



Regional Webinar on

“The use of administrative data sources for official statistics production in Arab countries”

15 January 2025

14:00 Beirut Time (New York time 7:00– UTC -5)

I. Background

The availability of timely, high-quality and cost-effective statistics and data is key to supporting evidence-based policymaking and planning for decision makers. The increasing demand for such data has emphasized the importance of leveraging administrative records for statistical purposes. Utilizing administrative registers is pivotal for modernizing statistical systems, producing official statistics in all areas and enhancing data quality, which will ultimately alleviate the significant burden on the government budget and efforts in conducting censuses and related surveys. In countries with high-quality registration systems and good collaboration between related agencies, as much as 90 % of official statistics is produced based on administrative data sources. These records or registries also play a crucial role in filling the data gaps and monitoring progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and implementing the 2030 Agenda.

At the global level, countries have developed their administrative records, especially the population registry and the civil registry, to keep pace with technology in terms of reporting, registration, data updating and electronic linkage between civil registration centers on the one hand and the various administrative registers on the other hand (health, education, courts, labor, taxes, border points, addresses, housing and facilities, water, electricity, telephone services, etc.).

At the regional level, there is a disparity in the use of administrative data for statistical purposes due to reasons related to the completeness and quality of administrative registries, and crises and instability. Several Arab countries have made notable progress in using administrative records for statistical purposes. During the 2020 census round, GCC countries led efforts by fully utilizing administrative registers (e.g., Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Abu Dhabi) or adopting mixed methodologies, combining registers, self-enumeration, and fieldwork (e.g., Qatar and Saudi Arabia). However, many countries still face challenges, including inconsistencies in registries, data quality issues, limited integration, and privacy concerns. Addressing these challenges through robust frameworks and regional collaboration is essential for modernizing statistical systems and enabling evidence-based policymaking in the region.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has enhanced the capacity of Arab countries in civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS), population and housing censuses, record linkages, business registers, and using administrative data for SDG indicators. It supports modernizing statistical systems through workshops, expert meetings, and advisory missions.

The Collaborative on Administrative Data (CAD) led by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) was established in 2020 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 to policy and decision makers to monitor progress and



implement the 2030 Agenda. The collaborative brings together stakeholders from countries and regional and international agencies and is a space for learning and sharing to strengthen the capacity of countries to produce and use administrative data sources for statistical purposes.

In this context, ESCWA's Statistics, Information Society and Technology cluster and UNSD under the umbrella of CAD, are jointly organizing, a Regional Webinar on "The use of administrative data sources for official statistics production in Arab countries" on Wednesday, January 15th, 2025.

II. Objectives

The webinar aims to advance the adoption of administrative records for statistical purposes in the Arab region by enhancing the capacity of its national statistical offices in utilizing administrative data and fostering regional collaboration and dialogue. Bringing together regional and global perspectives through the presentation of case studies and sharing of best practices and lessons learnt, participants will gain insights into integrating administrative data into statistical processes and into overcoming related challenges.

Specifically, the webinar's objectives are to:

1. Highlight the role of administrative records in enhancing data quality, cost-effectiveness, and timeliness;
2. Address key challenges, including data quality and integration, capacity gaps, and privacy concerns;
3. Foster global and regional collaboration and the exchange of best practices.

III. Expected outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of the advantages of using administrative sources for statistical purposes;
- Identification of key challenges and practical solutions for their integration;
- Strengthened regional collaboration and sharing of best practices.

IV. Participants

- Representatives from national statistical offices;
- Representatives from ESCWA, UNSD, CAD, GPSDD and UN WOMEN.

V. Language

The webinar will be in Arabic and English. Simultaneous interpretation will be made available.



VI. Provisional agenda

Time (Beirut)	Topic	Speaker
14:00-14:10	Opening remarks and introduction	ESCWA & UNSD
14:10-14:25	Quality of administrative data (15 min including Q&A)	UN WOMEN
14:25-15:10	Session 1: Insights from inside and outside the ESCWA Region 1. Arab countries' experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sultanate of Oman's experience in the use of administrative data for statistics (15 min) - Jordan's experience in the use of administrative data for statistics (15 min) 2. Norway's experience in shifting from a statistical system reliant on traditional census and surveys to a system where around 90 percent of official statistics are based on different administrative sources (15 min)	National Center for Statistics and Information, Oman Department of Statistics, Jordan Statistics Norway
15:10-15:25	Q&A	
15:25-15:45	Session 2: Accessing administrative data 1. Advocacy and outreach (10 min) 2. Data sharing: interoperability and formalization (10 min)	GPSDD UNSD
15:45-15:55	Q&A	
15:55-16:00	Closing remarks	ESCWA & UNSD