provide decision-makers with clear, evidence-based arguments for supporting the sharing and use of administrative data for statistical purposes.



policy brief summarizing the potential of using administrative data to improve national statistical outputs, including examples of successful implementations from national pilot projects or other countries.



9





7. Legislative advocacy and legal reforms

- **Description:** Advocate for legal reforms that facilitate the use of administrative data. This could involve reviewing and updating existing laws in line with international best practice, proposing new legislation, or lobbying for Memoranda of Understanding that include specific datasharing agreements (more on this below).
- Objective: Create an enabling legal environment that supports the use of administrative data for statistical purposes.
- Example tools: A high-level event with international participation, explaining the benefits and need for an updated statistical legal framework. Or a proposal or white paper outlining the necessary legal reforms required to enable data-sharing between government agencies for statistical purposes.



- 8. Data sharing agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs)
- **Description:** Develop and promote the use of formal data-sharing agreements and administrative data.
- **Objective:** Establish clear for data sharing, which can help ensure continuity in the collaboration between agencies despite staff changes.
- Example tool: A template for a data-sharing agreement that outlines data security, privacy considerations, and roles of the parties involved, as well as technical details such as variables, frequency, metadata, and mode of data transfer.



- 9. Success stories and case studies
- **Description:** Collect and disseminate success stories and case studies that highlight the positive impact of using administrative data for statistical purposes. These stories can be shared through reports, videos, or presentations.
- Objective: Provide concrete examples that inspire and motivate stakeholders to support the use of administrative data
- Example tool: A booklet/ collection of case studies from different organizations and/ or countries showcasing how administrative data improved statistics and provided a better basis for policymaking.



10. Engaging the media

- Description: Work with the media to raise awareness about the benefits of administrative data. This can include writing op-eds, holding press conferences, or organizing media tours to showcase administrative data projects
- Objective: Reach a broader audience and ensure that the importance of administrative data is widely recognized and understood. As well as being a key platform for sharing the message, by building strong relationships with journalists, the media can become a valuable ally and potential champion for the use of
- Example activity: A press conference highlighting the results of a successful administrative data project, followed by media coverage in newspapers, TV, and online platforms.

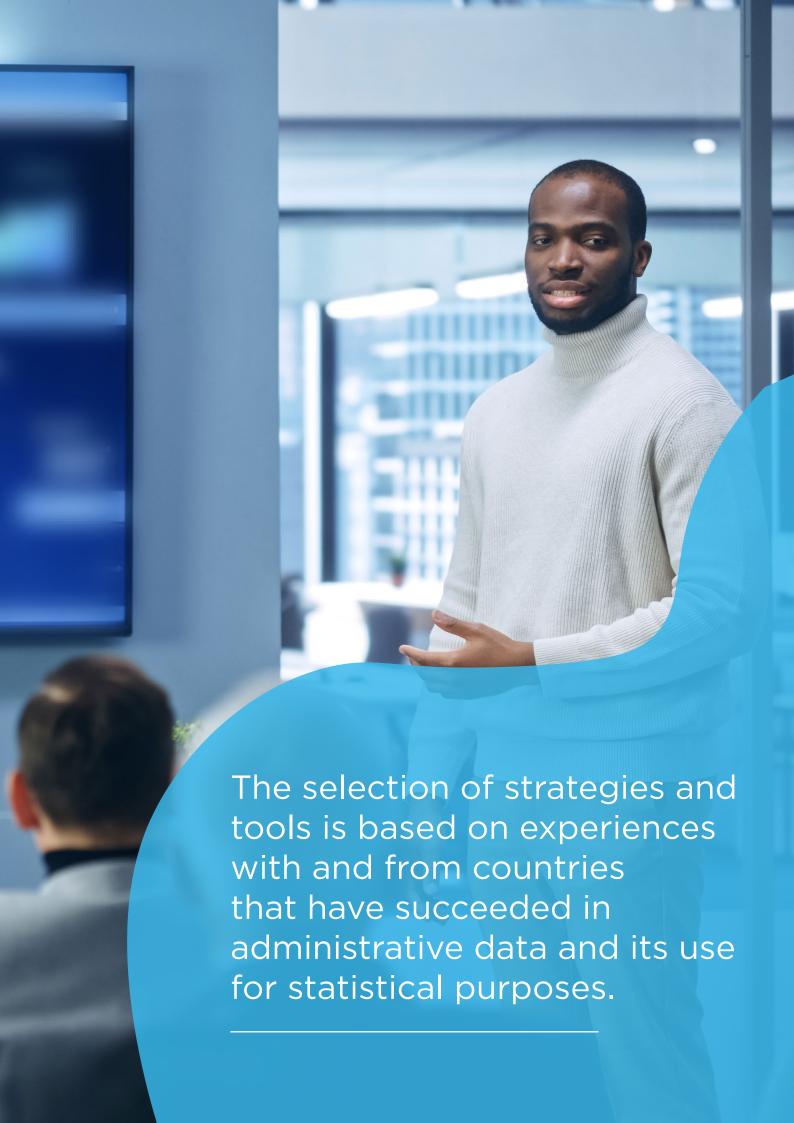


11. Advocacy coalitions and networks

- Description: Establish coalitions or networks of stakeholders who are committed to promoting the use of administrative data. Networks such as the Collaborative on Administrative Data can collaborate on advocacy strategies, share resources, and coordinate actions.
- Objective: Create a unified voice to amplify advocacy efforts and increase the impac of advocacy activities.
- Example activity: A national advocacy coalition consisting of representatives from statistical agencies, data holders, academic institutions, NGOs, and international organizations to promote administrative data use in policymaking.



The Collaborative on Administrative Data is a multi-stakeholder collaborative of countries and regional and international agencies, aimed to strengthen the capacity of countries to use administrative data sources for statistical purposes. The collaborative is a platform to share resources, tools, best practices and experiences, and contributes to raise awareness among all members of national statistical systems about the benefits of sharing and combining administrative sources to enhance the quality, timeliness, coverage and level of disaggregation of statistical data.



8 Navigating challenges with competing legal frameworks

As briefly described in section 6.2, legal frameworks that do not allow for the sharing of administrative data, or that contradict one another, can pose a significant challenge. This is a complex topic, and how to address this from a legal standpoint is beyond the scope of this advocacy toolkit. Instead, you can find links to further materials and support in section 10: Tools and resources.

Where this toolkit is relevant is that establishing strong working relationships with administrative record holders and users is beneficial in almost any regulatory context. Particularities that neither agreements nor laws can resolve are often best addressed through collaborative partnerships.¹¹

However, revising or completely renewing the statistical legal framework of a country often requires a strong advocacy strategy. The example of Kyrgyzstan illustrates how this can be done successfully and also highlights that this could feasibly take two years or longer.



¹²See: (2024) Effective and Ethical Data Sharing at Scale, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. https://www.data4sdgs.org/effective-and-ethical-data-sharing-scale

KYRGYZSTAN

Overhauling the legal framework for statistics in Kyrgyzstan

In 2017, the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (NSC) launched an ambitious project to modernize the existing Law on State Statistics. The aim was to bring this law into full compliance with the UN Fundamental Principles on Official Statistics (UNFPOS) and the UNECE Generic Law on Official Statistics (GLOS) for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, and eventually to enable wide access to administrative microdata for statistical purposes. These efforts involved internal preparations, followed by intensive engagement with Parliament, the Prime Minister's office, the Office of the President, and the business community. These efforts led to the adoption of the new Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Official Statistics in 2020.

Brief summary:

- The timeframe for the modernization of the law from NSC's side was approximately two years.
- · The first six months were used for internal preparations, to discuss and write the first draft of the new law jointly with international consultants and local legal experts. Also, a list was put together of all the stakeholders to be invited to roundtables and workshops to present and discuss the first draft.
- During the next six months, the new law was promoted among key stakeholders through workshops and roundtables. The audience were representatives of national authorities, the business community, civil society, service users, and academia. The NSC had prepared presentations of the new law and its benefits and implications with a focus on communicating in an easily understandable way.
- · A draft was submitted to Parliament. Following this the NSC (driven by the NSC chair) had meetings with high-level officials from the Government and active parliamentarians for the next three months to get them on board and further advocate the draft law within the Government and Parliament. The purpose was to explain the content and usefulness and benefits of the new law.

Lessons:

- · Members of Parliament, the Prime Minister's office, the Office of the President, and the business community were essential to getting the law passed.
- · Businesses ended up being strong supporters of the new law. The increased use of admin data for them means a decrease in response burden which is seen as a very positive effect.
- · Some provisions of the new law, in particular around granting access to administrative data, were linked to other on-going government initiatives on e-government and data exchange among national authorities. This ensured support by the Government.
- The new law was in line with the UN Fundamental Principles on Official Statistics and UNECE Generic Law on Official Statistics. This was seen as a very strong point by the parliamentarians and a significant factor in achieving support and buy-in from different stakeholders.
- The chair of the NSC is a former Member of Parliament (MP) himself. This meant he had a lot of existing connections and a good understanding of MPs' interests and needs. This enabled him to get access, and also to tailor the communication effectively.
- MPs were the biggest champions for the new law after they understood its importance and benefits.

9 Conclusion

In this toolkit, you've learned about the critical aspects of advocating for the enhanced use and sharing of administrative data for statistical purposes. The toolkit outlined the foundational principles of effective advocacy, emphasizing the importance of understanding the unique contexts and needs of different stakeholders. Recognizing that there is no universal approach, it provided a variety of examples and strategies that have proven successful in specific country contexts and thematic areas, serving as inspiration for others to adapt to their own circumstances.

You now understand the necessity of conducting thorough stakeholder analyses. By identifying the specific reasons stakeholders may resist or support data sharing—such as concerns over privacy, data quality, or resource constraints—advocates can tailor their approaches to address these issues directly. This targeted strategy fosters more meaningful and productive engagements, paving the way for successful collaborations.

The toolkit highlighted the importance of timing and context in advocacy efforts. By aligning initiatives with moments when stakeholders are most receptive—such as during policy reforms, public debates on data transparency, or in response to demonstrated successes in other regions—advocates can significantly enhance the effectiveness of their campaigns. Recognizing and preparing for these opportunities ensures that efforts are both timely and impactful.

If you've followed this guide, then you've engaged with your stakeholders via meetings or workshops, published briefs or run pilot projects. So what's next? Reflecting on the efficacy of your advocacy efforts is paramount. Regular monitoring and evaluation allows advocates to assess progress, understand what approaches are working, and identify areas that need adjustment. This iterative process of reflection and adaptation ensures that advocacy efforts remain dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances, ultimately leading to more sustainable and long-term success.

Advocating for the increased use and sharing of administrative data is an ongoing endeavor that requires a nuanced and flexible approach, often over many years. By understanding stakeholder perspectives, conducting thorough barrier analyses, identifying strategic entry points, and committing to continuous reflection and adaptation, advocates can effectively promote access to and the integration of administrative data into statistical systems. This, in turn, supports more informed policymaking and contributes to the overall advancement of statistical capacities globally.



10 List of resources and tools

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Links specifically regarding statistical legal frameworks and MoUs:

CAD Legal framework assessment tool:

https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/admin-data/tools/ legalAssessmentTool

CAD MoU guidance and template:

https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/admin-data/tools/mou

UNECE Guidance on Modernizing Statistical Legislation:

https://unece.org/DAM/stats/publications/2018/ECECESSTAT20183.pdf

UNSD Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems, chapter 3.4: https://unstats.un.org/capacity-development/handbook/html/topic. htm#t=Handbook%2FC3%2FLegislative_frameworks.htm

Templates and documents for the Advocacy Toolkit available online:

https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/admin-data/tools

- 1. High-level event concept note and agenda template: A ready-to-use template for organizing stakeholder engagement workshops, including session topics, objectives, and participant lists.
- 2. Stakeholder engagement tools: A template for mapping stakeholders and key actors as well as an agenda for a stakeholder engagement workshop.

Other free and accessible templates and tools:

- 3. Capacity-building curriculum: A sample curriculum for training sessions on the technical aspects of using administrative data for statistical purposes. You can find more information and inspiration at: https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/admindata/training
- 4. Data-sharing agreement template: A legal document template that can be adapted for creating formal data-sharing agreements between agencies. You can find more information at: https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/capacity-development/admin-data/tools/mou
- 5. Legal framework assessment tool: A questionnaire that can help determine how well your legal framework is adapted to allow for the sharing of administrative data, and which areas could need improvement. You can find the tool at: https://unstats.un.org/UNSDWebsite/ capacity-development/admin-data/tools/legalAssessmentTool

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The Complete Guide to Advocacy Marketing - Pragmatic Institute. Available at: https://www.pragmaticinstitute.com/product/framework/advocacy/









