



Annual Report 2013-14

The National Statistical Commission have the privilege to present their Eighth Report as required under the Government of India Resolution dated 1st June 2005 published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-III Section-4.

This Report covers the period from April 01, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

**National Statistical Commission
New Delhi**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The Commission also wishes to place on record the active cooperation and support, it has received from senior officials, in particular Dr. T.C. A. Anant, the CSI, Shri A.K. Mehra, the DG (NSSO) and Smt. S. Jeyalakshmi, the DG (CSO). The Commission expresses its deep appreciation of the role played by Shri M.V.S. Ranganadham, Dy. Director General and of the supporting staff in the Commission's secretariat, without whose untiring efforts the work of the Commission would not have been possible.

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List of Abbreviations

ADG	Additional Director General
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
AITOT	All India Training of Trainers
APC	Agriculture Production Commissioner
AS	Agriculture Statistics
ASI	Annual Survey of Industries
ATR	Action Taken Report
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy
CACP	Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices
CAP	Coordination and Publications Division
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing
CBEC	Central Board of Excise & Customs
CCC	Central Coordination Committee
CD	Compact Disk
CES	Consumer Expenditure Survey
CMIE	Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy
CPC	Common Product Classification
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPI (AL/ RL)	Consumer Price Index for Agriculture Labourers/ Rural Labourers
CPI-IW	Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers
CSI	Chief Statistician of India
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAC	Department of Agriculture and Cooperation
DES	Directorate of Economics and Statistics
DG	Director General
DGET	Directorate General of Employment & Training
DLHS	District Level Health Survey
DO	Demi Official
DOHFW	Department of Health & Family Welfare
DOS	Disk Operating System
DOSJE	Department of Social Justice and Empowerment
DPD	Data Processing Division
EARAS	Establishment of an Agency for Reporting Agricultural Statistics
EFC	Expenditure Finance Committee
ESD	Economic Statistics Division
EUS	Employment Unemployment Survey
FA	Field Agency
FARMAP	Farm Analysis Package
FOD	Field Operations Division
FSU	First Stage Unit
GCES	General Crop Estimation Surveys
HAG	Higher Administrative Grade

HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IASRI	Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICP	International Comparison Programme
ICS	Improvement of Crop Statistics
ICSSR	Indian Council of Social Science Research
ICT	Information & Communications Technology
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIP	Index of Industrial Production
IIPS	International Institute for Population Sciences
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPV	Internet Protocol version
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISI	Indian Statistical Institute
ISS	Indian Statistical Service
IT	Information Technology
ITC-HS	Indian Trade Clarification based on Harmonized System
LUS	Land Use Statistics
MCA	Ministry of Corporate Affairs
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOSPI	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
MPCE	Monthly Per Capita Expenditure
NAD	National Accounts Division
NCO	National Classification of Occupations
NCRB	National Crime Records Bureau
NCSC	National Crop Statistics Centre
NDSAP	National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRI	Non-Resident Indian
NSC	National Statistical Commission
NSDI	National Spatial Data Infrastructure
NSS	National Sample Surveys
NSSO	National Sample Survey Office
NSSTA	National Statistical Systems Training Academy
OM	Office Memorandum
ORGI	Office of the Registrar General of India
PCL	Prices and Cost of Living
PFCE	Private Final Consumption Expenditure
PSUT	Physical Supply Use Table
RBI	Reserve Bank of India
RFD	Results Framework Document
RPC	Rural Price Collection
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SASA	State Agricultural Statistics Authority
SDP	State Domestic Product
SDRD	Survey Design and Research Division

SEBI	Securities and Exchange Board of India
SNA	System of National Accounts
SOSU	Sampling and Official Statistics Unit
SPCL	Statistics of Prices and Cost of Living
SRS	Sample Registration System
SSD	Social Statistics Division
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TOR	Terms of Reference
TRS	Timely Reporting Scheme
UGC	University Grants Commission
UT	Union territory
WCFI&ES	Working Class Family Income & Expenditure Survey
XBRL	eXtensible Business Reporting Language

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. The National Statistical Commission (NSC), consisting of a part-time Chairperson, four part-time Members and an ex-officio Member, has been functioning since 12th July 2006. The Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is the Secretary to the Commission.

(Paras – 1.1 to 1.4)

2. The NSC has a 13-point mandate. In addition, the functions of the Governing Council of the NSSO were entrusted to the NSC. The NSC has also been assigned oversight functions on the statistical surveys conducted by the line Ministries at the Centre.

(Paras – 1.5 to 1.7)

3. The Commission held ten meetings during the financial year 2013-14. In all the ten meetings, the Commission deliberated on the issues referred to it and on issues covered under its mandate.

(Paras – 1.8 to 1.9)

4. The NSC is mandated to constitute professional committees to assist it on various technical issues. Accordingly, the NSC constituted a number of committees and worked through them.

(Paras – 1.10 to 1.19)

5. The NSC received two references on statistical issues. The first one relates to the RBI's proposal for inclusion of questions on Inflation Expectations & Consumer Confidence in the NSS and this was not agreed to. The second one is about conducting Business Victimization survey on pilot basis. NSC desired that the NCRB and the Ministry of Home Affairs may be consulted first, as they are the main users of the data.

(Paras – 1.20 to 1.24)

6. The NSC held user consultation on two occasions during the period under report. The first one was a brain storming session on NSSO matters and the second one was an interaction with academicians, experts and students at Mumbai.

(Paras – 1.25 to 1.29)

Statistical Policy and Institutional Framework

7. The NSC recommended a National Policy on Official Statistics, which includes provisions to adopt the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as guiding principles and to articulate a framework consistent with the Principles. The Policy includes provisions for submission of

Annual Reports by the CSI and for review of the Policy once in five years on the basis of the reports of the CSI.

(Paras – 2.2 to 2.6)

8. The NSC noticed that the statistical coordination work in the MOSPI has been suffering mainly because of lack of clarity on what are the items of work that fall under this category and on distribution of work among the Offices/ Divisions in the MOSPI. The NSC recommended that distribution of coordination work among its different Offices/ Divisions may be worked out and notified by the MOSPI.

(Paras – 2.7 to 2.12)

9. Apart from the NSSO in the MOSPI, other line Ministries also conduct surveys from time to time. The NSC desired that a 'Manual on Sample surveys' may be brought out by the MOSPI to provide more detailed guidance to the line Ministries.

(Paras – 2.13 to 2.15)

10. The Committee, constituted under the Chairmanship of the ADG, CSO (CAP), may prepare Ministry/ Department-wise list of pending recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission and submit the same to the NSC.

(Paras – 2.16 to 2.20)

11. The NSSO shall bring out an overview report covering key results in the subjects of inquiry in each NSS round. Responsibility for preparation of other reports will be finalized by the NSC. This process may be introduced from the 71st NSS round onwards.

(Paras – 2.21 to 2.29)

12. All the filled-in listing schedules of the NSS Rounds may be weeded out, immediately after their retention in electronic mode. Detailed inquiry schedules may be weeded out after two years after the placing of unit level data in the public domain.

(Paras – 2.30 to 2.36)

13. The NSC identified three subject areas, namely, Educational statistics, Labour Statistics and Fiscal statistics, in which the Planning Commission and the NSC need to put in their concerted efforts to improve the respective statistical systems. Three Committees, each chaired by a Member of the Planning Commission and co-chaired by a Member of the NSC, would be constituted on the subject areas in due course.

(Paras – 2.37 to 2.42)

Review of statistical activities of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI)

14. The recommendations, on improving social sector statistics, economic statistics, statistical training, national accounts statistics, price statistics, and the activities of the Computer Centre and the CSO (CAP), may be considered by the MOSPI for compliance.

(Paras – 3.3 to 3.28)

15. The Agricultural Statistics Wing has been created in the NSSO (FOD) to bring out qualitative improvement in Crop Statistics in India and to evaluate the TRS/ EARAS and GCES schemes, under the ICS Scheme. No visible change has been noticed in the type and extent of infirmities, and that the Village officials' cooperation and involvement in the agricultural statistical work reduced significantly over the years. In view of this, the NSC recommended that the operation of the ICS scheme may be taken up periodically, say once in five years. The NSSO may prepare and place before the NSC, proposals for diversification of the work of the AS Wing during the remaining period to cater to other requirements.

(Paras – 3.30 to 3.37)

16. The 71st NSS Round (Survey period: January 2014 – June 2014) would be devoted to the subject of Social Consumption comprising 'Health and Morbidity' and 'Education'. The methodology formulated by the 71st NSS Round Working Group has been approved by the NSC.

(Paras – 3.41 to 3.48)

17. The 72nd NSS Round will develop schedules to cover tourism, household consumption of durable goods/ services and an evaluation of the methodology for shorter schedules. The Working Group constituted will inter alia formulate the methodology. The Working Group will also give a report to the NSC on the feasibility of preparing a Master Sample for use in future NSS rounds. Member-Secretary of the Working Group shall submit monthly progress reports to the NSC covering various aspects. With regard to the subject coverage for the 73rd NSS round, conducting a follow-up survey of the VI Economic Census could be considered as one of the options. The NSSO may submit a detailed note on the coverage, conceptual framework and other requirements for the survey.

(Paras – 3.49 to 3.55)

Review of some statistical activities of a few other Central Ministries

18. The recommendations, on occupational wage survey, creation of a web portal for submission of returns, compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, revision of indices, revision of the NCO, census of Government employees, etc., and submission of complete information, may

be considered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment for compliance. The proposal of the Labour Bureau to carry out Working Class Family Income & Expenditure Survey, as a part of the revision exercise of the CPI-IW has been concurred with.

(Paras – 4.2 to 4.8)

19. The NSSO reported to the NSC that the data presently being collected by them under the Rural Price Collection (RPC) scheme is being used for compilation of the CPI (AL/ RL) with base year 1986-87 by the Labour Bureau and that the index requires revision of base as the frame has become outdated. Appropriate steps should be taken expeditiously to revise the base in a time bound manner and to stop the present data collection under the RPC scheme. The users of the present CPI (AL/ RL), especially the States who use the index in formulating minimum wage policies, need to be given advance notice on the stoppage of the existing index.

(Paras – 4.9 to 4.12)

20. The Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) has been regularly conducting a demographic survey called 'Sample Registration System (SRS)'. The NSC's recommendations, on compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy and strengthening and evaluating the civil registration system through the SRS, may be considered by the ORGI for compliance.

(Paras – 4.13 to 4.16)

21. Agricultural statistics received from the DAC are used by the CSO in compilation of national accounts. The statistics flow to the DAC from the States. The NSC's recommendations, on strengthening coordination, improving quality of area and production estimates, enhancing coverage, compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, and horticulture statistics, may be considered by the DAC for compliance.

(Paras – 4.17 to 4.24)

22. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Department of Health and Family Welfare (DOHFW) is an important data source extensively used for evidence-based decision making by policy makers at the Centre and in the States/ UTs. The fourth NFHS (NFHS-4) is the fourth survey in the series of surveys conducted by the DOHFW. The DOHFW may, in respect of the NFHS-4, take note of the recommendations of the NSC on controlling and measuring non-sampling errors, on ensuring comparability with NHHS-3 data and on dissemination of data.

(Paras – 4.25 to 4.38)

23. The NSSO and the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DOSJE) have proposed to conduct an advanced pilot survey on drug abuse on the basis of methodology developed by a Committee. The NSC noted some shortcomings in the methodology for the pilot survey (conducted and proposed). The NSC recommended that a Working Group may be constituted for looking into the methodology and sampling design afresh and for

overseeing the conduct of a fresh pilot survey to recommend suitable methodology for a nation-wide survey on drug abuse.

(Paras – 4.39 to 4.52)

24. The recommendations, on improving corporate sector and balance of payments statistics, may be considered by the RBI, the SEBI and the MOSPI, for compliance.

(Paras – 4.53 to 4.55)

New Statistical Initiatives

25. The Ministry of Labour and Employment made a proposal for conducting a survey on contract labour through the NSSO. At the instance of the NSC, the MOSPI constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Papola to inter alia formulate methodology for the survey. The Papola Committee's report was considered by the NSC. The NSC felt that definitional clarity on 'contract labour' is very much required and that there could be alternative approaches in measuring contract labour. The NSSO may experiment different approaches in the field and come out with the findings.

(Paras – 5.2 to 5.5)

26. The enhanced scope of measuring work, employment and unemployment through a set of existing and new indicators recommended in the 19th ICLS has been noted by the NSC. In order to deliberate on their implications, the NSSO may prepare a consultation paper and organize a Workshop to take the views of all stake-holders and users of data.

(Paras – 5.6 to 5.14)

27. The Expert Group on Green National Accounting submitted its report in March, 2013. The CSO (SSD) identified steps for implementation of the recommendations in the report. The NSC noted the implementation plan and recommended inter alia that the work in respect of First Accumulation Accounts could be coordinated with the concerned Ministries/ Departments and carried out in the CSO (SSD), that the CSO (SSD) may prepare a detailed statement on resource requirements (stage-wise) and on other measures for implementation and submit it for the consideration of the NSC.

(Paras – 5.15 to 5.17)

28. The NSC should have an independent website in order that its arms length relationship with the Government is not only maintained, but also seen to have been maintained. With the objective of providing a separate website for the NSC, the MOSPI got the Domain name 'statcom.gov.in' registered. The MOSPI may take steps for outsourcing the work of web-designing, hosting and future maintenance of the newly registered NSC website through tendering process.

(Paras – 5.18 to 5.20)

Chapter-1

Introduction

Setting up of the National Statistical Commission (NSC)

1.1 A Commission set up by the Government in January 2000 under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan reviewed the statistical system in the country and submitted its report to the Government in August 2001. One of the key recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission was to establish a permanent National Commission on Statistics to serve as a nodal and empowered body for all core statistical activities of the country, evolve, monitor and enforce statistical priorities and standards and to ensure statistical co-ordination among the different agencies involved.

1.2 In line with the recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission, the Government of India resolved the setting up of a permanent National Statistical Commission (NSC); vide Notification No. 85 dated 1st June 2005 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-III-Section-4. The Commission consists of a part-time Chairperson, four part-time Members and Secretary, Planning Commission as the *ex-officio* Member. The Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is the Secretary to the Commission. He has a dual role, as he is also the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI). The service conditions of the part-time Chairperson/ Members of the NSC and of the CSI have been laid down in the Government of India Notification No. 465 dated 10th May 2006 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II-Section-3-Sub-Section (ii). In order to support the CSI in providing assistance to the Commission in the discharge of its functions, a small secretariat comprising a Deputy Director General and a Director with other support staff has been created.

Composition of the Commission

1.3 In accordance with the aforementioned Notifications, the NSC has been constituted from time to time and has been functioning since 12th July 2006. The part-time Chairperson/ Members of the NSC have a maximum tenure of three years. The names of the persons holding part-time positions in the NSC during the period under report are given below.

Dr. Pronab Sen	–	Chairperson since 25-2-2013
Prof. Biswanath Goldar	–	Member since 20-6-2013
Prof. S. Mahendra Dev	–	Member since 5-7-2013
Prof. Rahul Mukerjee	–	Member since 20-7-2013
Shri Ramesh Kolli	–	Member since 8-7-2013

1.4 Dr. T.C.A. Anant was the CSI and Secretary to the Commission during the entire period under report.

Mandate of the Commission

1.5 Under the aforesaid Government of India Resolution dated 1st June, 2005, the NSC is mandated, -

- (a) to identify the core statistics, which are of national importance and are critical to the development of the economy;
- (b) to constitute professional committees or working groups to assist the Commission on various technical issues;
- (c) to evolve national policies and priorities relating to the statistical system;
- (d) to evolve standard statistical concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies in different areas in statistics and lay down national quality standards on core statistics;
- (e) to evolve national strategies for the collection, tabulation and dissemination of core statistics, including the release calendar for various data sets;
- (f) to evolve national strategies for human resource development on official statistics including information technology and communication needs of the statistical system;
- (g) to evolve measures for improving public trust in official statistics;
- (h) to evolve measures for effective co-ordination with State Governments and Union Territory Administrations on statistical activities including strengthening of existing institutional mechanisms;
- (i) to exercise statistical co-ordination between Ministries, Departments and other agencies of the Central Government;
- (j) to exercise statistical audit over the statistical activities to ensure quality and integrity of the statistical products;
- (k) to recommend to the Central Government, or any State Government, as the case may be, measures to effectively implement the standards, strategies and other measures evolved under clauses (c) to (h);
- (l) to advise the Government on the requirement of legislative measures on statistical matters including the statute for the National Statistical Commission; and
- (m) to monitor and review the functioning of the statistical system in the light of the laid down policies, standards and methodologies and recommend measures for enhanced performance.

1.6 In addition to the aforesaid mandate, all functions of the Governing Council of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) were entrusted to the NSC with effect from 30th August 2006, in accordance with a decision of the Union Cabinet in its meeting dated 10th August 2006. The functions mainly

relate to conducting National Sample Surveys (NSS) on various socio-economic subjects through the NSSO and the State DESs in the form of rounds, each round normally being of one year duration coinciding with the agricultural year. From the 68th NSS Round onwards, the NSC has constituted Working Groups on subjects decided by it, in a manner that they will be able to assist it in overseeing the entire gamut of survey activities for each round.

1.7 The NSC has also been assigned certain oversight functions in respect of the statistical surveys conducted by line Ministries at the Centre. For this purpose, the MOSPI notified Guidelines, vide Notification No. 232 dated 5th December 2011 published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-III Section-4, requiring line Ministries at the Centre to obtain concurrence of the NSC for conducting any statistical survey. Apart from concurrence, the Guidelines provide for recommending of names of experts by the NSC for constituting Committees to formulate methodology etc., for conducting various surveys with the NSC's oversight and for finalizing draft report of surveys' results in consultation with the NSC.

Working of the Commission

1.8 The Commission held ten meetings during the financial year 2013-14. The dates of the meetings are indicated below.

Meeting No./ Subject	Dates of the Meeting	Place where held
58	20 th July, 2013	New Delhi
59	19 th to 20 th August, 2013	New Delhi
On drug abuse survey	6 th September, 2013	New Delhi
On 4 th National Family Health Survey	13 th September, 2013	New Delhi
60	18 th to 19 th September, 2013	New Delhi
61	17 th to 18 th October, 2013	New Delhi
62	20 th to 21 st November, 2013	New Delhi
63	6 th to 7 th January, 2014	New Delhi
64	17 th to 18 th February, 2014	New Delhi
65	12 th to 13 th March 2014	Mumbai

1.9 In all the ten meetings, the Commission deliberated on the issues referred to it and on issues covered under its mandate. The Commission also had consultations and detailed discussions, with the concerned subject matter specialists, on improvements to the statistical system in the respective fields. Minutes of each meeting of the Commission were recorded and circulated to all the Members and the same were confirmed in the subsequent meeting after discussion. The recommendations of the Commission, as and when made, were forwarded to the concerned Government Departments for appropriate action.

Constitution of professional Committees

1.10 The NSC is mandated to constitute professional committees to assist it on various technical issues. Accordingly, the NSC constituted a number of committees and worked through them. Details are given in the following paragraphs.

1.11 The Commission constituted nine professional committees in July 2010, in order to assist it in different subject areas. Of these, seven committees have submitted their reports and on the basis of the reports of six committees, the NSC had given its recommendations in its Annual Report for the year 2011-12. On the report of the seventh committee on social sector statistics, the NSC recommended, in its 45th meeting, that the report should be considered as a first draft and further details need to be looked into, in respect of availability, quality of data and data gaps and that the CSO may constitute a Group to complete the work of the committee. Subsequently, the matter was reviewed in the 54th NSC meeting, in which it was decided that theme papers may be invited from a few experts before constituting the Group. Accordingly, the CSO (SSD) has initiated the process of commissioning theme papers and the progress thereof is being reviewed from time to time by the NSC.

1.12 The details of the remaining two committees are given below.

- Committee on Statistics of Agriculture and allied sectors under the Chairmanship of Prof. Y.K. Alagh
- Committee on administrative statistics of corporate sector and allied fields under the Chairmanship of Dr. R. B. Barman

1.13 The Alagh Committee submitted its report to the NSC on 5th November, 2013. The report was uploaded in the MOSPI website inviting comments and suggestions. It was also sent to the Government Departments/ Organisations dealing with the subject matter, to some of the Agriculture universities, and to a few experts, requesting them to give their views on the report. The NSC noted the recommendations of the Committee and the views received thereof. It was recognized that the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Committee are very exhaustive, that the Committee, although has not gone into great detail in addressing the entire TOR, has flagged issues that require attention and that no single agency could be made responsible for implementing the recommendations. The NSC, therefore, decided to consider the recommendations for appropriate action in a phased manner in due course.

1.14 With regard to the Barman Committee, the status of its working was reviewed by the NSC. It was reported to the NSC that a Sub-Committee on private corporate sector under the Chairmanship of Prof. B. N. Goldar has been constituted by the CSO (NAD) to inter alia look into the MCA-21 database of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs and report its findings. The Goldar Committee is expected to submit its report in about six months time.

In view of this, the NSC decided to consider the requirement of continuing with the Barman Committee, only after receiving the Goldar Committee report.

1.15 The NSC reviewed the working of the following Standing Committees constituted under the Chairmanship of a Member of the NSC, for the purpose of nominating a Member to chair each of the Committees, as the tenure of the Members chairing the committees expired.

- Standing Committee on monitoring implementation of Rangarajan Commission recommendations and the NSC recommendations
- Standing Technical Committee on NSSO matters

1.16 With regard to implementation of the pending recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission, a Committee has been constituted by the MOSPI to scrutinize the responses received. Details are given in chapter-2. In view of this, the NSC did not nominate a Member to chair the first Standing Committee.

1.17 With regard to the Standing Technical Committee on NSSO matters, the status note submitted by the NSSO has been noted by the NSC. The need for continuing with this Committee was considered in the context of the subject coverage for the 72nd NSS Round. The non-official members of the Standing Technical Committee have been included in the Core Group within the 72nd NSS Round Working Group. It was also provided in the TOR of the Working Group that the work assigned to the Standing Technical Committee shall continue to be carried out by the Core Group of the 72nd Working Group within the mandate. It was also laid down that the tenure of the Chairman and Members of the Standing Technical Committee on NSSO matters will be co-terminus with that of the 72nd Round Working Group in respect of the matters currently under the consideration of the Committee and the Committee shall submit a report to the NSC on those matters. The Working Group was constituted on these lines on 18th September, 2013. In view of this, the NSC decided that the Standing Technical Committee on NSSO matters shall cease to have separate existence.

1.18 There are a few other committees, which were constituted at the instance of the NSC. Details are given below.

- (1) Standing Committee on Industrial Statistics under the Chairmanship of Prof. Biswanath Goldar
- (2) Advisory Committee on National Accounts under the Chairmanship of Prof. K. Sundaram
- (3) Committee to evaluate MOSPI plan scheme 'Capacity Development' under the Chairmanship of Prof. Atul Sarma
- (4) Working Group for formulating methodology to measure contract labour under the Chairmanship of Prof. T.S. Papola

- (5) Committee to formulate methodology for a pilot study for direct estimation of savings and investment through household survey under the Chairmanship of Shri Suman K. Bery, former Member, NSC (presently under the Chairmanship of Dr. S.L. Shetty)
- (6) Working Group to look into the coverage of occupation category for collection of wage rate data under the Chairmanship of Dr. T.S. Papola
- (7) Expert Group to look into compilation of seasonally adjusted series under the Chairmanship of Dr. Dilip Nachane
- (8) Working Group on Time-use surveys under the Chairmanship of Prof. S. R. Hashim

1.19 The aforementioned Committees at s. nos. (3) to (8) have a specified tenure, whereas the remaining two are of continuous nature. The Committees mentioned at s. nos. (1) and (2) are Standing Committees and their functioning is of a continuous feature. The reports of the Committees specified at s. nos. (5 to (8) are awaited. The reports of the Committee mentioned at s. no. (3) and (4) have been received and the recommendations thereof, of the NSC, are given in chapters 3 and 5 respectively, in this report.

References received by the Commission

1.20 The NSC received the following references on two statistical issues:

- Inclusion of questions on Inflation Expectations & Consumer Confidence in the 72nd NSS Round
- Conducting Business Victimization Survey on pilot basis in India

1.21 With regard to the reference on Inflation Expectations & Consumer Confidence, the RBI made a request to the NSSO to add a few questions relating to Inflation Expectations & Consumer Confidence in one of its regular surveys to be carried out in non-urban areas, as a one-time exercise. This request was placed by the NSSO before the Working Group on NSS 72nd round in its second meeting. The Working Group desired that the proposal may be placed before the NSC for their decision on whether such opinion oriented questionnaire on expectations of people can at all be accommodated in the present NSS 72nd round survey. The proposal was considered by the NSC in its 65th meeting. The NSC felt that such surveys on perceptions of people would not fit in into the NSS rounds and hence, the proposal was not agreed to. This was communicated to the RBI.

1.22 On the proposal to conduct Business Victimization Survey on pilot basis in India, the CSO (SSD) reported to the NSC the related international developments.

1.23 Victimization affecting business sector was one of the major topics of discussion in an Expert Group Meeting convened by the United Nations Statistics Division in February, 2013. During the discussions in the Expert Group Meeting and subsequent follow-ups, the United Nations Office on

Drugs and Crime has conveyed its willingness to extend technical support should India take up the Business Victimization Survey in India.

1.24 A presentation was made by the officers of the CSO (SSD) in the 59th NSC meeting. It was noted that similar issues were raised by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) earlier. The NSC desired that the Bureau and the Ministry of Home Affairs may be consulted first, as they are the principal users of the data, and the SSD may revert back to the NSC on this issue along with the outcome of the consultations.

User consultation by the Commission

1.25 The NSC held user consultation on two occasions during the period under report. The first one was a brain storming session on NSSO matters and the second one was an interaction with academicians, experts and students at Mumbai. Details are given in the following paragraphs.

1.26 It is customary to decide on the subjects of coverage in the NSS Rounds for a full cycle of ten years. The subjects for the next cycle need to be decided by the NSC. Compared to the past, the subjects may be different as it would be necessary to take care of the increasing demands as well as weaknesses in the existing system, keeping in view the resources available to the NSSO. An Expert Group may be needed to be constituted by the NSC to advice on the manner in which the NSSO activities could be streamlined in order to meet the growing demands. Before constituting the Group, it was felt that a brainstorming session may be convened to elicit opinion of experts within and outside the Government.

1.27 Accordingly, a brain storming session on functioning of NSSO duly considering its engagement with activities in hand in its various Divisions, resources for future activities/ surveys in offing and need for re-alignment and re-orientation of working of the NSSO in order to elicit views/ suggestions on making better and optimal use of resources was held at the Mahalanobis Bhavan, Kolkata during 2-3 August 2013.

1.28 There were wide ranging discussions and suggestions emerging therefrom. Highlights of some of the important suggestions that emerged in the brain storming session have been reported by the NSSO. The report submitted by the NSSO has been noted by the NSC. It was felt that some more sessions need to be conducted in future by the NSSO in a more formatted manner, to elicit opinion on specific issues.

1.29 The NSC interacted with some of the local academicians, students and users of data at Mumbai during its 65th meeting. A number of issues were raised by the participants, which were clarified by the Members of the NSC, the CSI and other officers. The issues deliberated in the session included distribution of capital assets and their accrual to households, rental values of households, usage pattern of agricultural commodities, non-availability of

socio-economic features of households in cost of cultivation data, providing access to the data in the listing schedules of the NSS, covering food security related aspects in the NSS Consumer Expenditure Surveys, lack of panel data on migrant workers in household surveys, deviations in conceptual framework in successive NSS rounds on the same subject in a few cases, non-availability of data on origin in exports data, feasibility of covering exports/ trade information in ASI, data integration in respect of information collected from companies by different official agencies, feasibility of providing identification of exporting companies in Daily Trade Returns, feasibility of providing access to users on the worksheets (information on quantities on Input-Output tables and Supply-Use tables) prepared by the NAD, and collecting data on trade in value-added (service element). The NSC noted the issues to address them in an appropriate manner, in due course.

About this report

1.30 The recommendations of the NSC on statistical policy and institutional framework are given in Chapter-2. Reviews and comments of the NSC on the statistical activities of the MOSPI are covered in Chapter-3 and those of few other Central Ministries and organizations are provided in Chapter-4. Chapter-5 gives an account of the new statistical initiatives.

Expenditure of the Commission

1.31 The annual expenditure on account of the establishment of the National Statistical Commission including salary and wages, domestic travel, office expenses, hiring of accommodation, professional services, administrative services and requirements for day to day administration of the Commission is being met from a demand under the MOSPI voted by the Parliament.

1.32 The Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, vide their OM No. 7(2)/E.Coord/2013 dated 18th September, 2013, issued economy measures to promote fiscal discipline without restricting the operational efficiency. The measures include a mandatory 10% cut in non-plan expenditure, and requirement of all officers, except those in the apex scale, to travel in economy class while on tour. The expenditure of the NSC is met from non-plan funds and hence, the aforementioned economy measures were applied to the NSC as well.

1.33 In order to give effect to the economy measures issued by the Ministry of Finance, the part-time Chairperson, the part-time Members of the NSC and the CSI have volunteered to travel by economy class while on domestic official tours. The NSC also decided that the travel entitlement of all the non-official members of the Committees and Working Groups constituted by the NSC, whose travel costs are reimbursed from the NSC budget, would be limited to economy class.

1.34 In the budget estimates for the year 2013-14, a provision of Rs. 95.70 lakhs was made for the NSC under the non-plan budget of the MOSPI. It was reported that an expenditure of Rs. 65.81 lakhs was incurred during 2013-14.

Chapter-2

Statistical Policy and Institutional Framework

2.1 The NSC is mandated inter-alia to evolve national policies and priorities relating to the statistical system. In this chapter, the NSC reviewed the earlier recommended National Policy on Official Statistics and recommended a revised version. Besides, the NSC has also given its well considered opinion on a few wide ranging issues, namely, statistical coordination by the MOSPI, manual on sample surveys, institutional mechanism for implementation of NSC recommendations, process for releasing NSS reports and weeding of filled-in paper schedules of the NSS rounds. Details are given in the following paragraphs.

National Policy on Official Statistics

2.2 In its Annual Report for the year 2010-11, the NSC recommended a draft National Policy on Official Statistics. The Policy includes a Code of Statistical Practice and Guidelines for Outsourcing of Statistical Activities. The Policy aims to integrate the statistical system, provide timely, credible and comprehensive statistical services to policy makers and users within and outside the Government, in a manner consistent with the United Nations Fundamental Principles on Official Statistics. In the context of strengthening statistical coordination, the NSC recommended, in its Annual Report for the year 2006-07, for designating nodal officers and the role to be assigned to them.

2.3 The aforementioned recommendations were reviewed by the NSC in its 63rd meeting held during 6th to 7th January, 2014. It was felt that the Code of Statistical Practice and Guidelines for Outsourcing of Statistical Activities earlier recommended by the NSC may not be a part of the Policy. Instead, the Policy may provide for appropriate enabling provisions to empower the MOSPI to notify a Code of Statistical Practice and Guidelines for Outsourcing of Statistical Activities. The NSC also felt that the Policy should include implementation mechanism.

2.4 In order to implement the Policy, the NSC recommended that the Government may notify nodal officers of the rank of at least Joint Secretary or equivalent in the line Ministries/ Departments at the Centre, and an officer of appropriate rank in each Public Sector Undertaking and Autonomous institution under the administrative control/ oversight of each line Ministry/ Department. Nomination of nodal officers should be obtained from the respective Ministries/ Departments. The nodal officers shall assist the Chief Statistician of India (CSI) in evolving strategies to implement the policy, bring up specific proposals for the decision of the Government and be responsible for implementation of the strategies and decisions. Implementation strategies

should be evolved, from time to time, in the meetings to be taken by the CSI with the nodal officers. The participation of States/ UTs in the meetings may be ensured on voluntary/ invitation basis. This would facilitate the States/ UTs to take steps to improve their statistical systems. In view of these reasons, the NSC decided to integrate the recommendation on designating nodal officers into the Policy, in the form of an implementation strategy.

2.5 The NSC also recognized that the National Policy on Official Statistics should include provisions to adopt the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as guiding principles, to articulate a framework consistent with the Principles and to provide mechanisms for promoting and assessing compliance to the Policy.

Recommendations of the Commission

2.6 The NSC, after incorporating the aforementioned changes, recommended the National Policy on Official Statistics, given at Annex-I. The Policy includes provisions for submission of Annual Reports by the CSI and for review of the Policy once in five years on the basis of the reports of the CSI. The NSC recommended that the Policy may be considered by the Government, for notification and implementation.

Statistical Coordination by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI)

2.7 Under the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, the MOSPI is entrusted inter alia with the responsibility of:

- coordination of statistical work with a view to identifying gaps in data availability or duplication of statistical work in respect of Departments of the Government of India and State Statistical Bureaus and to suggest necessary remedial measures;
- laying down and maintenance of norms and standards in the field of statistics, evolving concepts, definitions and methodology of data collection, processing of data and dissemination of results; and
- advising the Departments of the Government of India on statistical methodology and on statistical analysis of data

2.8 The Statistics Wing in the MOSPI has to perform all the nodal statistical functions assigned under the aforementioned Rules. The functions have to be carried out in the following Offices/ Divisions of the Wing.

(1) Central Statistics Office (CSO):

- Coordination and Publications Division (CAP)
- Economic Statistics Division (ESD)
- Social Statistics Division (SSD)
- Training Division/ NSSTA

- Computer Centre

(2) National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)

2.9 Keeping the nodal functions in mind, the NSC reviewed the coordination activities on statistical matters of the Statistics Wing. It was noticed that the coordination work has been suffering mainly because of lack of clarity on what are the items of work that fall under this category and on distribution of work among the Offices/ Divisions in the Wing.

Recommendations of the Commission

2.10 In order to address the aforementioned issue, the NSC recommended that distribution of coordination work among the different Offices/ Divisions in the Statistics Wing of the MOSPI may be worked out by the MOSPI and notified for the information of all the concerned. The notification may specify a Liaison Officer in each of the Office/ Division of the MOSPI, who would be a resource person, mainly responsible for coordination work.

2.11 A Liaison Officer's coordinating responsibilities, from time to time, may include the following subject areas:

- norms and standards, consistent with international standards
- statistical classifications
- data integration
- coordinating the production and dissemination of statistics required in the field
- assessing training requirements
- reviewing statistical activities and providing guidance/ advice to the line Ministries/ Departments and to the States/ UTs
- reviewing administrative statistics and suggesting measures for enhancing their potential
- monitoring compliance to statistical policies and protocols laid down by the Government
- bringing the deficiencies and suggestions for improvement, in the form of periodical reports, to the notice of the CSI

2.12 The MOSPI may include the aforementioned functions of Liaison Officers in the notification recommended.

Manual on Sample Surveys

2.13 Conducting sample surveys is a specialized field, requiring great technical skills. Apart from the NSSO in the MOSPI, other line Ministries also conduct surveys from time to time. In order to ensure professionalism in the survey practice, the MOSPI, on the recommendations of the NSC, notified 'Guidelines for conducting statistical surveys'. The Notification was published on 5th December, 2011 as Notification No. 232 in the Gazette of India

Extraordinary Part-III Section-4. The Guidelines provide inter alia for the oversight of the NSC on surveys conducted by the line Ministries at the Centre.

2.14 The NSC reviewed the Guidelines and desired that a 'Manual on Sample surveys' may be brought out by the MOSPI to provide more detailed guidance to the line Ministries. It was reported that the NSSO is planning to bring out a manual, namely, 'Manual on Conduct of Large Scale Sample Surveys – Indian Experience'. The NSC, after examining the layout of the manual proposed by the NSSO, felt that it would be appropriate as induction material for those who would be working in the NSSO. The NSC felt that the requirement of line Ministries may be different, as they need to be familiarized about the whole thought process on sample surveys in order to facilitate their easy compliance of the 'Guidelines for conducting statistical surveys', issued by the MOSPI. The manual should also seek to expose them to various facets of quality assurance, which are implicitly adopted in the NSSO work.

Recommendations of the Commission

2.15 In view of the above, the NSC recommended that a separate manual be prepared with an appropriate layout for this purpose and a suitable person may be identified by the MOSPI to take up the work on consultancy basis in a time bound manner.

Implementation of Commission's recommendations

2.16 The Rangarajan Commission, in its report submitted to the Government in the year 2001, made 623 recommendations. The Cabinet, in its meeting held on 27th February, 2002, noted these recommendations for implementation and entrusted the task of coordinating and monitoring the process of their implementation, by various Central Ministries and States, to the MOSPI.

2.17 The NSC, functioning since 12th July, 2006, had made 424 recommendations in its seven Annual Reports, so far submitted to the Government.

2.18 The Coordination & Publications Division (CAP) in the CSO is responsible for coordinating implementation of the recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission and of the NSC. The NSC reviewed the status of implementation of the recommendations. The details of the pending recommendations implementation agency-wise are given at Annex-II. The summary position is as follows:

Recommendations of	Total	Implemented	Pending
Rangarajan Commission (2001)	623	156*	467
NSC (seven Annual Reports)	424	58	366
Total	1047	214	833

* includes 9 recommendations rejected.

2.19 It was reported by the CSO (CAP) that responses have been received by them from the implementing agencies, in respect of most of the pending recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission and that the responses need to be scrutinized by them for ascertaining the status. The NSC felt that some of the pending recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission have been overtaken by subsequent events and developments and that this requires a thorough review to prepare a fresh list of recommendations that need to be pursued in the present context. In view of this, the NSC recommended that a Committee of officers may be constituted by the MOSPI under the Chairmanship of the ADG, CSO (CAP) to take up this exercise on the basis of available material and through consultation process, and prepare a Ministry/ Department-wise list of recommendations. Accordingly, a Committee has been constituted by the MOSPI and the Committee has started functioning.

Recommendations of the Commission

2.20 The NSC desired that the list prepared by the Committee may be submitted to Shri Ramesh Kolli, Member, NSC for vetting, prior to placing it before the NSC.

Procedure for releasing National Sample Survey (NSS) reports

2.21 The NSC, in its Annual Report for the year 2010-11, laid down the following procedure regarding the process to be followed by the NSSO before release of NSS Reports.

- The tenure of the Working Group appointed for the NSS Round shall be extended to cover the whole gamut of survey operations including release of Reports. The Experts to whom the draft NSS Reports shall be sent for comments may be decided by the Working Group. Each Expert may be paid a fee of Rs. 2,500/- for offering comments on each NSS Report.
- The draft Reports, comments of Experts and responses of the NSSO shall be sent to the Chairperson and Members of the NSC. Members of the NSC would report their comments, if any, to the Chairperson, NSC within a week. On the basis of all these inputs, the Chairperson, NSC would give clearance or otherwise for the release of the Reports. If required, the Chairperson, NSC will have a meeting with NSSO (SDRD) on the issues involved. In case any suggestions are

received from Experts for additional tables not finding place in the approved tabulation plan, the Chairperson of the NSC would decide whether a supplementary report needs to be brought out by the NSSO. The release of any Report shall not be held up due to the suggestion of Experts for incorporating additional tables.

2.22 From the 68th NSS Round onwards, the NSC has constituted Working Groups on subjects decided by it, in a manner that they will be able to oversee the entire gamut of survey activities for each round.

2.23 From the year 2010-11, a system of target defined delivery of output has been established by the Prime Minister's Office in the form of Results Framework Document (RFD) to monitor the performance of Ministries/ Departments. Release of NSS reports is included in the RFD of the MOSPI. The NSC desired that a period of two months shall be provided in each case, after preparation of draft report by the NSSO, for obtaining clearance of the NSC for release of the Reports.

2.26 In its 59th meeting, the NSC emphasized the importance of CSO (SSD) analyzing NSS unit level data for its reports and suggested that a number of NSS reports could be shifted to the SSD. Similar recommendation was made by the NSC in its 60th meeting in respect of economic statistics, in which case the reports need to be shifted to the CSO (ESD). These recommendations, if implemented, will free the SDRD from the burden of preparing a large number of reports and facilitate for its focusing on timeliness in release of main reports and in innovations and research.

2.27 In the brainstorming session on functioning of the NSSO held in August, 2013, the following suggestion was received.

"Since report writing takes considerable time, SDRD may write only main report on the subject covered and other reports may be written by the users departments based on unit level data. The concerned Working Group may assign the job of writing of such reports to concerned official members of the Working Group. Even assigning this work to research fellows/ interns may also be thought of. The Working Group may also be asked to reduce number of tables to be given in the reports. They may also take a view on reducing the number of reports to be finalized on survey. Possibility of engaging Economic Statistics Division and Social Statistics Division for writing reports based on NSS surveys is worth exploring and can be tried."

2.28 In view of the aforementioned status, the NSSO made a request in the 61st NSC meeting that the NSC may consider inter alia the following issues and give suitable directions.

- Reports to be prepared and released by the NSSO

- Role of the NSC after preparation of survey instruments and reports by the Working Groups

Recommendations of the Commission

2.29 The NSC considered the aforementioned issues and gave the following directions:

- (a) The Working Groups would be submitting to the NSC, the details of the methodological instruments as usual. These will include the sampling design, the concepts and definitions, and the schedules of inquiry.
- (b) The Tabulation plan and the list of reports in respect of each survey formulated by the Working Group shall be submitted to the NSC for its approval. The members of the Working Group may be invited for the meeting in which these issues would be considered by the NSC.
- (c) The NSSO shall bring out an overview report covering key results in the subjects of inquiry in each round and simultaneously release unit level data. Responsibility for preparation of other reports will be finalized by the NSC. In respect of subject areas handled by line Ministries/ Departments, the relevant unit level data would be shared with them by the NSSO and on the basis of that data; they should bring out their own reports.
- (d) The aforementioned process may be introduced from the 71st NSS round onwards.

Weeding of filled-in schedules of inquiry of National Sample Survey (NSS) rounds

2.30 Because of limitations in office space, the NSSO has to weed out old filled-in paper schedules from time to time. The filled-in schedules are of two types – the listing schedules and the detailed inquiry schedules. The detailed inquiry schedules are the basis for the unit level data and the listing schedules provide information on multipliers. It was earlier decided that the detailed inquiry schedules can be weeded out after one year of the publication of the last report of a particular round of NSS and release of unit-level data (NSC Annual Report 2011-12).

2.31 The issue of weeding out of listing schedules was considered in the 42nd meeting of NSC and the NSC desired that a note on feasibility of placing data contained in the listing schedules in the public domain as also on the parameters on which data can be generated over and above what is being presently made available through dissemination of unit level data may be presented by the NSSO. During the 50th meeting of NSC, the matter was considered again and it was decided that the information collected on village amenities in the listing schedules shall be tabulated and presented in the reports and appropriate proposals for collecting more information through the

listing schedules would be deliberated in the Standing Technical Committee on NSS matters.

2.32 The Standing Committee discussed the issue in its meeting held on 8th August 2012. In this meeting, it was recommended inter alia that the use of listing schedules may be restricted and limited to facilitating the selection of households and its use for calculation of multipliers besides processing of data collected through the block on Village Facilities and that the listing schedules up to the 66th NSS round may be weeded out. The committee further recommended that if listing schedules of any round are required for some methodological study, the same may be retained in electronic/ physical form as deemed fit.

2.33 The NSSO (DPD) reported to the NSC in its 61st meeting, the following status in respect of the filled-in listing schedules from the 51st NSS round onwards:

- i. All the listing schedules of the 51st to 55th NSS rounds were sent from various Data Processing Centres of the NSSO (DPD) to the Computer Centre for data entry, processing and tabulation.
- ii. Computer Centre has completed the job of data entry of listing schedules for the 54th NSS round and a Report on the data was prepared. The Editorial Advisory Board of Sarvekshana did not find the Report useful for publication, as no meaningful information other than that has already been made use of, in selection of households is likely to emerge from it.
- iii. Data entry work of 55th NSS round has been completed by the Computer Centre and the Data Processing Centre, Bangalore. This data is now in the custody of DPD and is to be processed and tabulated.
- iv. Listing Schedules from the 51st to 53rd NSS rounds are lying with the Computer Centre, and they have expressed their inability to enter and process these schedules, due to manpower shortage.
- v. Listing schedules from the 56th NSS round onwards are lying in the custody of various Data Processing Centres of the NSSO (DPD).

2.34 The NSSO reported that there may not be any substantial gain in preserving or processing of the listing schedules of the 51st – 53rd Rounds and the 56th – 64th Rounds, as repeat surveys on the relevant subjects have already been conducted in the subsequent rounds. Even if they are not weeded out, they may not be legible or usable for data processing due to natural wear and tear, as many of these are more than 10 years old. It was also pointed out that information on the Summary Block of the Listing Schedules from which multipliers are calculated, have been data-entered and tabulated for all rounds of NSS. Besides, from the 61st round onwards, a new block of "Village Facilities" has been added in the Listing Schedule. This block has also been data entered and tabulated up to the latest round and tables have been generated.

2.35 In the light of above, the NSSO requested that the NSC may consider and accord approval to:

1. weed out all the Listing Schedules up to the 65th NSS round, after retaining a scanned image of the Listing schedules of 61st to 65th NSS rounds; and
2. retain scanned image of the listing schedules of the 66th NSS round and future rounds, and thereafter, weed out the listing schedules along with the detailed inquiry schedules after the release of all NSS Reports pertaining to that round.

Recommendations of the Commission

2.36 The NSC considered the aforementioned proposals made by the NSSO in the light of the status reported in the 61st NSC meeting and gave the following directions:

- (a) Copies of filled-in listing schedules, where feasible, may be retained in electronic mode (with proper indexing to facilitate retrieval) and the paper schedules may be weeded out. In future, all the filled-in listing schedules may be weeded out, immediately after their retention in electronic mode.
- (b) Detailed inquiry schedules may be weeded out after two years after the placing of unit level data in the public domain, unless queries have been raised requiring re-examination of the data.

New professional committees

2.37 The NSC identified three subject areas, in which the Planning Commission and the NSC need to put in their concerted efforts to improve the respective statistical systems. The three subject areas decided by the NSC for this purpose are – Educational statistics, Labour Statistics and Fiscal statistics. The NSC felt that it is necessary to constitute professional committees on the three subject areas. Each Committee would be chaired by a Member of the Planning Commission and co-chaired by a Member of the NSC. Institutional consultancy would be made available to each committee to assist it in technical work.

2.38 The Chairperson of the NSC addressed letters to the concerned Members of the Planning Commission requesting them to chair the committees. With regard to co-chairmanship, the Members of the NSC nominated are –

- (a) Educational Statistics – Shri Ramesh Kolli
- (b) Labour Statistics – Prof. B.N. Goldar
- (c) Fiscal Statistics – Prof. S. Mahendra Dev

2.39 The CSO (SSD), the CSO (ESD) and the CSO (NAD) would provide secretarial support to the aforementioned committees, respectively.

2.40 Each Committee would interact with the concerned line Ministries at the Centre in relation to their structure and activities, undertake a comprehensive consultation process with users of data and other experts in the field, collect material available on the subject area assigned to it, identify data gaps and data weaknesses, and suggest ways and means of overcoming the problems in the system, including strengthening of the coordination mechanisms. This process is expected to re-establish knowledge and institutional memory in the MOSPI.

2.41 The reports of the Committees would be considered by the NSC and the NSC would make specific recommendations, Ministry-wise, on each of the aforementioned subject areas. The recommendations would also be placed before the concerned Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees.

2.42 Further modalities for constituting the Committees and choosing of institutional consultants are being worked out with the approval of the Chairperson, NSC. The Committees would be constituted in due course.

NATIONAL POLICY ON OFFICIAL STATISTICS

INTRODUCTION

1. The primary aim of official statistics is to provide an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful empirical picture of the society and economy to support the formulation and monitoring of economic and social policies by the Government, and for decision-making by a variety of non-Governmental entities in a country. It is recognized that official statistics are public goods and that they must comply with certain basic principles, such as professional independence, impartiality, accountability and transparency about methods of collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics. These principles are enshrined in the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics:

Principle 1. Official statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society, serving the Government, the economy and the public with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. To this end, official statistics that meet the test of practical utility are to be compiled and made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honor citizens' entitlement to public information.

Principle 2. To retain trust in official statistics, the statistical agencies need to decide according to strictly professional considerations, including scientific principles and professional ethics, on the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data.

Principle 3. To facilitate a correct interpretation of the data, the statistical agencies are to present information according to scientific standards on the sources, methods and procedures of the statistics.

Principle 4. The statistical agencies are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

Principle 5. Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records. Statistical agencies are to choose the source with regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on Respondents.

Principle 6. Individual data collected by statistical agencies for statistical compilation, whether they refer to natural or legal persons, are to be strictly confidential and used exclusively for statistical purposes.

Principle 7. The laws, regulations and measures under which the statistical systems operate are to be made public.

Principle 8. Coordination among statistical agencies within countries is essential to achieve consistency and efficiency in the statistical system.

Principle 9. The use by statistical agencies in each country of international concepts, classifications and methods promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all official levels.

Principle 10. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries.

OBJECTIVE

2. The Official Statistical System in India functions within the overall governance and administrative structure of the country as per the constitutional scheme of division of powers. At the centre, it is horizontally decentralised across the Ministries and Departments. Each Ministry's jurisdiction, in turn, is vertically decentralised, between the Centre and the States/ Union territories (UTs). In recent years, private data sources have become increasingly important supplements to official data.

3. In such a decentralized statistical system, adherence to a common set of principles is necessary for building public trust, and can be achieved only if the various component parts carry out their functions within a framework, which is consistent with these principles. This Policy adopts the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as the guiding principles and articulates a framework consistent with them. It also provides mechanisms for promoting and assessing compliance.

THE FRAMEWORK

4. In order to give effect to the aforementioned objective, the Central Government enunciates this policy, covering initiatives in the following areas:

- A. Core Statistics;
- B. Data Quality;
- C. Code of Statistical Practice;
- D. Statistical Manuals;
- E. Data Documentation;
- F. Statistical Coordination;
- G. Efficiency of Data Collection;
- H. Data Dissemination;
- I. Capacity Development;
- J. Institutional and Legal Framework;

- K. Assessment of Data Needs;
- L. Statistical Studies/ Reports by line Ministries;
- M. Strengthening State Statistical Systems;
- N. International Cooperation;

A. Core Statistics

5. Statistics of national importance and considered critical to the economy and society, to be designated as 'core statistics', would be identified for being promoted and regulated. It shall be mandatory for Governments at all levels to collect and disseminate them. The Ministry of Statistics in the Central Government, under the directions of the National Statistical Commission (NSC), shall:

- (i) Identify and notify 'Core' Statistics and update them from time to time.
- (ii) Evolve national quality standards on core statistics, such as standard statistical concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies, national strategies for collection, tabulation and dissemination including release calendars for various data sets and ensure statistical co-ordination among the different officials agencies involved to implement the standards to promote quality, credibility, timeliness and public trust in respect of core statistics.
- (iii) The national quality standards will be binding on all agencies at the Centre and in the States/ UTs, involved in generating the requisite data for all core statistics.

B. Data Quality

6. Public faith in official statistics depends upon the perceived quality and consistency of the data. Data quality is the outcome of good practices in data collection and compilation; consistent and transparent procedures; and periodic review by independent agencies to ensure compliance with the laid down practices and procedures.

7. Quality assurance through external and independent validation in the form of statistical audit is necessary to identify and rectify deficiencies in the statistical products. The NSC shall:

- (i) Evolve a National Quality Assurance Framework on official statistics for implementation by all the producers of official statistics internally.
- (ii) Conduct statistical audit periodically through independent agencies on all the major statistical products covering collection, processing and dissemination, and place the findings of the audit and

consequent improvements made in the system in the public domain.

C. Code of Statistical Practice

8. There is a need for establishing standard good practices to meet the legitimate expectations of the users within and outside the Government and the public at large. The Ministry of Statistics shall, in consultation with the NSC, notify, from time to time, a Code of Statistical Practice. The Code shall be mandatorily complied with by –

- (i) all Ministries and Departments in the Central Government and their instrumentalities;
- (ii) all Union territory Administrations and their instrumentalities; and
- (iii) all States in respect of core statistics and statistical activities that are fully or partially funded by the Central Government.

9. The Ministry of Statistics shall encourage the use of the Code of Statistical Practice among producers of other official statistics and among private producers of statistics through active promotional measures.

D. Statistical Manuals

10. Statistical concepts, definitions, classifications, norms and protocols are required to be laid down to ensure uniformity, consistency and comparability. The Ministry of Statistics in collaboration with the nodal Ministry/ Department, if any, shall bring out, from time to time, statistical manuals on different subjects, including statistical procedures, protocols and professional ethics.

11. All new statistical products shall be brought out along with sufficient documentation to be placed in the public domain. The Ministry of Statistics, in consultation with the NSC, will lay down the minimum documentation required.

12. For all new statistical products which are of a regular nature, the Ministry of Statistics, in consultation with the NSC, shall lay down the minimum documentation required and issue guidelines for preparation of manuals, which shall be developed at the earliest possible.

13. All effort shall be made to clear up the backlog of manuals, in respect of the existing statistical products, at the earliest. The NSC shall over-see this process.

E. Data Documentation

14. The Ministry of Statistics shall, in consultation with the NSC, notify, from time to time, a Data Documentation Policy to cover inter alia the following aspects.

- (a) Metadata
- (b) Data structure and instructions for users
- (c) Outputs of technical committees appointed at the Centre and in the States and UTs on statistical matters
- (d) Technical monographs on methodological studies, pilot studies, type studies or any other study arising from recommendations made by technical committees
- (e) Instances of erroneous interpretation of data and clarifications furnished thereof by the Government

F. Statistical Coordination

15. Coordination of the statistical activities of various Government agencies is necessary to enhance the usability of Government data, and to ensure that the data needs of all stakeholders are met without unnecessary duplication or overloading some parts of the system. The Ministry of Statistics headed by the Chief Statistician of India, is vested with the authority to ensure such statistical coordination among all Central Government offices/ agencies.

16. The Ministry of Statistics, in consultation with the NSC, shall evolve procedures for:

- (a) Consultation between data generating agencies in Government to avoid duplication and fill data gaps.
- (b) Enabling sharing of data without compromising on confidentiality/ security of data
- (c) Ensuring compatibility through harmonization of concepts, definitions, classifications, sampling frames etc.

17. All Central Government offices/ agencies shall extend full support to the Ministry of Statistics in making these procedures effective. In case of any disagreement, the matter shall be referred to the NSC.

18. The Ministry of Statistics shall take steps for promoting the pooling of data collected by the Central and State/ UT agencies in National Sample Surveys for providing reliable indicators of development at the State/ UT and district levels required for planning. It shall also examine the feasibility of pooling State/ UT and Central Government data in other areas where both the levels of Government are active. It shall further provide measures for integrating data from different sources.

G. Efficiency of Data Collection

19. Lack of access to the generation of or underutilization of administrative data is a major cause of inefficiency in official statistics, in terms of both costs and timeliness. The Ministry of Statistics, in consultation with the NSC, shall examine the measures necessary to improve the usability of administrative

data sets for statistical purposes. It shall also issue guidelines for addressing the confidentiality concerns in sharing administrative data sets. All Central Government Ministries/ Departments/ Agencies shall fully cooperate in this effort. The NSC shall mediate any inter-Ministerial dispute in this regard.

H. Data Dissemination

20. The Central Government has declared a National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, which was published in the Gazette of India (Weekly), Part I-Section 1, Reference No. 501GI/2011, Issue No. 11, dated 17th March 2012. The Ministry of Statistics shall, in consultation with the NSC, notify the categories of official statistics for which compliance with this policy shall be mandatory and the standards that should be followed for integration of such statistics for enhancing their utility and for identifying data gaps.

I. Capacity Development

21. The official statistical system, in order to meet emerging challenges from time to time, needs to constantly upgrade the technical capacity and the knowledge base of its personnel. The Ministry of Statistics shall institute a system for assessing the human resource requirements of the official statistical system from time to time. It shall also:

- (i) Network all locations in the Government and its instrumentalities involved in production of official statistics to ensure a uniform pattern of training and expertise in the official statistical system.
- (ii) Augment where necessary, without affecting the public good character of official statistics, the existing human resources by outsourcing statistical activities and laying down guidelines for the purpose.
- (iii) Arrange induction and refresher training courses for statistical officers/ staff and also making provision for study leave or sabbatical leave for broadening their knowledge in statistical theory and practice.
- (iv) Develop training modules and impart training in the use of statistics in administration to officers and staff of non-statistical disciplines in the Government, including those in organized services such as the Indian Administrative Service, the Indian Police Service, the Indian Forest Service and the Indian Revenue Service.
- (v) Organize suitable training programmes on various IT packages and IT applications, both long term and short-term, leading to award of Diplomas for the statistical officers and staff.

J. Institutional and Legal framework

22. The collection of statistics on any subject generally vests with the concerned Ministry or Department that is responsible for that subject according to its status in the Union, State or Concurrent Lists. The collection of such data is most often carried out under provisions which are provided for in various Acts and Policies. In a number of instances the submission of data to Government agencies is voluntary and has no legal sanction or legal protection. In order to systematize data collection by Government agencies and for protection of respondents, the Collection of Statistics Act 2008 (7 of 2009) should ordinarily be used in all cases where there is no specific statutory provision in a particular Act. In all exceptional cases, the concerned Ministry or Department at the Centre shall record the reasons in writing and communicate to the NSC.

23. The Ministry of Statistics headed by the Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is the nodal agency for planned development of the statistical system in the country and for coordination in all statistical activities in Government. The Ministry is also responsible for the implementation of the Collection of Statistics Act 2008. In this capacity, the Ministry of Statistics shall provide all guidance to any Government agency which wishes to collect data under the Act.

24. The NSC, constituted by the Government and placed within the functional jurisdiction of the MOSPI, is an independent body operating at a distance from the Government as a non-Ministerial entity, directly accountable to Parliament. It has two main functions: one is oversight and the other is assessment of official statistical activities. The NSC discharges its accountability to the Parliament through the MOSPI. At the national level, the officials of the Ministry of Statistics and other offices in the system are required to process the recommendations of the NSC for implementation. The NSC shall be given statutory status through an appropriate Act of Parliament.

25. At present, there are a number of Censuses that are carried out without any legal backing. Steps shall be taken for providing statutory support to censuses presently not being carried out under the Census Act, 1948 (37 of 1948).

26. The NSC shall periodically assess the institutional capacity of the various Ministries/ Departments/ Agencies of the Central Government to carry out the statistical activities required of them and shall make appropriate recommendations to the Government.

K. Assessment of Data Needs

27. With the rapid changes that are taking place in Indian society and economy, there is a constant need to assess the data requirements of a wide variety of stakeholders in the country and abroad. There is as yet no

structured system of making such an assessment, and this function is carried out on an ad hoc basis by the Ministries/ Departments concerned. Since there may be a potential conflict of interest between the Government agencies and the wider community of stakeholders in terms of the type of data that needs to be generated by the official statistical system, the NSC shall institute regular processes by which data needs of various stakeholders are elicited, and the NSC shall decide which of these requirements should be met by the official statistical system. Such assessment shall form an integral part of the NSC's Annual Report to Parliament.

L. Statistical studies by line Ministries

28. Line Ministries/ Departments at the Centre, from time to time, publish studies/ reports based on data collected through various statistical activities such as Censuses, Sample surveys, Case studies, Methodological studies and administrative data. There is a need to develop protocols to ensure that these activities are carried out in a professional way. Ministry of Statistics, in consultation with the NSC, has notified Guidelines to be followed by line Ministries in respect of statistical surveys (mainly sample surveys). The Guidelines were published in the Gazette of India–Extraordinary Part III-Section 4 issue no. 232 dated 5th December 2011. The Ministry shall bring out similar guidelines in respect of the remaining activities.

29. It shall also be mandatory for the line Ministries/ Departments to take consent of the NSC before release of reports on such statistical activities.

M. Strengthening of the State Statistical Systems

30. Since some of the statistical subjects fall under the domain of States/ UTs, it is important that they also improve their statistical systems. The Ministry of Statistics shall:

- (i) Provide guidance and assistance to States/ UTs on all statistical matters.
- (ii) Provide technical assistance to States/ UTs for all core statistics.
- (iii) Advise States on statistics that are important and critical at the State level to ensure their quality, credibility and timeliness.
- (iv) Advise States to integrate data collected by them, and, in particular, creating databases at the level of Panchayat Raj and Nagar Palika Institutions and integrating them with the State statistical system.
- (v) Evolve and implement, if necessary, centrally sponsored scheme for strengthening State statistical systems in each Five Year plan.
- (vi) Extend training facilities to State level statistical officers/ staff in all official statistical matters including data processing and data integration.

N. International Cooperation

31. As a signatory to numerous international treaties and conventions, India is responsible for providing statistical information on a wide variety of indicators. In order to ensure that the commitments made by the country in terms of statistical information are feasible and are carried out with due rigour, the Ministry of Statistics shall be invariably associated in all cases where such statistical information may be required.

32. In new and emerging areas of official statistics, it is desirable that Indian statistical agencies collaborate with their counterparts from other countries and international agencies to evolve statistical standards suitable for Indian context. The NSC shall work closely with the Ministry of Statistics and the concerned nodal Ministry to develop such collaborative programmes.

33. The Ministry of Statistics shall also establish collaboration with international agencies and other countries to enhance capacity creation on statistical matters both in India and in other countries.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

34. Each Ministry and Department in the Central Government shall notify an officer of the rank of at least Joint Secretary or equivalent as the 'nodal officer' for all statistical activities concerning that Ministry/ Department. The Ministry/ Department shall also notify a nodal officer of appropriate rank in each Public Sector Undertaking and Autonomous institution having substantial statistical functions under its administrative control/ oversight. The nodal officers shall submit statements to the Ministry of Statistics on adherence to this policy by the concerned Ministry/ Department/ Organisation in such format and with such periodicity, as may be prescribed by the Ministry of Statistics from time to time. The nodal officers shall also –

- (a) assist the Chief Statistician of India in evolving specific strategies in respect of implementing this policy;
- (b) bring up, where necessary, specific proposals for consideration and decision of the Government at appropriate level;
- (c) coordinate implementation of the strategies evolved and decisions made in their respective Ministries/ Departments/ Organisations, as the case may be, and
- (d) submit periodical reports to the Chief Statistician of India on the process of implementation.

35. The policy would be implemented through a process of consultation among the following officers:

- (a) The Chief Statistician of India (CSI)
- (b) Senior officers of the Ministry of Statistics nominated by the Ministry

(c) Nodal Officers

36. The meetings of the aforesaid officers will be chaired by the Chief Statistician of India and secretariat support would be provided by the Ministry of Statistics.

37. The Chief Statistician of India shall submit annual reports to the Government on the implementation of the policy. The annual reports shall be placed in the public domain.

38. The State Governments and the UT Administrations will be invited to participate; in the consultation process mentioned at paras -35 and 36, by nominating their nodal officers of appropriate rank. This would facilitate the States and UTs in knowing the processes evolved and implemented from time to time by the Centre and in taking up similar initiatives in their respective statistical systems.

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

39. On the basis of annual reports of the Chief Statistician of India, the policy will be reviewed once in five years in consultation with the NSC and modifications, if necessary, would be incorporated in the policy.

Annex-II

Two statements on pendency position of recommendations

Statement-1: Ministry-wise pendency position of Rangarajan Commission recommendations

S. No.	Ministry/ Department/ Office/ States/ UTs	No. of pending recommendations*
1	Statistics & Programme Implementation	214
2	Agriculture & Cooperation	40
3	Human Resource Development	40
4	Reserve Bank of India	37
5	Health & Family Welfare	27
6	Home Affairs	24
7	Labour & Employment	22
8	Industrial Policy & Promotion	14
9	Commerce	12
10	Economic Affairs	11
11	Environment & Forests	10
12	Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation	10
13	Corporate Affairs	9
14	Revenue	9
15	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	8
16	Road Transport & Highways	8
17	Financial Services	7
18	Shipping	7
19	Expenditure	6
20	Power	6
21	Rural Development	6
22	Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries	5
23	Civil Aviation	5
24	Posts	5
25	Comptroller & Auditor General	4
26	Railways	4
27	Science & Technology	4
28	Telecommunications	4
29	Water Resources	4
30	Planning Commission	2
31	Women & Child Development	2
32	Atomic Energy	1
33	Coal	1
34	New and Renewable Energy	1
35	Petroleum & Natural Gas	1
36	Space	1

37	Tourism	1
38	All States/ UTs	143

* In case of a few recommendations, more than one office is responsible for implementation. Hence, the total of the last column exceeds 467 (the number of pending recommendations).

Statement-2: Ministry/ Department-wise details of pending NSC recommendations

Ministry/ Department/ Office/ States/ UTs	2006- 07	2008- 09	2009- 10	2010- 11	2011- 12	2012- 13	Total
MOSPI	1	41	11	69	176	29	327
Industrial Policy & Promotion		8					8
Coal		9					9
Labour & Employment						1	1
Commerce					1	1	2
Corporate Affairs		4					4
Agriculture & Cooperation				3		1	4
Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries				5			5
Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises						1	1
Tribal Affairs						1	1
Expenditure						3	3
All States		14		27			41
Southern States		20					20
Lakshadweep				3			3
Karnataka						1	1
Total	1	96	11	107	177	38	430

* In case of a few recommendations, more than one office is responsible for implementation. Hence, the total exceeds 366 (the number of pending recommendations).

Chapter-3

Review of statistical activities of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI)

3.1 The NSC reviewed the nodal coordination role of the MOSPI and given its recommendations in chapter-2 of this report. In this chapter, the details of the review of some of the statistical activities of the MOSPI are given.

3.2 Inputs were obtained on pre-specified aspects from the following Divisions of the CSO for facilitating review by the NSC. The findings of the review and the recommendations of the NSC in respect of the following Divisions are given in the following paragraphs.

- Social Statistics Division (SSD)
- Economic Statistics Division (ESD)
- Training Division
- National Accounts Division (NAD)
- Prices and Cost of Living (PCL) Unit in the NAD
- Computer Centre
- Coordination and Publications Division

Social Statistics Division (SSD)

3.3 The note submitted by the CSO (SSD) was considered by the NSC in its 59th meeting. The ADG, CSO (SSD) made a presentation in the meeting on the activities of the Division.

3.4 Social Statistics encompasses statistics relating to Population and Vital Events, Health and Family Welfare, Nutrition, Education, Gender, Children, Human Development, Disability, Labour and Employment, Housing, Culture, Environment, etc. The Social Statistics Division (SSD) in the CSO does not collect any primary data, but uses the data released by the various source agencies on social sector to bring out reports and publications. In a way, this falls under data integration function. The Division works in co-ordination with the Central Ministries and the State/ UT DESs on all matters relating to social statistics. Thus, the activities of the SSD are of the nature of dissemination of statistics on social and environment sectors, statistical tracking of International Commitments, development of data bases, evolving new statistical tools/ surveys to bridge data gaps, Improving local level statistics, Promoting research etc.

3.5 The SSD with its three functional units handles the following three sets of topics in each of the units.

- (a) Environment Statistics, Disaster Statistics, Climate Change statistics, Natural Resource Accounting, Green National Accounts, National and International awards and Promoting Research in Statistics., through Grant-in-aid research scheme, Health/ Nutrition Statistics
- (b) Monitoring of MDGs, Child Statistics, Disability Statistics, Budget and Plan, Coordination within the MOSPI and other Ministries
- (c) Basic statistics for Local Level Development, Delhi Group on Informal Sector, Time Use Survey, gender statistics, crime statistics, Monitoring of SAARC Development Goals/ SAARC Social Charter, Poverty, Human Development Indices, Social Institutions Gender Index, National Data Bank for socio religious categories and DevInfo.

3.6 The SSD has prepared statistical manuals on 17 topics for providing guidance to the statistical organisations in the country. The SSD assisted the Delhi Group in preparing a manual titled "Measuring Informality: A Statistical Manual on the informal sector and informal employment", and handed it over to the ILO. The SSD has been bringing out country reports on MDGs and on SAARC Social Charter, since 2005. The Division was responsible for the release of three adaptations of DevInfo, namely, DevInfo India Version 1.0 (year 2006), DevInfo India Version 2.0 (year 2008) and DevInfo India Version 3.0 (year 2011).

3.7 The SSD has been assisting an Expert Group, under the Chairmanship of Prof. S. R. Hashim, on Time Use Surveys. The Division has been working on a pilot scheme for compiling village level statistics at the Village/ Gram Panchayat level.

3.8 Women and Men in India (2012) and Compendium of Environment Statistics (2012) are regular annual publications of the SSD. Apart from these, ad hoc publications are also brought out by the SSD from time to time. Some of these are - Situation Analysis of Elderly in India- 2011, Disability in India –A statistical profile 2011, and Children in India 2012 – A Statistical Appraisal. The Division has been working on two new publications – on Climate Statistics and Disaster Statistics.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.9 On the basis of the material furnished by the SSD in its 59th meeting, the NSC made the following recommendations:

- a) The SSD may provide statistical standards and methodology in respect of social sector statistical products to line Ministries and monitor the implementation of the standards.
- b) The SSD may study datasets on social sector available with line Ministries and States/ UTs and attempt data integration.
- c) Dissemination of data through DEVINFO may be explored.

- d) SSD spends considerable time on activities, such as financing of research studies, financial assistance to holding conferences/seminars, travel grant assistance to Indian Statisticians for presenting their papers in International Conferences, conducting On-the-spot essay writing competitions, Awards, and statistics Olympiad. It would be better, if these activities are handled in the CSO (CAP) or the Training Division.
- e) The aim of SSD publications should not be merely to compile tables from reports of line Ministries, but to provide metadata containing inter alia source of underlying data set, assessment on quality of the data, its coverage, and guidance on use.
- f) The SSD's effort in developing a framework for State MDG was noted and appreciated. However, it was felt that State level MDGs should not be developed by the MOSPI. SSD was advised to take up the matter with the Planning Commission to advise the States to prepare State level reports as per the SSD framework. The SSD may provide support in computing the relevant indices.
- g) The NSC emphasized the importance of SSD analyzing NSS unit level data for its reports. It was suggested that a number of NSS reports could be shifted to the SSD.
- h) The feasibility of updating data tables of National Data Bank for Socio-Religious Categories through Electronic link to the primary sites may be explored.
- i) The SSD should generate back series of population for the inter-censal years in collaboration with the RGI.
- j) SSD should examine the feasibility of constructing the sex ratios for 0-6 years age group from RGI and NSS data.
- k) It was not felt appropriate that the SSD be the nodal Division for the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tourism etc., as those Ministries do not handle social sector statistics. The ESD may coordinate with such line Ministries.

Economic Statistics Division

3.10 The note submitted by the CSO (ESD) was considered by the NSC in its 60th meeting. The ADG and other officers of the CSO (ESD) made a presentation before the NSC on the activities of the Division.

3.11 Economic Statistics Division (ESD) of the CSO is the subject matter division dealing with production of various important economic statistics including generation of lead indicators on industrial sector. The on-going activities of the ESD are given below:

- (i) Annual Survey of Industries
- (ii) Monthly all India Index of Industrial Production
- (iii) Economic Census (periodic)
- (iv) Compilation of Energy Statistics
- (v) Compilation of Infrastructure Statistics

- (vi) Maintenance and regular review of National Classifications for Industries, products in manufacturing and services sectors and coordination of all other statistical classifications

3.12 The ESD is involved in developing methodology for Annual Survey of Service Sector, Index of Service Production, Trade in Services, Index of Infrastructure Development, and for ICT Statistics.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.13 On the basis of the material furnished by the ESD and the discussions made during its 60th meeting, the NSC made the following recommendations:

- 1) The ESD may provide statistical standards and methodology in respect of economic statistical products to line Ministries and monitor the implementation of the standards.
- 2) The ESD may study datasets on economic statistics available with line Ministries and States/ UTs and attempt data integration.
- 3) Dissemination of data through DEVINFO may be explored.
- 4) The aim of ESD publications should not be merely to compile data and tables from reports/ administrative sources of line Ministries, but to provide metadata containing inter alia source of underlying data set, assessment on quality of the data, its coverage, and guidance on use.
- 5) Formats devised by the CSO (NAD) on trade sector data requirements may be looked into, for adaptation.
- 6) Time lag in the release of report on 'Energy Statistics' may be reduced. Links to latest databases available in other sources may be provided, while releasing the publications.
- 7) In addition to collecting data on products in CPC under the ASI, the ESD should consider collecting data on ITC-HS codes; as such data would be available readily from most of the factories. This measure would also encourage self-filing of returns by factory managements and provide for additional validation.
- 8) As the ASI is conducted under the provisions of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008, the dissemination and sharing of ASI data shall be done in a manner that is consistent with the relevant provisions under the Act.
- 9) The efforts made by the CSO for introducing a web portal for collection of ASI data have been well appreciated. The CSO should liaise with the Labour Bureau to validate and release results simultaneously.
- 10) The ESD may work out modalities for bringing out a Fact Sheet every quarter on financial results, as is done by the CMIE.
- 11) The ESD may work out ways and means of switching over to volume index in place of the present quantity index in respect of IIP.
- 12) Use-based classification presently being followed in IIP needs re-examination, as some products could fall under both capital and consumer categories.

- 13) The ESD may provide guidance to the CBEC on validation and tabulation of production data.
- 14) Data on ICT indicators is being collected in the 71st NSS round through household survey. The ESD shall look into the issue of collecting such data for the non-household sector from other surveys, censuses and administrative sources, in consultation with the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, and attempt data integration.
- 15) With regard to Infrastructure statistics, it was noted that an Annual national level index of infrastructure development is being compiled. It was felt that this index is presently not being used for any purpose. Compiling Annual State Level Index would be more useful.
- 16) On the issue of statistical classifications, the ESD must play a more pro-active role in laying down and implementing classifications by all official agencies, consistent with international classifications.
- 17) The general view on under-reporting of own-account enterprises in Economic Census needs special care and attention by the ESD.
- 18) The feasibility of sharing of list frames prepared on the basis of Economic Census data with local authorities and registration authorities may be examined under the provisions of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008.
- 19) The concept of 'Business Register' requires more clarity, as it appears that the CSO (ESD) and the CSO (NAD) have been approaching the issue in different ways.
- 20) The NSC emphasized the importance of ESD analyzing NSS unit level data for its reports. It was suggested that a number of NSS reports on economic statistics could be shifted to the ESD.
- 21) An Annual Survey of Services Sector was conducted on pilot basis. Collecting administrative data from service tax returns may also be explored as a part of the pilot exercise. Based on the experience in the pilot, a complete proposal on introducing the survey as a new product may be prepared and submitted.
- 22) It was felt appropriate that the ESD be the nodal Division for the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Tourism etc.

Training Division

3.14 The note submitted by the Training Division of Central Statistics Office (CSO) was considered by the NSC in its 61st meeting. The ADG, CSO (Training) made a presentation before the NSC on the activities of the Division.

3.15 The Training Division is primarily responsible for developing training policy for statistical personnel and conducting training for building capacities in official statistics at the National and International levels. Besides training activities, the Division is responsible for implementing the Internship Scheme of the Ministry, preparation of manuals on various statistical indicators/ subjects, building partnership with developed and developing countries in the

field of official statistics, organizing international seminars/ workshops etc. The National Statistical Systems Training Academy (NSSTA) under the Training Division is a premier Institute fostering human resource development in Official Statistics.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.16 On the basis of the material furnished by the CSO (Training) and the discussions held in the 61st meeting, the NSC felt that a number of responsibilities within its mandate are not adequately carried out by the Division. Accordingly, the following recommendations have been made by the NSC:

- (1) The Training Division may comprehensively assess the training needs in respect of persons working at various levels in the official statistical system at the Centre and in the States/ UTs, duly keeping in view the international developments, newly emerging areas and demands on statistical products of the users within and outside the Government.
- (2) The Training Division may prepare and submit to the NSC a draft Training Policy for building capabilities at national and state level in respect of all types of statistical products.
- (3) A manual on official statistics on the lines of the earlier publication 'A Guide to Official Statistics' may be brought out.
- (4) The reach of the training programmes may be enhanced in a decentralized way through e-mode of learning. These may include releasing e-manuals/ monographs, Audio/ Video CDs, arranging virtual class rooms, webcasts through official website and broadcasts through IGNOU.
- (5) The training on official statistics imparted to teaching faculty in Universities may have some UGC recognized incentives mechanism. This would attract more participation. Hence, the matter may be taken up with the UGC.
- (6) The faculty working at NSSTA and the trainees may involve themselves in research activities.
- (7) The training imparted to ISS probationers may include using unit level data and writing reports.
- (8) Feedback on training programmes may be obtained from trainees as also from the concerned organisations.
- (9) The Training Division may strengthen and widen the engagement with international agencies and other countries, in respect of research activities.

National Accounts Division (NAD)

3.17 The note submitted by the CSO (NAD) was considered by the NSC in its 62nd meeting. In this meeting, the ADG, CSO (NAD) made a presentation before the NSC on the activities of the Division.

3.18 The National Accounts Division (NAD) of the CSO has been engaged in the preparation of national accounts and related aggregates. The major statistical products of this Division are:

- (i) bringing out two annual publications, one titled "National Accounts Statistics", containing these statistics, and the other presenting these statistics in the framework prescribed by the System of National Accounts, "Sequence of National Accounts – India";
- (ii) preparation of comparable estimates of State Domestic Product (SDP) at current prices, for the use of Planning Commission, Finance Commission and Ministry of Finance;
- (iii) releasing Quarterly estimates of national income with a time lag of two months and releasing the Advance Estimates two months before the end of each financial year;
- (iv) releasing Input Output Tables once in five years; and
- (v) releasing Value of Output of agriculture and allied sectors (State-wise) once in two years

3.19 The responsibility of compilation of state accounts lies primarily with the State DESs. NAD provides the necessary guidance and inputs for this compilation. For the use of policy makers and researchers, the NAD consolidates the estimates of State Domestic Product and publishes the same twice a year on the website of the MOSPI. The NAD has also been guiding States in compiling district income estimates. Compilation of Satellite Accounts is in the domain of the representative Ministry. The NAD acts as the technical adviser for the purpose and also provides the necessary data support.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.20 On the basis of the material furnished by the NAD and the discussions made in the 62nd meeting, the NSC made the following recommendations to bring in, improvements in the working of the NAD.

- (1) Keeping in view the international standards, the National Accounts may be presented at basic prices, instead of at factor cost.
- (2) Substantial divergence between national accounts and state accounts in respect of agriculture sector was observed. The CSO (NAD) may discuss the issue with the Ministry of Agriculture and the concerned States, for finding a solution.
- (3) It was noted that a few indicators are available on civil aviation and railways in respect of services sector and that having no index on service production has been a handicap. The CSO may plan a benchmark survey on services sector and also plan to compile indices on the sector using the survey database.
- (4) ADG, NAD during the presentation informed that he had taken up with IMF to organize training on sectoral accounts and implementation of the recommendations of SNA 2008. NSC, while

noting the major changes in SNA 2008, suggested that in addition to the proposed training, IMF may be approached to send a Mission for evaluation under the Report on Observance of Standards and Codes to identify the weaknesses in compilation of national accounts in India. Thereafter, training programmes focused on weak areas may also be organized with the assistance of IMF.

- (5) The CSO (NAD) may assess its training requirements in collaboration with the NSSTA, particularly in respect of training of trainers.
- (6) The CSO (NAD) may attempt to compile national balance sheet. They should aim to compile complete sequence of accounts, as prescribed in SNA 2008. They should also compile supply use tables.
- (7) The paper on divergence between PFCE and NSS CES estimates has been updated with latest data and furnished to the 68th Round Working Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. A.K. Adhikari. The CSO (NAD) may place the paper before the NSC along with the views of the Working Group. It was noted that concordance in respect of services is difficult in the two data sets. Hence, steps should be taken to follow international classification on individual consumption (i.e., Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose) both in the NAD as also in the NSSO. Common classification would facilitate better comparison between the two data sets.
- (8) The CSO (NAD) may look into alternative data sources hitherto untouched, to improve their estimates. In respect of companies, the Income Tax data base may be looked into along with that of the MCA. In respect of services, data from Income Tax and Services Tax returns needs to be examined.
- (9) The CSO (NAD) should take steps to update rates and ratios used in compilation of national accounts. They should be constantly engaged with the NSSO, the line Ministries, the States/ UTs and expert institutions in conducting type studies to periodically update them.

Prices and Cost of Living (PCL) Unit

3.21 The ADG, CSO (NAD) and the officers of the Prices and Cost of Living (PCL) Unit in the NAD made a presentation on the activities of the Unit before the NSC in its 63rd meeting. On the basis of the note furnished and the presentation made, the NSC noted inter alia the following points.

- (a) The PCL Unit compiles Consumer Price Indices (CPI) for rural/ urban/ combined at State level and all India level. Sub-group level indices are released at all India level and group indices are released at State/ UT level.
- (b) The PCL Unit also acts as an interface between Asian Development Bank and the NSSO for collection of price data under International Comparison Programme (ICP) for compilation of Purchasing Power Parity by the World Bank.

- (c) The CPI are released since January, 2011 with base 2010, for which price data is collected from 1181 villages and 310 towns. Data in rural areas is collected by the Department of Posts. In respect of urban areas, the data is collected by the NSSO and DESs of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Lakshadweep. The data flow is ensured through web portals.
- (d) Since the CPI is to be released by 12th of each month, the data collected for the previous month is to be made available by 3rd day of the month. About 95 % of the urban data are uploaded by this date, whereas in case of rural, it is about 90%.
- (e) The details of shortfalls in the data reported are made available on-line in the portals to alert the supervisors to take corrective steps. It was reported that this information is rarely used by the concerned supervisors in respect of rural areas.
- (f) Because of inconsistencies noticed at the time of validation, about 8% of the reported prices (mostly on non-food items) in rural sector are ignored, while compiling indices. Inadequate coverage of items in data collected in the rural sector leads to more price imputations. It was suggested that if rural price data, being collected for CPI (AL/ RL) by the NSSO is made available to the PCL Unit, it would facilitate cross-validation of rural price data collected through the Department of Posts.
- (g) It was reported that alternative source for rural price data collection may have to be explored as present system of data collection has not stabilized even after three and half years.
- (h) Urban price data are received very late from DES, Arunachal Pradesh.
- (i) The PCL Unit is planning to revise the base to 2012, using the NSS 68th Round consumer expenditure data pertaining to Modified Mixed Reference Period.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.22 Based on the material furnished, the NSC made the following recommendations.

- (1) The PCL Unit shall make attempts to release unit level data from the CPI data collection to permit academic usage.
- (2) The NSSO may provide access to the PCL Unit on the CPI (AL/ RL) data for facilitating cross-validation of CPI rural data.
- (3) The PCL Unit may examine the feasibility of compiling spatial indices by building up an appropriate basket of commodities on the basis of ICP and CPI data with the required improvisations and augmentations.

Computer Centre

3.23 Statistical activities of the Computer Centre were reviewed by the NSC in its 63rd meeting. The DDG, Computer Centre made a presentation before the NSC in this meeting. Based on the note furnished and the presentation made, the NSC noted inter alia the following points.

- (a) Currently, the Computer Centre has been engaged in a host of activities, such as data dissemination, cataloguing and archiving of micro data, imparting training on IT, data processing (Economic Census & CPI data), maintaining the website of the MOSPI, and application development for the MOSPI.
- (b) The Computer Centre is the nodal office in the MOSPI on Cyber Security issues, IPV6 implementation, Data Controller functions under the NDSAP, and for NSDI.
- (c) The servers of the Computer Centre are run on 24X7 basis and two applications namely, the micro data archive and the DevInfo are hosted on the servers of the Computer Centre.
- (d) The Computer Centre is planning to redesign the website, as a tool to provide better statistical services to data users. It is also contemplating creation of a centralized catalogue of all official micro data and a repository of metadata documentation by inclusion of unit level data from other line Ministries and States.
- (e) The Computer Centre is exploring the possibility of establishing data centers in research institutions, to facilitate easy data access to researchers.
- (f) The Computer Centre has been facing serious resource constraints, even to carry out the existing work. This aspect requires immediate attention, particularly in the context of transforming the Centre into a Data Storage and Dissemination Office.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.24 The NSC considered the material furnished and made the following recommendations.

- (a) Efforts should be made to evolve a system to provide eventually free on-line access to data on different subjects, to promote its usage. Till such time, the present proposal of establishing data centers may be explored in consultation with the ICSSR and the UGC.
- (b) The Computer Centre should be evolved as the centre and the coordinating junction for the proposed network of all agencies engaged in production of official statistics to ensure better data flow.
- (c) Manpower planning has to be done and executed in a manner consistent with the ongoing activities and the future vision.

- (d) The Computer Centre should strengthen its coordination mechanism with other line Ministries and States/ UTs to bring in more data into its dissemination portal.
- (e) In all cases, where data/ reports can be accessed at disaggregated levels, the concerned local authorities need to be sensitized.
- (f) The Computer Centre may examine the feasibility of exploiting the potential of administrative statistics, and for this purpose, may initiate dialogue with the concerned producers including imparting training to the concerned personnel.

Coordination and Publications Division (CAP)

3.25 The major activities of the CSO (CAP) are:

- (a) coordinating the implementation of the recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission and the NSC;
- (b) handling the administration of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008;
- (c) general statistical coordination; and
- (d) plan scheme coordination.

3.26 With regard to plan scheme coordination, the MOSPI has been implementing a plan scheme 'Capacity Development' during the 11th Five Year Plan period. The main objective of the scheme is to enhance the capacity in the CSO and the NSSO. Based on the recommendations of the NSC and in the light of the instructions contained in the Department of Expenditure (Plan Finance-II Division) OM No. 1(3)/PF.II/2011 dated 14.12.2011, the MOSPI constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Atul Sarma to evaluate its plan scheme of 'Capacity Development'.

3.27 The Atul Sarma Committee recommended that the plan scheme with all its components may be continued in the 12th Plan (2012-17). The report of the Committee was placed before the NSC in its 59th meeting. The ADG, CSO (CAP) presented the report of the committee in this meeting. The NSC approved the recommendations given in the report. The status note, on the action taken/ proposed to be taken on the recommendations given in the report, presented by the CSO (CAP) in the 60th NSC meeting was also examined by the NSC. Other statistical activities of the CSO (CAP) were reviewed by the NSC in its 63rd meeting.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.28 On the basis of review of the statistical activities of the CSO (CAP), the NSC made the following recommendations:

- (i) A more detailed action taken report on the recommendations made by the Atul Sarma Committee may be submitted by the Division.

- (ii) The activities recommended in this report to be shifted from the CSO (SSD) may be taken up by the CSO (CAP).
- (iii) An updated status report on implementation of the Rangarajan Commission recommendations may be submitted to the NSC, for review.
- (iv) An updated Action Taken Report (ATR) on the recommendations made in the previous Annual Reports of the NSC may be placed before the Parliament and the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees. The ATR may also be submitted to the NSC, for review.
- (v) The report submitted to the Government, on the working of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008, may be furnished to the NSC, for review.

3.29 During the period under report, the NSC has also reviewed the statistical activities of the Agricultural Statistics (AS) Wing of the NSSO (FOD) in the MOSPI, besides the National Sample Surveys being conducted by the NSSO. Details are given in the following paragraphs.

Agriculture Statistics (AS) Wing in the Field Operations Division (FOD) of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)

3.30 The AS Wing of the NSSO (FOD) is entrusted with the overall responsibility of providing technical guidance and assisting the states in developing suitable survey techniques for obtaining timely and reliable estimates on area and yield, imparting training to state field personnel and exercising supervision over the primary field work on area enumeration, area aggregation and crop cutting experiments through the Improvement of Crop Statistics (ICS) Scheme. A total of 10,000 sample villages are generally covered under the ICS scheme out of which 5,000 are covered by the NSSO and remaining 5000 villages by the State Governments. Besides, approximately 30,000 crop cutting experiments are selected for supervision by the NSSO and the State Agencies on a matching sampling basis to know the extent to which the technique and methodology is actually followed in the field, and to suggest remedial measures.

3.31 An assessment is made on the extent of discrepancies between the entries of supervisor and the khasra register completed through Girdawari operations by village accountants. The supervisors while checking possible errors of aggregations also scrutinize the crop abstract of the village, which is prepared by the Patwaris. Permanently settled states are also covered under this scheme where a sub-sample of EARAS sample villages is supervised following the same methodology. The supervision of crop cutting experiments is carried out concurrently. The discrepancies noticed in the conduct of experiments are recorded and corrected in the field to ensure reliability of data of supervised experiments for use in methodological studies and developing crop yield estimates for advance crop forecast.

3.32 Agriculture Statistics wing is responsible for all aspects of the ICS scheme from the primary stage of preparation of the survey design to data processing and publication of reports. Every year at the start of the Agriculture season, it prepares annual work programme of each district in respect of number of villages to be covered for supervision of area enumeration and crop wise number of crop cutting experiments to be supervised in each season. Specified time schedule is supplied to field officials for completing the field work in time. After completion of field work by the NSSO and the State agencies, the schedules of inquiry of both the agencies are analyzed and processed at the Agriculture Statistics Wing. The processing of data is preceded by manual scrutiny and coding of schedules. The data is processed and tabulated.

3.33 From the data collected under the ICS scheme, the AS Wing:

- (a) prepares yield estimates of some important crops for use by the Ministry of Agriculture in crop forecasts and cross-checking the yield rates received from the states received from the States;
- (b) brings out an annual report titled "Review of crop statistics system through Scheme for Improvement of Crop Statistics", which is discussed in High Level Coordination Committee meetings in each State to effect improvements where feasible; and
- (c) releases an annual report titled 'Consolidated Results of Crop Estimation Survey on Principal Crops' every year, which brings out differences between official estimates on area and production as released by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Survey estimates.

3.34 The data collected through survey, their statistical products and the reports prepared under the ICS scheme have not been put in the public domain since the inception of the scheme. However, they have been used for methodological studies only by IASRI and Technical Committees. The survey under ICS scheme, due to its basic fact finding objective and very small sample size, restricts use of its data for statistically valid independent estimate of any characteristic. The reports too speak of observations useful for the concerned agencies only.

3.35 An Expert Committee constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture under the Chairmanship of Prof. A. Vaidyanathan observed that the findings of the ICS scheme, which has continued uninterrupted for the last forty years, clearly indicate erosion in proper implementation.

3.36 The DDG, NSSO (FOD), AS Wing, Faridabad made a presentation before the NSC on the statistical activities of the Wing in the 64th NSC meeting. The Wing has been created to bring out qualitative improvement in Crop Statistics in India and to evaluate the TRS/ EARAS and GCES schemes, under the ICS Scheme. During the presentation, it was pointed inter alia that no visible change has been noticed in the type and extent of infirmities, and

that the Village officials' cooperation and involvement in the agricultural statistical work reduced significantly over the years.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.37 On the basis of the status reported and the suggestions received during the 64th NSC meeting, the NSC made the following recommendations:

- (1) There are many data gaps in the field of agricultural statistics, which have not been addressed adequately over the years, while resources are being spent every year on the ICS scheme without much success. As such, the operation of the ICS scheme may be taken up periodically, say once in five years.
- (2) The NSSO may, in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture, the CSO, the Planning Commission and the IASRI, prepare proposals for diversification of the work of the AS Wing during the remaining period to cater to other requirements in the subject area, such as statistics on non-principal crops, agricultural inputs, horticulture, agricultural markets, and minor irrigation including allied fields such as animal husbandry. The proposals may be placed before the NSC for consideration.

Review of National Sample Survey (NSS) activities

3.38 As already stated, the NSC has been exercising the functions of the erstwhile Governing Council of the NSSO. The functions include deciding the subjects for coverage in each round, formulating methodology, and overseeing the processing of data and the release of survey reports/ unit level data by the NSC. The NSC has been constituting Working Groups to assist it in exercising these functions.

3.39 During the period under report, the NSSO released the following eight reports based on the data of the NSS 66th round (July 2009- June 2010), the 68th round (July 2011- June 2012) and the 69th round (July 2012- Dec. 2012):

NSS 66th round (July 2009- June 2010)

1. Employment and Unemployment Situation Among Religious Groups in India
2. Employment and Unemployment Situation in Cities and Towns in India

NSS 68th round (July 2011- June 2012)

1. Key Indicators of Employment and Unemployment in India
2. Key Indicators of Household Consumer Expenditure in India
3. Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, 2011-12
4. Level and Pattern of Consumer Expenditure

NSS 69th round (July 2012- Dec. 2012)

1. Key Indicators of Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Housing Condition in India
2. Key Indicators of Urban Slums in India

3.40 The NSSO also placed the Unit Level Data in respect of following schedules during the period under report:

NSS 68th round (July 2011- June 2012)

- i. Schedule 1.0: Consumer Expenditure-Type 1(Uniform Mixed Reference Period)
- ii. Schedule 1.0: Consumer Expenditure-Type 2(Modified Mixed Reference Period)
- iii. Schedule 10: Employment and Unemployment

NSS 69th round (July 2012- Dec. 2012)

- i. Schedule 0.21: Particulars of Slum
- ii. Schedule 1.2: Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Housing Condition

Methodology for the 71st Round of the National Sample Survey (NSS)

3.41 The NSC decided earlier that the 71st NSS Round (Survey period: January 2014 – June 2014) would be devoted to the subject of Social Consumption comprising 'Health and Morbidity' and 'Education' and appointed a Working Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. Rajeeva Karandikar to formulate the survey methodology and to oversee the entire gamut of activities of the survey. The survey instruments developed by the Working Group were presented by the NSSO in the 61st meeting of the NSC.

3.42 About 8300 FSUs will be surveyed in the central sample at all-India level by the NSSO. In each FSU, 8 households will be surveyed for collecting data in Schedule 25.0 (Health and Morbidity) and same number of households will be surveyed for collecting data in Schedule 25.2 (Education and IT Literacy).

3.43 Data on the following aspects are proposed to be collected in Health and Morbidity Survey:

- prevalence rate of morbidity
- extent of use of health services provided by the Government
- medical care received as in-patient of medical institutions, the cost incurred

- expenditure incurred on treatment received from public and private sectors
- assessment of the role of alternative schools of medicine (AYUSH)
- extent of use of private and public hospitals for childbirth, the cost incurred
- extent of receipt of pre-natal and post-natal care by women who undergo childbirth
- information on certain aspects of the condition of the 60-plus population

3.44 Important changes (inclusions/ exclusions) proposed by the Working Group in the 71st round are as follows:

- In 71st Round, the list of ailments used in the 60th round has been replaced by a more comprehensive list (supplied by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare).
- Bifurcation of health expenditure by Allopathic system/ AYUSH has been provided.
- Provision has been made for capturing expenditure on hospitalization due to non-ailments like normal child-birth.
- 'Usual MPCE of the households' would be collected using a single-shot question.
- Questions relating to immunization of children have been dropped, as those are better available from other data sources.
- As before, data on ailments for each case of hospitalization for each person will be collected for 365 days' reference period, and data on each spell of other illness for each person will be collected for 15 days' reference period.

3.45 Some of the new issues on health and morbidity that came up and the manner in which they have been addressed by the Working Group are detailed below:

- (a) For better netting the expenditure made by the students staying away from the household but economically dependent on the parent household on education as well as health, it was thought that it will be difficult to capture the overall expenditure on education as well as health from the student household, those who are staying away from the household (staying in hostel) by treating them as single-member households. It was therefore suggested to exclude such single-member households (i.e. stay-away students in hostels) from the listing and include them as households' member during the listing in the parent household. It has been implemented in 71st Rd, even though it will be a slight deviation from the concepts and definitions of 'household' from the earlier rounds.

It was noted that both in case of education and health, estimates generated are not of the "per-household" type (had this been so,

the definition of household would have been important, as it affects estimated number of households and average household size). Nor is any distribution of expenditure over households estimated from these surveys (unlike, say, consumer expenditure surveys, where the presence of single-member student households affects the distribution of per capita consumer expenditure over both households and persons).

On the other hand, in the 71st round survey, unlike the consumer expenditure surveys and the last education survey, is a January-June survey. In many hostels, the vacations are during April-June. This means a large chunk of the survey period is vacation time, and so stay-away students in hostels cannot be captured adequately. Besides, hostels generally restrict access of outsiders on security considerations, and investigators may be barred from entering some hostels, especially women's hostels.

Concerns were expressed that parents may not be able to provide item-wise expenditure incurred by their children at hostel. It was noted in the AITOT that even if the item-wise break-up of expenditure reported is very approximate, the main purpose of the survey will be achieved if the total expenditure is available. In the education survey, sample size inadequacies have always been more acutely felt at higher levels of education, particularly for professional/ vocational education, where the students mostly stay in hostels and expenditure per student is heavy.

- (b) Only 'Out of pocket' expenditure of the household to be collected, as required by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Direct payment made to the hospital or medical service provider by the insurance company or the employer to be totally excluded.
- (c) Information on expenditure *incurred during the last 365 days* on account of the ailment to be collected (consumption approach), rather than information on expenditure *for treatment received during the last 365 days*.

3.46 The Data proposed to be collected in the 71st Round on Education and IT Literacy Survey is mainly on the following aspects:

- information on educational infrastructure
- participation of persons aged 5-29 years in the education system
- private expenditure incurred on education
- examining the extent of educational wastage and their causes
- IT literacy of persons aged 14 years and above

3.47 Some of the new issues on education and IT literacy that came up and the manner in which they have been addressed are detailed below:

- In order to get an idea of how many stay-away students have been captured in this survey, a new column as “whether resident of students’ hostel? (yes-1, no-2)” has been included in the demographic block of both the schedules.
- All the expenditure incurred and/ or to be incurred *during the current academic session* on the education of household members is to be considered irrespective of the source of expenditure, i.e. whether the expenditure has been incurred and/ or to be incurred by the sample household or not. In case, academic session is yet to be started for a student as on date of survey and it is not possible to obtain information for the coming academic session, expenditure information may be collected with reference to the last academic session.
- For better netting of cases of Technical/ Vocational educations, a separate second-stage stratum “households with at least one student (aged 5–29 years) receiving technical/ professional education” has been included.
- Amount reimbursed by the employer (government or others) on the expenditure of education and scholarships/ stipends to be collected separately.
- Payments which are preconditions to admissions to be collected.
- Expenditure on students studying abroad will not be collected.
- *“whether the household has a Computer?” and “whether the household has any access to internet?” to be collected for each household.*
- For each person, IT-Literacy will be determined through 4 questions: *able to operate a computer/ able to use computer for word processing or typing/ able to use internet for searching desired information/ able to use internet for sending emails?*

Recommendations of the Commission

3.48 The methodology formulated by the 71st NSS Round Working Group has been approved by the NSC along with the following directions.

- (1) The subject coverage notified for the 71st NSS round may be modified to indicate ‘health’ in place of ‘health and morbidity’. This is necessary to remove a possible impression among users that the survey would measure ‘morbidity’ in all its dimensions.
- (2) With regard to students staying in hostels, their information may be collected at their usual residence, as proposed. Similarly, in respect of health characteristics, information on temporary stay away cases due to hospitalization may be included in the expenditure of their usual household. However, in respect of child births where it is customary for a daughter (or a daughter-in-law) to shift to another household (most of

the cases, her parents' household); information may be collected at the household where the cost has been incurred.

- (3) In all cases, where information is collected in respect of persons who are not members of the household as per the usual NSS definition of 'household', additional information on location (State code and district code) may be collected in order to facilitate subsequent re-grouping of such expenditures under the relevant State or district for national/ state accounts purposes. For the same purpose, such additional information may also be collected in respect of expenditure on each case of hospitalization in other States/ Districts for the members of each selected household.

Subject coverage for the 72nd and 73rd Rounds of National Sample Surveys (NSS)

3.49 The subject coverage up to the 71st NSS Round and for the 74th NSS Round was decided earlier. The 74th NSS round would be devoted to quinquennial survey on Employment & Unemployment and Household Consumer Expenditure. In view of this, the NSC felt it appropriate to deliberate on the subject coverage for the 72nd and 73rd NSS rounds, which if decided would clear the path up to the 74th NSS round for which the subject matter was already decided.

3.50 The issue of subject coverage for the 72nd NSS Round came up before the NSC in its 59th meeting (August 2013). Several possibilities and requirements were considered by the NSC for this purpose. It was noted that the frame of the VI Economic Census would not be ready during the planning stage of the 72nd Round to facilitate a follow-up survey of the Census in the round. Taking all the relevant factors into consideration, the NSC decided that the 72nd Round (Survey period: July 2014-June 2015) will develop schedules to cover tourism, household consumption of durable goods/ services and an evaluation of the methodology for shorter schedules under consideration of the Standing Technical Committee on NSSO matters chaired by Prof. Shibdas Bandyopadhyay.

3.51 The Working Group for the 72nd NSS round would function in the same manner, as was the case in the previous rounds, to formulate the survey methodology and to oversee the entire gamut of activities of the round. Keeping in view the commonalities in the work between the Technical Committee and the Working Group, it was decided that the Working Group would be chaired by Prof. Shibdas Bandyopadhyay and have the other two members of the Technical Committee, i.e., Prof. Rajeeva Karandikar and Dr. Chandan Mukherjee as members. In addition, Prof. Diganta Mukherjee of the ISI (SOSU) would be included as the other non-official member in the Working Group.

3.52 It was also decided that the work assigned to the Technical Committee would be carried on by the Working Group within the mandate. The Working Group will also give a report to the NSC on the feasibility of preparing a Master Sample for use in future NSS rounds, keeping in mind the discussion in the brainstorming session.

3.53 A Working Group was constituted on the aforementioned lines on 18th September, 2013 and it has started functioning. The ADG, NSSO (SDRD) was made the member-secretary of the Working Group. Prof. Rahul Mukherjee, Member, NSC was made the special invitee to the Group. The Member-Secretary of the Working Group shall, with the approval of the Chairman of the Working Group, submit monthly progress reports to the NSC covering various aspects.

3.54 With regard to the subject coverage for the 73rd NSS Round (Survey period: July 2015-June 2016), the request of the NSSO came up before the NSC in its 65th meeting (March 2014). By this time, considerable progress was made in respect of the VI Economic Census data preparation. Since three to four follow-up surveys of Economic Census were conducted in the past in every 10-year cycle of NSS and since the last follow-up survey was conducted in 2010-11, the NSC felt that conducting a follow-up survey of the VI Economic Census during the NSS 73rd round could be considered as one of the options. In order to deliberate on this issue, the NSSO has been asked to submit, in consultation with the CSO, a detailed note on the coverage, conceptual framework and other requirements for the survey, for consideration of the NSC. The note may also cover the manner in which the Business Register, being organized by the CSO (NAD) in compliance with the 13th Finance Commission recommendations, could be used as a source in the proposed survey.

Recommendations of the Commission

3.55 The recommendations made by the NSC on the aforementioned issues are summarized as follows:

- (1) The 72nd NSS Round will develop schedules to cover tourism, household consumption of durable goods/ services and an evaluation of the methodology for shorter schedules. The Working Group constituted will inter alia formulate the methodology. The Working Group will also give a report to the NSC on the feasibility of preparing a Master Sample for use in future NSS rounds. Member-Secretary of the Working Group shall submit monthly progress reports to the NSC covering various aspects.
- (2) With regard to the subject coverage for the 73rd NSS round, conducting a follow-up survey of the VI Economic Census could be considered as one of the options. The NSSO may submit a detailed note on the coverage, conceptual framework and other requirements for the survey.

Chapter-4

Review of some statistical activities of a few other Central Ministries

4.1 During the period under report, some of the existing statistical systems at the Centre have been reviewed by the NSC. Details are given in the following paragraphs.

Ministry of Labour and Employment

4.2 The NSC took up the review of statistical activities of the Ministry of Labour and Employment in its 63rd meeting. To facilitate this process, the Ministry, vide DO letter no. 4(63)/2013-NSC dated 13th December, 2013, has been requested to furnish a detailed note on its statistical activities (including those of its attached and subordinate offices, Public Sector Undertakings and autonomous organizations). Points to be covered in the note have been suggested in the letter addressed to the Ministry.

4.3 The Ministry of Labour and Employment did not furnish any note, for prior circulation to the Members of the NSC before the date of the 63rd meeting. However, the officers of the Ministry made presentations before the NSC in the meeting, in respect of activities of the Labour Bureau and the DGET. They have also furnished notes on these organizations during the meeting. The note furnished by the Labour Bureau refers to a few annexures, but no annexures were provided. No material has been received in respect of other organizations under the Ministry.

4.4 Based on the material provided by the representatives of the Labour Bureau and the DGET, the NSC noted inter alia the following points.

- (a) The Labour Bureau collects and disseminates data obtained through statutory and voluntary Returns from States/ UTs/ Chief Labour Commissioners (Central Sphere) under different Labour Laws (11 statutes). The reports on this data of 2010 are published in 2013. Thus, there is delay in bringing out the publications, usually due to late receipt of data.
- (b) The Labour Bureau periodically conducts Working Class Family Income and Expenditure Survey through the NSSO (FOD). The last survey was conducted in 1999-2000. The data is used for base revision of Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW).
- (c) The Bureau has been compiling and releasing monthly Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) with base year 2001. Base revision exercise has been taken up. Under the exercise, the

- number of Centres would be increased to 88 and two new sectors, namely, handlooms and construction would be covered.
- (d) The Bureau has been compiling monthly Consumer Price Index for Agricultural and Rural Labourers (CPI-AL/ RL) with base year 1986-87.
 - (e) The Bureau brings out annual reports on the basis of labour statistics data, collected under the Annual Survey of Industries.
 - (f) The Bureau has been conducting annual sample surveys on employment-unemployment. So far, three surveys have been conducted and the reports were released. Fourth survey is under progress. In addition, the Bureau conducts Quarterly Quick Employment Survey (sector-specific enterprise survey).
 - (g) The Bureau periodically conducts Occupational wage survey. The survey data is used for updating the base for Wage Rate Index Numbers. Presently, the Wage rate index is being compiled with base 1963-65.
 - (h) There is a heavy vacancy position in the Labour Bureau on the non-plan side.
 - (i) The DGET has a network of 956 Employment Exchanges, having over 4 crore job seekers registered. But, only 4 lakhs placements take place annually through this system. The system is planned to be computerized under the Employment Exchange Mission Mode project to make it more effective.
 - (j) The Ministry is proposing to revise the National Classification of Occupations (NCO-2004) to harmonize it with the ISCO-2008 series.
 - (k) Returns in form ER-I and ER-II are obtained under the Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of vacancies) Rules, 1960. The forms are used for collecting information from both act and non-act establishments.
 - (l) The DGET also conducts Census of Central Government Employees.
 - (m) The DGET brought out annual publications on Employment exchange Statistics (latest in December, 2012), on Annual Employment Review (latest in March 2011) and on Census of Central Government Employees (latest in December 2009).

Recommendations of the Commission

4.5 Based on the presentation and discussion held in the 63rd meeting, the NSC made the following recommendations:

- (1) The fact that the occupational wage survey has been delayed due to shortage of staff is a matter of concern. The survey is a very useful resource on occupational and skill utilization in the sectors under coverage and the NSC desired that the Labour Bureau and the Ministry of Labour and Employment take steps to give this work the prominence it deserves. If staff shortage is an issue, the NSC suggested that the quick employment survey may be

discontinued. However, it may not be discontinued till such time the Periodic Labour Force Survey being planned by the NSSO becomes operational.

- (2) The Labour Bureau and the Ministry of Labour and Employment may consider the creation of an integrated web portal for submission of returns on-line by concerned informants.
- (3) The Ministry of Labour and Employment in general and the Labour Bureau, in particular, should in compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, prepare a plan for the dissemination of disaggregated unit level data in the public domain. Specifically, survey based data may be released in the same way as the national sample survey and the national family health survey have been releasing their data so far.
- (4) Base revisions of indices may be pre-planned to make them effective once in five years. Base revision for the Wage Rate Index and CPI (AL/ RL) may be taken up immediately.
- (5) For the construction sector to be included in the framework of the CPI (IW), rotational design may be considered.
- (6) Heavy vacancy position under non-plan in the Labour Bureau requires immediate attention, as continuance of this trend is adversely affecting the functioning of the Bureau.
- (7) The use of the NCO-2004 needs to be reviewed, particularly in the domain of administrative statistics. The concerned functionaries need to be imparted training on the use of the classification. The Ministry of Labour and Employment may bring out statistics on newly emerging occupations, occupations that are waning and their geographical distribution aspects. This will help the Ministry and other users, in planning to build capacities in different occupations.
- (8) The Ministry of Labour and Employment may liaise with the States/ UTs to cover on census basis all employees in the Government (at all levels) setup.
- (9) The Ministry of Labour and Employment may focus its attention on enterprise surveys, rather than household surveys, and the surveys may be conducted under the provisions of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008.
- (10) Complete information on the statistical activities of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, as requested vide DO letter no. 4(63)/2013-NSC dated 13th December, 2013 addressed to Secretary (Labour), may be sent with the approval of the Secretary (Labour) for review by the NSC. The fact that the material has the approval of the Secretary needs to be mentioned in the communication. On receipt of the material, the NSC may invite the officers of the Ministry, if necessary, for further discussions.

4.6 The Labour Bureau, vide DO letter no. 23/3/2013-CPI-IW (NS) dated 9-1-2014, made a proposal to carry out Working Class Family Income & Expenditure Survey (WCFI&ES), as a part of the revision exercise of the CPI-

IW. The proposal has been considered by the NSC, in the light of the 'Guidelines on conducting statistical surveys' notified by the MOSPI, vide Notification No. 232 dated 5th December 2011 published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-III Section-4.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.7 The proposal has been concurred with by the NSC, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The survey may be conducted if no data is available with the NSSO or the CSO and the Nodal Officer (under the Collection of Statistics Rules, 2011) also certifies that the proposed survey if conducted would not amount to unnecessary duplication.
- (2) It will not be possible to integrate the WCFI&ES with any regular survey of the NSSO. Hence, a separate survey may be planned. In case the separate survey is to be conducted through the NSSO, the NSSO may be provided adequate resources required by them, both in terms of manpower and finances.
- (3) An officer in the Labour Bureau may be designated as Liaison Officer to interact and coordinate with the MOSPI and the NSC Secretariat on the conduct of the Survey.
- (4) The Labour Bureau may, in consultation with the TAC-SPCL, formulate the methodology for conducting the proposed survey, which includes concepts, definitions and classifications to be followed, sampling design, method of collecting data, processing, tabulation and dissemination of data. The methodology formulated should be properly documented and presented to the NSC for its concurrence and the survey shall be carried out in accordance with the methodology finally approved by the NSC.
- (5) Other conditions laid down under para - (3) of the 'Guidelines on conducting statistical surveys' may be complied with.

4.8 The directions of the NSC were communicated to the Labour Bureau; vide DO letter no. 4(63)/2014-NSC dated 19th February, 2014.

National Sample Survey Office and the Labour Bureau (Rural Price Collection scheme)

4.9 The NSSO reported to the NSC that the data presently being collected by them under the Rural Price Collection (RPC) scheme is being used for compilation of the CPI (AL/ RL) with base year 1986-87 by the Labour Bureau and that the index requires revision of base as the frame has become outdated. The weighting Diagram was derived based on 38th round of NSS

data in 1983. Officers of the NSSO made a presentation in the 64th meeting of the NSC, highlighting the problems faced in the data collection under the RPC scheme. It was also suggested by the NSSO that the Labour Bureau may use CPI (Rural) of the CSO in place of CPI (AL/ RL).

4.10 The issue of revision of base year for consumer price indices was considered earlier by the NSC. In its Annual Report 2011-12, the NSC recommended as follows:

"It was reported to the NSC that weighting diagrams for the CPI (Rural) and CPI (AL/ RL) are derived from the quinquennial Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES) results of the NSSO and that both these series are due for revision on the basis of the NSS 68th Round CES results. In other words, the item composition for these CPI series would be derived from a common set of items covered under CES, which would result in having a few common specifications for items in both the series. Prices are collected once in a month for both the series. Hence, the NSC recommended integration of price collection in the rural areas by selecting villages to be covered under CPI (AL/ RL) from those selected for the CPI (Rural)."

4.11 In its Annual Report 2012-13, the NSC recommended inter alia that it would be advisable for the agencies to choose 2011-12 as the base year for consumer indices.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.12 In the light of the problems presented by the NSSO, which pose questions on the representativeness of the CPI (AL/ RL), the NSC recommended that, -

- (1) appropriate steps should be taken expeditiously to revise the base of the index in a time bound manner and to stop the present data collection under the RPC scheme, as soon as possible;
- (2) the NSSO may liaise with the Labour Bureau to move suitable proposals before the TAC-SPCL to finalise the methodology for revision; and
- (3) the users of the present CPI (AL/ RL), especially the States who use the index in formulating minimum wage policies, need to be given advance notice on the stoppage of the existing index.

Office of the Registrar General of India (Sample Registration System)

4.13 The Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI) has been regularly conducting a demographic survey called 'Sample Registration System (SRS)'.

The ORGI was requested to furnish a detailed note on the SRS, for the perusal of the NSC, covering inter alia the following aspects.

- (a) Statistical standards laid down for the survey and monitoring implementation of the standards
- (b) Data flow from field agencies, and assessment about the quality and timeliness of the data
- (c) Process of statistical coordination for the successful conduct of the survey
- (d) Manner of implementing the Data Dissemination Policy and Data Sharing Policy of the Government
- (e) List of users of the survey data and reports
- (f) Bottlenecks/ constraints, if any, noticed in the survey
- (g) Recommendations of Commissions/ Committees pending for implementation
- (h) Details of the Committees (list may be given) presently functioning

4.14 The Registrar General of India and other officers of his office made a presentation before the NSC in the 63rd NSC meeting, on the SRS, a demographic survey being regularly conducted by them. The Registrar General also presented before the NSC, the new initiatives being taken up for improving registration of vital events under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969.

4.15 Based on the presentations and the note furnished by the ORGI, the NSC noted inter alia the following points.

- (b) SRS presently covers 1.47 million households and about 7.5 million population. The sample unit in rural areas is a village or a segment of a village (in case of large villages) whereas in urban area, it is a census enumeration block. At present, 7597 units spread over all States/ UTs are being surveyed. Average size of Sample unit is 190 Households.
- (c) SRS provides Annual estimates of Infant mortality rate, birth and death rates at State and National level for rural and urban areas. It also provides data for estimating components of Total Fertility Rate, Maternal Mortality Ratio and other measures of fertility and mortality. Data for determining the causes of death through verbal autopsy is also being collected since SRS-2004.
- (d) SRS has a dual reporting system with continuous and retrospective recording of events by two independent functionaries. Adequate field checks have been provided at different levels to ensure quality.
- (e) The SRS sampling frame is revised once in 10 years. A revision is due now and from 2014 onwards, the number of sample units will be increased to 8861.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.16 Based on the aforementioned inputs, the NSC made the following recommendations:

- (1) The SRS, being a panel, is a very rich demographic data source. The unit level data of the future surveys under the SRS should be released, as per the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy. The data for the previous cycle from 2003 to 2013 be digitized and made available to users, as it has very high potential use in research.
- (2) The NSC pointed out the need to develop a mechanism to migrate from the SRS to a civil registration based statistical system. In view of the fact that a number of States have achieved high level of penetration for civil registration of births, it may be useful for the ORGI to develop a transition plan for this. Suitable modifications in the SRS schedule may be included to provide for assessment of status of the civil registration of vital events.

Ministry of Agriculture

4.17 The Officers of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC) made five presentations before the NSC in its 64th meeting, covering different subject areas. Dr. U.C. Sud of the IASRI made a presentation on the activities of the IASRI in the meeting. With regard to the recommendations of the Vaidyanathan Committee, which include setting up of a National Crop Statistics Centre (NCSC), it was stated during the presentation that the Government accepted the report of the Committee, that the proposal for setting up a new centre, i.e., NCSC, was not supported by the EFC, and that the EFC has recommended a pilot programme out of the funds available under the scheme "Improvement of Agriculture Statistics".

4.18 With regard to agricultural statistics on crop area and crop yield, it was reported inter alia that there have been delays in reporting by States, that large variations were being noticed in successive advance and final estimates, that there has been mismatch between the district-wise estimates and State level estimates received from the SASAs, that the quality/ reliability of the results of the crop-cutting experiments was doubtful, and that there has been inter-agency variation and large year-to-year variations in the estimates within State, besides inter-State large variations in yield rates. The following suggestions were made during the presentation.

- (a) Since the primary workers (Patwaris etc.) are unable to devote adequate time for agriculture statistical work, contract workers may exclusively be engaged by the SASAs for the field work at village level.

- (b) A Core Group/ Coordination Committee of officers of Departments of Agriculture, Land Records and DES under the leadership of State Secretary (Agriculture)/ APC should meet and coordinate with other State Agencies to finalize data on area/ production, before furnishing the data to the Central Government.
- (c) The Core Group should also liaise with the Departments of Sugar, Horticulture and other agricultural input related Departments (e.g., Irrigation, Power, Weather, Remote Sensing, and Agricultural Research Institutes etc.) for their feedback in finalising estimates of area and production.

4.19 Agricultural statistics received from the DAC are used by the CSO in compilation of national accounts. The statistics flow to the DAC from the States. As the States use agricultural statistics in compilation of SDP, the data on each State that goes into compilation of national accounts shall be the same as those used by each State in compilation of SDP. This does not seem to be happening, as the States revise their figures after release of final estimates by the DAC. Large variations are reported in production data of the States and of the DAC. Even within the DAC, there seems to be problems in reconciliation of figures, as the area/ production data for other crops (other than major crops) furnished by the DES are not consistent with those available in the LUS.

4.20 With regard to the cost of cultivation studies, it was pointed out inter alia that a Central Sector Scheme for studying the cost of cultivation of principal crops has been in operation since 1970-71, that the scheme is being implemented in 19 States through 16 implementing agencies, that the selection of crops for study is changed once in 3 years, that the Farm Analysis Package (FARMAP), a DOS based software (developed in 1992), is being used for data entry, validation, tabulation and generation of estimates, that there has been a time-lag of about 2 years in submission of cost estimates to the CACP, and that the methodological issues in the cost of cultivation survey are presently under the examination of a Committee under the Chairmanship of Director, National Centre for Agricultural Economics & Policy Research.

4.21 With regard to collection of data on prices (wholesale, retail and farm harvest prices) of agricultural commodities, it was stated inter alia that the State Governments collect and send price data directly to the Directorate of Economics & Statistics in the Ministry of Agriculture by post, that, of late, most of the States have stopped sending and a few of them have not been regular, and that the system has been suffering because of irregular and delayed reporting. It was pointed out during the presentation made before the NSC that there is a duplication in data collection by different agencies such as the DES, Agmarknet, and others, that there is a need to reconsider and review the list of markets and commodities in tune with the current agricultural marketing scenario, and that there is lack of uniformity in quality, units and time in the price data, which raises questions on comparability.

4.22 With regard to agricultural census, a host of problems, such as low priority given by State Governments, other pre-occupations of Patwaris contributing to delay of this work, and less interest shown in the Agriculture Census work by the field functionaries due to low rates of honorarium were brought to the notice of the NSC. Among the constraints being faced, diversion of officials trained in the work to other items of work by the States and non-filling of sanctioned posts in States like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand were also noted. Steps taken for improvement were reported in the meeting. It was suggested that the post of Agriculture Census Commissioner may be upgraded to the level of Additional Secretary to ensure effective coordination with the States for the overall improvement of Agriculture Census Scheme. It was also stated that the Ministry of Agriculture has agreed to this and requested the MOSPI in November, 2001 to upgrade this post to HAG and encadre it in ISS.

4.23 The system of horticulture statistics was reviewed by the NSC. During the presentation made by the concerned officer, it was noted that the major problems are due to methodological variations practiced by multiple agencies involved in data collection, delays and omissions by States, and lack of adequate institutional mechanisms for data collection and validation. It was reported that an alternative methodology developed by the IASRI would be piloted in five States, before extending it to the entire country.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.24 The NSC made the following recommendations on the aforementioned issues:

- (i) The DAC may take suitable steps for implementation of the suggestions given in para – 4.18, to ensure better coordination among State agencies and improve quality of area and production estimates.
- (ii) The DAC may enhance the scope of its statistical activities to cover not only principal crops but also all the crops in all the States/ UTs. For this purpose, the DAC needs to strengthen coordination within the Department as well, to ensure inter alia that all the cultivable land is taken into consideration for generating agricultural statistics.
- (iii) The DAC may, in consultation with the States/ UTs and the IASRI, work out and execute a concrete plan to bring in, the entire agricultural statistics within its ambit. The plan should include generating reliable statistics for establishing linkage between production, consumption and trading of agricultural produce, value chain, food balance sheets, harmonization of classifications used by different agencies producing the data, steps for improving land-use statistics to cover the areas under

hilly tracts in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura, data on land being converted from agricultural to non-agricultural use, systematizing revision and reconciliation of figures by the States and the Centre, documenting all the steps, and dissemination of unit level data in compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy.

- (iv) With regard to the cost of cultivation studies, its scope may be enhanced to cover more crops and more States, its sampling design may be got reviewed by the IASRI to reduce sampling and non-sampling errors, and the FARMAP may be replaced by a more user friendly web-enabled system.
- (v) The data on cost of cultivation survey has immense potential of being used by planners and researchers. Hence, unit level data of the survey should be made available, in compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy.
- (vi) The DAC may guide the States in taking up cost of cultivation studies, which are important at State level and which cannot be accommodated in the surveys of the Centre.
- (vii) The problems in price data could be overcome through better coordination among the Central and State agencies, and by using IT-enabled systems for data collection, flow and processing of price data. The DAC may take steps in this direction and provide methodological guidance to the States to improve quality of data. The data on wholesale, retail and farm harvest prices may be regularly disseminated with a reasonable time lag.
- (viii) The disaggregated unit level data of the agricultural census may be disseminated, in compliance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy.
- (ix) The DAC may take steps to introduce uniform methodology on horticulture statistics, after the conclusion of the pilot experiment, to assist the States in strengthening data collection and validation mechanisms, and to strengthen coordination through nodal officers to be designated by each State.

Department of Health and Family Welfare (National Family Health Survey)

4.25 The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted by the Department of Health and Family Welfare (DOHFW) is an important data source extensively used for evidence-based decision making by policy makers at the Centre and in the States/ UTs. The fourth NFHS (NFHS-4) is the fourth

survey in the series of surveys conducted by the DOHFW. The NFHS-4 can be viewed as a step to update the NFHS-3 data.

4.26 The International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS) has been the nodal agency for all the NFHS series including the NFHS-4. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) constituted by the DOHFW formulated the survey methodology for the NFHS-4. The DOHFW submitted the technical proposal on NFHS-4 to the NSC. A meeting of the NSC was held on 13th September, 2013 to discuss issues arising out of the proposal.

4.27 The officers of the DOHFW and Dr. F. Ram of the IIPS presented the proposal before the NSC in the meeting dated 13th September, 2013. On the basis of the presentation made and the discussions held in the meeting, the following salient features of the NFHS-4 were inter alia noted by the NSC.

- (1) The NFHS-4 will be held during 2014-15. A Steering Committee headed by the Secretary (DOHFW) approved the NFHS-4 proposal in its meeting on 19.08.2013. A Technical Advisory Committee headed by Dr N.S. Sastry, Former Director General of the NSSO has been guiding technical aspects of the survey.
- (2) The NFHS-4 has similarities with NFHS-3. The scope of NFHS-4 has been greatly expanded over NFHS-3.
- (3) NFHS-4 will provide information on HIV prevalence for women (age 15-49) and men (age 15-54) at the national level and for 11 groups of States/ UTs.
- (4) Anemia testing and height and weight measurements for women (age 15-49), men (age 15-54) and children under age 5 will also be included in NFHS-4.
- (5) The domain of clinical, anthropometric and biochemical testing is being further expanded in NFHS-4 to include blood glucose and hypertension measurements with estimates to be reported at the district level. The scope of the survey has been enhanced in other subject areas also.
- (6) NFHS-4 will provide estimates of most indicators at district level for all the 640 districts with separate estimates for urban and rural areas for 157 districts having level of urbanization between 30-70%. In view of this, the sample size for the NFHS-4 is likely to be about 5.68 lakhs households, up from about one lakh households in case of NFHS-3.
- (7) NFHS-4 will be designed to provide information on sexual behavior, HIV/ AIDS knowledge, attitudes and behavior and domestic violence only at the state level, while most other indicators will be reported at the district level, a sub-sample of 15% of households will be selected for the implementation of the state module, in addition to the district modules. In the 15% of households, a long questionnaire will be canvassed that includes all the questions needed for the district-level estimates plus the additional questions required for the state module.

- (8) The sample size for the implementation of the state module will be almost equivalent to the state level sample size in NFHS-3 to facilitate comparability.
- (9) About 12-15 field agencies (FAs) will be selected to implement data collection through Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

4.28 The NSC considered the aforementioned proposal in the light of the 'Guidelines on conducting statistical surveys', notified by the MOSPI vide Notification No. 232 dated 5th December 2011 published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-III Section-4. It was stated by the officers of the DOHFW that time required for canvassing each schedule in a household would be about 1 ½ hours and that more time would be required in the NFHS-4 to collect information on Bio-markers. The phasing of field work planned in the NFHS-4 was also noted by the NSC.

4.29 The NSC expressed concern about the possibility that more than four-fold increase in sample size and the complexities introduced by way of expansion in scope in the NFHS-4 may result in increase of non-sampling errors. Having considered this aspect, as also all other relevant factors, the NSC advised the DOHFW as follows.

- (1) The NSC noted that the scope and size of the state module is such that it can be used to maintain comparability with NFHS-3. In light of that and also recognizing that training and phasing of field work are important to control non-sampling errors, the NSC advised completion of state module on priority ahead of district module.
- (2) Taking up state module first would ensure complete comparability with NFHS-3 and facilitate phasing of training programme to ensure lower non-sampling errors in the district module also. With this, the NSC felt that, the scope for possible non-comparability between NFHS-3 and NFHS-4 will be minimized. Yet, the data for all the requirements articulated by the DOHFW would be available. This would also facilitate quick release of results on the basis of state module.
- (3) It would be necessary to put in place at least one team in every State/ UT in the beginning itself, so as to fully train them and get the state module completed on priority. Augmentation of strength with additional teams can be done, subsequently, who would be put on intensive training before being put on the job.
- (4) The field work should be subject to strict supervision and the filled-in information should be got thoroughly scrutinized.
- (5) The aforementioned advice of the NSC may be brought to the notice of the Technical Advisory Committee, for appropriate action. The response of the Committee may be communicated to the NSC.

4.30 The DOHFW placed the aforementioned advice of the NSC before the TAC constituted by them. The TAC, in its meeting held on 30th September, 2013, considered the advice of the NSC. The recommendations/ observations

of the TAC have been approved by the Secretary, DOHFW and this was communicated to the NSC vide their letter dated 11th October 2013 along with the minutes of the TAC meeting. The minutes indicated summarization of the main points as follows:

- (1) NFHS-4 would be conducted in two phases following the practice of NFHS-3.
- (2) Full NFHS-4 sample will be used for generating district, state and national level estimates. Only for some of the indicators like domestic violence, HIV/ AIDS etc., the estimates will be based on the additional questions to be canvassed in 15% of the total sample households. It would, therefore, be operationally difficult and impractical to cover a part of the sample first and the rest of the sample later.
- (3) Almost all TAC members clearly stated that NFHS-4 should not provide two sets of estimates from the same survey. NFHS-4 data would be available to public and if someone wants to generate estimates based on 15% sample households earmarked for collecting additional information on domestic violence, HIV/ AIDS etc., he or she may do so.
- (4) TAC recognises the concern of NSC about controlling non-sampling error and recommends that additional efforts be made to check non-sampling errors through spot checking of fieldwork, quick feedback etc.
- (5) The use of computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) would help in controlling errors occurring due to data entry, skip patterns, inconsistency between information on different items etc. CAPI would also allow real time monitoring of data quality by providing data quality tables for every field agency on weekly basis. The regular feedback to agencies/ teams would help in improved data quality. This would be a unique feature of NFHS-4."

4.31 In reply to the aforementioned letter dated 11th October 2013, the Chairperson, NSC, vide his letter dated 28th October, 2013 addressed to the Secretary, DOHFW, expressed concern on the following issues.

- 1) The entire tenor of the TAC deliberations seem to suggest that just the size of the sample and the manner of supervision would be enough to control non-sampling errors and resolve issues of comparability with the previous series of surveys.
- 2) In a sample of this size and a survey methodology utilizing a very large number of partner organizations will inevitably have a higher non- sampling errors than smaller surveys which are carried out in a more concentrated manner. In such a situation, while it may not be entirely feasible to do anything about non-sampling errors per se, at the very least efforts should be made

so that such non-sampling errors can be estimated and appropriate corrections made. The interpenetrating sample methodology is one way of doing so. This methodology has not even been considered and is probably not feasible in the manner in which the survey is proposed to be carried out, i.e., district by district.

- 3) More importantly, the TAC should be aware that survey schedules which are not completely standardized will invariably lead to differences in response from the survey respondents. In NFHS-4, 15% of the sample (state sample) will have a substantially larger schedule than the remaining 85%. If the data from these schedules are clubbed with the other, it could lead to serious contamination of the estimates. On the other hand, it is precisely this 15% which will be comparable to the earlier three rounds of NFHS. The remaining 85% will not be strictly comparable except for the bio-metrics. How this dilemma can be resolved is a matter that needs consideration.

4.32 The Chairperson, NSC also suggested, in his letter dated 28th October, 2013, that the TAC may meet the NSC to resolve the issues. Accordingly, the Chairman and members of the TAC of the DOHFW made a presentation before the NSC in its 62nd meeting, on the steps proposed to be taken in the NFHS-4 for controlling non-sampling errors.

4.33 It was recognized that the NFHS-4 is required to provide district level estimates to provide necessary clues for policy interventions at district level and that DLHS series being conducted so far by the DOHFW would be discontinued after conducting the NFHS-4. It was also reported that the DLHS has been integrated with the NFHS in evolving the NFHS-4 and this exercise resulted in increase in the sample size. It was emphasized by the TAC that the NFHS-4 will be the benchmark for all future NFHSs, in respect of district level demographic and health indicators.

4.34 The main concern about NFHS-4 is with regard to non-sampling errors that may contaminate the results due to heavy increase in sample size, which may eventually pose questions on comparability with the past. Non-sampling errors arise mainly due to invalid definitions and concepts, inaccurate sampling frames, unsatisfactory questionnaires, defective methods of data collection, tabulation and coding and incomplete coverage of sample units. These errors are unpredictable and not easily controlled. Unlike in the control of sampling error, this error may increase with increases in sample size. If not properly controlled, non-sampling errors can be more damaging than sampling error for large-scale household surveys. In the NFHS-4, it is apprehended that data on qualitative variables may be relatively more prone to non-sampling errors. As the sources of non-sampling error are numerous and varied, it is virtually impossible to assess the totality of non-sampling

error that arises in a survey. It is possible, however, to study and assess some of the components of non-sampling error.

4.35 The TAC in their presentation brought out inter alia the following aspects in respect of the issues of concern.

- (1) The content of the questionnaires in NFHS-4 has been enhanced by adding additional questions, but retaining the questions that were there in the NFHS-3 questionnaire. The information obtained in respect of questions repeated would facilitate comparability, as there is no change in concepts and definitions.
- (2) Non-sampling errors would be kept under control through a host of measures, such as dividing whole field operations into manageable number of phases, intensified training of field staff, data collection through CAPI, taking due care in field agency's selection and core staff, ensuring conducive working conditions for field staff, strengthening monitoring and supervision, running validation checks at IIPS level regularly to provide real time feedback to field agencies and teams, an intensified field monitoring, continuous evaluation of data through field-check tables during field work and convening review meetings with FAs about progress and data quality issues throughout the survey.
- (3) Measuring non-sampling errors is very difficult in a large sample survey of this dimension and time lines are not available as per the plan of action agreed with the other stakeholders, who are funding the survey. There is no time left even for conducting a pilot.
- (4) With regard to the issue of comparability, the results from the sub-sample (15 %) provided in the NFHS-4 would be comparable with the NFHS-3 at state level. At district level, the results of DLHS-4 would be comparable with those of the NFHS-4.

4.36 The NSC appreciated the above measures to control non-sampling errors but reiterated its original concern of the fact that four-fold increase in sample size would increase the risk for non-sampling errors, and was therefore keen that options for estimating such errors need to be explored. Chairman, TAC also agreed that this would be very desirable if such estimation could be carried out within the survey itself. In this connection, the overall sampling plan was taken note of by the NSC and it was suggested that the TAC may consider dividing the sample into two or more sub-samples to be canvassed independently to estimate non-sampling errors. One way of doing so, for example, would be through modifying the current proposal of not allocating more than two States/ Regions to a single agency by instead ensuring that in every State/ Region at least two different agencies are involved in the field work. The existing restriction should be appropriately modified, if required, to ensure that the total number of field agencies are as may be desirable. The estimation can be done through a suitable partitioning of the selected FSUs and creating two sub-samples in each district of every

State and region. The selected sub-samples are to be canvassed through independent agencies. Ideally, these sub-samples should be drawn independently. However, as was noted in the discussion in the 62nd NSC meeting, this may lead to geographical discontinuity, increasing implementation cost for the field agencies. If this is a consideration, then an alternative procedure may be considered: the full sample for the State/Region and districts be drawn as originally planned; the FSU's be plotted on to a map, and States and districts be partitioned systematically ensuring geographic continuity but adhering to the spirit of providing as far as possible two different agencies in every district. If this is done, care should be taken to ensure that each agency, operating within a State, broadly captures the full diversity of the State. Either of these two procedures would facilitate generation of some measures on non-sampling errors by comparing the estimates in the selected sub-samples. The discussion also pointed out the need to carefully test the State and district level samples for poolability, in view of their different schedules of inquiry, before generating merged estimates. The Chairman of the TAC was also of the view that ability to measure non-sampling error would increase user confidence in the quality of the results and agreed to consider the suggestions made.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.37 The NSC made the following recommendations on the aforementioned issues:

- (1) Steps to control and measure non-sampling errors in the NFHS-4 may be taken up on the lines suggested by the NSC.
- (2) The unit level data of the NFHS-4 to be placed in the public domain may include unique codes (may not be the names) assigned to agencies, interviewers and supervisors, to facilitate analytical study of non-sampling errors by users.
- (3) The report on the NFHS-4 may include a chapter on comparability of results of the NFHS-4 with those of the NFHS-3 and the DLHS-4.
- (4) Complete documentation through meta data may be placed in the public domain to facilitate further improvisations in the future NFHS.

4.38 The minutes of the 62nd NSC meeting, containing the aforementioned recommendations, were forwarded to the DOHFW. Secretary, DOHFW stated, vide his letter dated 10th January, 2014 stated inter alia that a study would be undertaken in two States (Jharkhand and Kerala) by selecting interpenetrating sub-samples to get some idea of non-sampling errors, that it would be appropriate to treat the NFHS-4 data as the benchmark, and that the IIPS has been instructed to conduct the NFHS-4 as recommended by the TAC. With the approval of the Chairperson, NSC, this communication was replied by the CSI; vide his letter dated 22nd January 2014, as follows.

1. It appears that the plan of action suggested by the Commission for controlling non-sampling errors has not been wholly taken up for implementation, presumably due to administrative problems. However, the idea of limiting the study to Jharkhand and Kerala is a welcome step under the given circumstances.
2. On the issue of comparability, the letter of the Secretary, DOHFW seems to suggest that NFHS-4 will be a new benchmark for the future surveys of such nature, and that the TAC is not apparently concerned about the comparability of NFHS-4 estimates with the earlier surveys. If that is the case, it should be clearly and explicitly mentioned in the NFHS-4 report that the results of the NFHS-4 may not be comparable with the earlier NFHS rounds and should be treated purely as a new benchmark.

National Sample Survey Office and the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (Drug Abuse Survey)

4.39 The NSSO and the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DOSJE) have proposed to conduct an advanced pilot survey on drug abuse. The facts giving rise to the proposal are detailed in the following paragraphs.

4.40 A preliminary survey on drug abuse was conducted by the NSSO, at the instance of the DOSJE to pre-test the schedules of inquiry in four samples (one urban block in Pune city and three rural samples, one each in Nagaland, Punjab and West Bengal). Subsequently, on the basis of the methodology recommended by a Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. Arijit Chaudhuri, a pilot survey was conducted during March-April, 2010 in three cities, namely, Amritsar, Mumbai and Imphal.

4.41 The drug users were captured in the aforementioned pilot survey through network sampling, where selection units comprised Drug De-addiction centres, pockets of consumption of drugs, brothels and Prisons, and observation units were actual drug users linked to them. The field work was carried out by staff of NGOs identified by the DOSJE under the supervision of NSSO. Based on the data collected, the NSSO brought out a report in January, 2011.

4.42 After examining the report of the pilot survey brought out by the NSSO, the DOSJE raised certain issues relating to under-estimates, non-coverage of certain age groups, limitation of pilot survey being confined to cities of Amritsar, Mumbai and Imphal instead of entire States of Punjab/ Maharashtra/ Manipur and non-coverage of other potential selection units such as, homeless/ pavement dwellers, street children, rag pickers, university/ college/ school campuses/ surroundings, highways/ roadside eateries, and liquor vendors, in the survey. The DOSJE suggested for conducting a more comprehensive and extended pilot survey, so as to cover some States.

4.43 The issues raised by the DOSJE were discussed in a meeting held on 21st April 2011 under the Chairmanship of Prof. Shibdas Bandyopadhyay, in which Prof. Arjit Chaudhuri was present. It was decided in this meeting that a Technical Committee headed by Prof. Arjit Chaudhuri may look into the matter afresh and take a final view.

4.44 The Technical Committee, after review, emphasized the importance of having complete frames for accurate estimation through this survey. Accordingly, the sampling design and methodology for the survey were finalized by the Technical Committee.

4.45 On the basis of the recommendations of the above said Technical Committee, the DOSJE constituted a Central Coordination Committee (CCC) to coordinate and monitor the overall progress of the Advanced Pilot Survey to be conducted, on the lines recommended by the Chaudhuri Committee, in all the districts of Manipur, Maharashtra and Punjab. The concerned State Governments were given the responsibility of preparation of list frames in the prescribed formats, and the National Institute of Social Defence under the DOSJE was given the responsibility of preparation of survey instruments viz., instructions manual, schedules of inquiry and tabulation plan, etc. In a meeting of the CCC held on 9th July 2013, arrangements for conducting the pilot were discussed.

4.46 A meeting of the NSC was held on 6th September, 2013 to discuss issues arising out of a pilot survey on drug abuse conducted by the NSSO and the proposal for conducting an Advanced Pilot Survey in view of the aforementioned status. The officers of the NSSO made a presentation before the NSC in this meeting, on the pilot survey done by them and on proposals for the future. The officers, during their presentation, explained the details of the sampling design and results of the pilot survey held on the basis of the report of the Technical Committee, and highlighted some problems observed in the list frames received from Manipur and Punjab for conducting the advanced pilot survey. The following are some of the facts presented by the NSSO, in the meeting.

- (a) The pilot survey on prevalence and dependence on harmful drugs was conducted during March-April, 2010 in three regions, namely, Amritsar, Mumbai & Imphal. Individuals aged 12 to 65 years who have ever consumed certain specified drugs (e.g., Heroin, Opium, Cannabis, Cocaine, etc.) were covered in the survey through Stratified Constrained Network Sampling.
- (b) Conventional household survey was not preferred because of significant presence of hard core drug users outside households, likely under reporting due to the stigma attached on consumption of such drugs, and relative rarity of consumption.

- (c) The MOSPI formed a Technical Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Arijit Chowdhuri to review the sampling design, estimation procedure and operation modalities used in the Pilot Survey and to suggest a comprehensive framework for the Advanced Pilot Survey.
- (d) The Committee observed inter alia that underestimates in the Pilot Survey were mainly due to incomplete frames. The Committee endorsed the Network Sampling technique adopted in the earlier Pilot Survey and advised to ensure completeness of Frames for all the Strata in each State.
- (e) List frames were received from Punjab and Manipur for the proposed Advanced Pilot Survey. Based on the validation of list frames received, the NSSO found that -
- In respect of Punjab, only 94 villages (out of 12715) appear in any of the Frames, of which 65 villages belong to Barnala & Jalandhar districts. No villages were found from 6 districts in any of the Frames. With regard to urban sector, out of 160 towns, 49 appear in any of the Frames.
 - With regard to Manipur, only 319 villages out of 2612 appear in any of the Frames and out of 35 towns, 27 appear in any of the Frames.
 - As per the list Frames furnished, there are 34 de-addiction centres in Manipur and 39 in Punjab. This information seems to be incomplete when viewed in the light of other sources available in the public domain.
- (f) The aforementioned evidence corroborates existence of other de-addiction centres, indicating incompleteness of the relevant list frame furnished.
- (g) With regard to list of pockets of consumption in Manipur, out of 2612 villages, only 268 villages have reported the presence of at least one drug consumption pocket and out of 35 towns, 21 of them reported at least one pocket. This may imply that the drug users from the remaining 90% villages are accessing these 268 villages and/ or 21 towns in Manipur. Absence of 14 towns (of which 10 from Imphal) in the list of pocket of consumption is also very doubtful considering the seriousness of the problem projected by the Stake holders.
- (h) The situation about the list of pockets of consumption is not very different in respect of Punjab. Only 53 villages (out of 12715) reported presence of at least one pocket of drug consumption.

Only 19% (31 out of 160) of the total census towns reported the presence of at least one pocket.

- (i) In view of the above, it can be inferred that list frames provided for the proposed Advanced Pilot Survey suffer from serious under coverage. The grave scenario of rural population being extensively affected by drug use as highlighted by the State Authorities has not been reflected in the Frames.
- (j) Extent of under-estimation cannot be measured in the already conducted pilot survey, as also in the proposed Advanced Pilot Survey, mainly due to incompleteness of the list frames. This poses a question, whether it is possible to prepare a complete frame.

4.47 The aforementioned facts and the material placed before it were considered by the NSC. The NSC noted the following shortcomings in the methodology for the pilot survey (conducted and proposed).

- (i) All the assumptions made in the course of formulating the methodology need to be tested in the pilot survey. But, this seems to have not been done. For example, the success of the pilot and the sampling design applied thereof mainly revolves around the completeness of the list frame. Dependence on NGOs for preparation of list frames seems to create a location bias against areas with limited presence of such bodies. The pilot did not explore the possibility of counting on the accuracy of the list frame because the informants were not probed about their accessing locations not listed in the frame. Seeking certification from the concerned State Government on completeness of the frame may not be adequate, because certain elements in the frame, such as pockets of consumption and addiction centres, are dynamic in character.
- (ii) Presence of cannabis in the list of specified drugs targeted in the survey further makes the list frame preparation almost impossible, as it may not be possible to enlist all the locations because of wide spread availability.
- (iii) If it is not possible to ensure completeness of the list frame, employing net-work sampling design exclusively in the survey becomes questionable.
- (iv) Among the specified drugs, it would be necessary to understand from the users whether the survey should cover all types of drugs and substances that may be abused or misused. The issue gives rise to at least three kinds of situations, i.e., drugs whose consumption is illegal, drugs whose consumption is legal but not

according to prescription, and abuse of drugs is wide spread because of the nature of their availability. The methodological approach and the sampling technique to be adopted in each situation may be different. This aspect was not considered adequately in the pilot.

- (v) The conducted pilot survey has undoubtedly given rise to underestimates. Extent of underestimation could not be assessed. This being the case, it may not be proper to conduct another pilot survey on the same lines, without looking into the issues and shortcomings.

4.48 The NSC noted that the drug abuse survey is a joint effort of the MOSPI and the DOSJE, as the technical support is provided by the MOSPI and the actual conduct of the survey is taken care of by the DOSJE. It was also brought to the notice of the NSC that the United States Department of Health & Human Services has been regularly conducting Annual National Household Surveys on Drug Abuse since 1990.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.49 In view of the above, the NSC recommended that - ,

- (a) No purpose would be served by conducting the proposed Advanced Pilot Survey.
- (b) Methodology and the sampling design need to be looked into afresh, to address the aforementioned concerns and other relevant factors. Different alternatives or combinations thereof need to be evolved to tackle different situations. The list of drugs to be covered and the procedure of preparing list frames need to be looked into. A Working Group may be constituted by the MOSPI for these purposes.
- (c) A fresh pilot survey should be conducted in two districts of Punjab (one district from those covered and one district not covered in the list frame furnished by the Government of Punjab) in accordance with the new methodology formulated by the Working Group. The pilot should be conducted under the oversight of the Working Group, so that all the methodological variations and assumptions could be professionally tested in the pilot.
- (d) The DOSJE would arrange resources for conducting the pilot survey and enlist the support of the Punjab Government, NGOs and other stake-holders in conducting the survey.
- (e) The Working Group should evolve estimation procedures and generate estimates, based on the data collected in the pilot, along with the relative standard errors and estimates on non-sampling errors.

- (f) On the basis of the results of the pilot, the Working Group should recommend suitable methodology for a nation-wide survey on drug abuse to generate estimates at national and state level.
- (g) The composition and terms of reference for the Working Group should be finalized by the MOSPI with the approval of the Chairperson, NSC.

4.50 As a follow-up of the aforementioned recommendations, the DOSJE was requested to give their concurrence for conducting a field survey in two districts of Punjab (one district from those covered and one district not covered in the list frame furnished by the Government of Punjab) for which that Department would enlist the support of the Punjab Government, NGOs and other stake-holders and provide resources for the purpose. The DOSJE stated that field survey should be conducted in two districts each of Punjab and Manipur and subject to this, gave their concurrence. The Secretary, MOSPI and the DG, NSSO agreed that the proposed pilot survey could be conducted in both the States, as suggested by the DOSJE.

4.51 In view of the above, a Working Group was constituted under the Chairmanship of the DG, NSSO; vide order no. 4(60)/2013-NSC (Part. II) dated 21st October, 2013. The terms of reference of the Working Group are as under.

- (a) Formulating alternate methodologies appropriate for the purpose of testing in a pilot survey, after examining the following issues, namely
 - ,
 - (i) What are the drugs to be covered in a drug abuse survey, specifically seeking to eliminate those that are very widely available?
 - (ii) What should be the procedure for preparation of list frames?
 - (iii) Whether it is feasible to identify the target population, i.e., the persons engaged in drug abuse, wholly through the process of identification of list frames, as was done in the earlier pilot survey?
 - (iv) In case, the answer to (iii) is 'no', whether it is possible to use the list frames for formation of separate sub-populations of households in order to conduct the survey through network sampling in such sub-populations and to survey the rest of the households in the usual two-stage design followed in NSS?
 - (v) Whether the approach followed by the United States Department of Health & Human Services in conducting Annual National Household Survey on Drug Abuse would be appropriate to be followed in Indian conditions?
 - (vi) Whether it would be possible to identify, for the purpose of two-stage NSS sampling design, separate sub-populations (area frames) that are prone to drug abuse, through

administrative records including areas where chemicals frequently used in the manufacture of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances are produced?

- (b) Conducting a field survey in two districts in each of Punjab and Manipur States (one district from those covered and one district not covered in the list frame furnished by the concerned State Government), to test all the methodologies formulated.
- (c) Evolving estimation procedures and generating estimates, based on the data collected, along with the relative standard errors and estimates on non-sampling errors
- (d) Recommending suitable methodology for a nation-wide survey on drug abuse to generate estimates at national and state level.

4.52 The Working Group started functioning. The tenure of the Working Group is six months. The NSC recommended that the report of the Working Group shall be placed before it.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

4.53 The RBI and the SEBI furnished detailed notes on the corporate sector and balance of payments statistics, being handled in the respective organizations. Officers from the organizations made presentations before the NSC in its 65th meeting. Apart from internal use by these organizations, the statistics are extensively used by the CSO in compilation of national accounts.

4.54 The data on corporate sector is collected statutorily by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), the SEBI and the Income Tax Department. The MCA database, which is presently used by the RBI and the CSO, is still in an evolving mode. The MCA has introduced XBRL taxonomy for submission of returns by large companies and listed companies. Access to this data has been provided to the CSO and the RBI. The data is used for generating estimates and growth rates by the RBI for providing necessary inputs to the CSO for compilation of national accounts. The NSC noted all the points and issues raised by the RBI and the SEBI. As a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. B.N. Goldar, Member, NSC is looking into the corporate sector statistics, the matter will be reconsidered, if necessary, on completion of the work of the Committee.

Recommendations of the Commission

4.55 The NSC, after detailed deliberations, made the following recommendations/ observations:

- (1) The RBI may consider conducting some of its surveys (presently carried out on the basis of voluntary responses) under the provisions of the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008.

- (2) It was reported that the SEBI has organized a dedicated portal for on-line submission of statutory returns (quarterly and annual) by the listed companies. It was suggested that the RBI and the CSO may explore directly using the database of the portal for their purposes, specifically to see whether this data could be used in generating quarterly estimates in a much faster way.
- (3) It was reported that the data collected in Block-4 of the Industrial Outlook Survey Schedule is being internally used by the RBI at present. The NSC felt that the data has a high potential for use in research and desired that the data may be placed in the public domain.
- (4) It was noted that information on destination (country-wise) for service exports is not made available at present. The NSC desired that the RBI may consider releasing them with suitable guidance on limitations.
- (5) The NSC desired to know whether a detailed statistical profile of investors and their investment activity by State/ location (rural/ urban) can be made available and whether a statistical profile of non-corporate market intermediaries could be generated.
- (6) The SEBI may review, in consultation with the RBI and the CSO, compilation and dissemination of information on statistical parameters from its database.
- (7) The CSO and the RBI may examine the use of information on foreign subsidiary companies, generated by the RBI through their statutory returns.
- (8) It was suggested whether the report on remittances by the NRIs could be expanded to cover all remittances including those received in India by foreigners residing in India.

Chapter-5

New Statistical Initiatives

5.1 During the period under report, a number of new initiatives were taken up on the statistical front. These initiatives range from updating the existing data to experimentation on bringing in new statistical products. Details are given in the following paragraphs.

Measuring contract labour

5.2 The Ministry of Labour and Employment made a proposal for conducting a survey on contract labour through the NSSO. The proposal of the Ministry included definitions and data requirements, in respect of the subject matter. The NSC, in its 49th meeting (held in May 2012), considered the proposal and recommended that a Working Group may be constituted by the MOSPI under the Chairmanship of Prof. T.S. Papola to formulate methodology (including sampling design), undertake pilot testing, as may be necessary, and submit its report to the NSC within six months. The NSC also desired that the Ministry of Labour and Employment may furnish the details of statistical information collected by them under the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Rules made there under, that the details furnished may be considered by the Nodal Officer (under the Collection of Statistics Rules, 2011) along with other material for tendering advice on avoiding unnecessary duplication, and that the details of the advice may be placed before the Working Group. The NSC further stated that it would consider the report of the Working Group and the advice of the Nodal officer, simultaneously. In pursuance with these recommendations, the MOSPI constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Papola in August 2012.

5.3 The Papola Committee did not undertake pilot testing before submission of its report, presumably due to not specifically mentioning this activity in its TOR. The Committee submitted its report to the MOSPI in July 2013. The recommendations of the Committee are as follows:

- (1) For the present, an independent survey on contract labour may be undertaken by NSSO but, in future, information on contract labour may be collected as part of the quinquennial surveys on Employment and Unemployment through a special module on contract labour in the survey schedule.
- (2) For the independent survey on contract labour, the schedule will be on the lines of Employment and Unemployment schedule of NSSO and is to be so designed that (i) along with the particulars of contract labour, estimates on key employment and unemployment indicators can also be developed for all workers

and (ii) separate estimates for the contract labour covered under the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 can be made available.

- (3) The sampling design for the independent survey on contract labour will be the same as the sampling design followed in employment and unemployment surveys of NSSO.
- (4) Total number of sample FSUs to be selected for the independent survey on contract labour will be on the lines of sample FSUs covered in the employment and unemployment surveys of NSSO considering the duration of the survey and availability of resources.
- (5) The coverage of the contract labour will not be restricted only to those contract labour who are employed in establishments but will be extended to households/ housing societies/ co-operative societies/ trust/ other non-profit institutions etc. Accordingly, the Working Group recommended the following definition of contract labour for the purpose of the survey:

“any person who is hired in or in connection with the work of an establishment/ household/ housing society/ co-operative society/ trust/ other non-profit institution etc., by or through a contractor shall be considered as a contract labour provided the person does not work in the capacity of a supervisor/ manager/ administrator and is not a regular employee of the contractor”

where establishment will mean an institutional unit situated in a single physical location in which one or predominantly one kind of economic activity like production and/ or distribution of goods and/ or services is carried out which is not for the sole purpose of own consumption and a contractor will mean an agency/ person who undertakes to produce a given result (i.e., production/ distribution of goods or services) for establishments/ households/ housing societies/ co-operative societies/ trust/ other non-profit institutions etc., through contract labour or supplies contract labour for any work/ services of the establishment/ households/ housing societies/ co-operative societies/ trust/ other non-profit institutions etc.

- (6) Collection of information with respect to the establishments where the contract labour worked will be made irrespective of the industrial coverage (i.e., for both agricultural and non-agricultural industries) and duration of operation of the establishments.
- (7) The CSO may collect data on 'number of contract labour' from all enterprises of each village/ block through its schedule of inquiry in subsequent Economic Census.

- (8) A pilot survey in a few states may be conducted before taking up the independent survey on contract labour for the country as a whole.

5.4 The Papola Committee's report was considered by the NSC in its 64th meeting, in the light of the views expressed on the report by the NSC Secretariat. The NSSO has been asked to make a presentation on the report in this meeting and to throw light on the views of the NSC Secretariat during the presentation. The NSSO was also requested to indicate the manner in which the data requirements of the Ministry of Labour and Employment could be met through implementation of the recommendations made in the report. Accordingly, the officers of the NSSO presented the report of the Committee before the NSC in its 64th meeting. Data requirements spelt out by the Labour Bureau have been noted by the NSC.

Recommendations of the Commission

5.5 On the basis of the aforementioned material, the NSC made the following recommendations.

- (a) Definitional clarity on 'contract labour' is very much required to measure it. There could be alternative approaches in measuring contract labour. While it may be true that none of the approaches would be complete for the purpose in view, it would be necessary to identify the most appropriate one or a combination thereof to address the issue.
- (b) The NSSO may experiment different approaches in the field and come out with the findings.
- (c) The advice of the Nodal Officer seems to have not been made available to the Committee. As such, the NSSO has been requested to furnish the advice for consideration by the NSC.

Recommendations of the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) and Implications for India

5.6 The International Labour Organization (ILO) convened the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) at Geneva during 2-11 October 2013. Shri G.C. Manna, Addl. DG, CSO (ESD) made a presentation before the NSC in its 64th meeting on the issues deliberated in the Conference.

5.7 The major theme of discussion of the 19th ICLS was consideration of the resolution (Resolution I) concerning work statistics as proposed by the ILO's Working Group on Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics. The said resolution, which has been approved in the 19th ICLS, aims to set standards for work statistics to guide national statistics offices in updating their existing statistical programmes in this particular field. These

standards facilitate the production of different subsets of work statistics as a part of an integrated national statistical system.

5.8 The resolution approved by the 19th ICLS envisages collection of data on various forms of work including own-use production of services and volunteer work in households producing services which are not within SNA production boundary. This apart, a change has been suggested in the definition of employment where persons in employment are now defined as all those who during a (short) reference period were engaged in any activity to provide goods or services for pay or profit. The term unemployment has been linked to the persons who were not in 'employment' as per the new definition and were available to take up 'employment'. The term 'labour force' would continue to be treated as those comprising the employed and unemployed. But because of the changes in the definition of employment and unemployment, the labour force as per the proposed resolution would be a sub-set of those in the labour force as per the existing practice. The countries would be required to follow both existing and revised concepts during the year(s) of transition to switch over to new concepts so that comparable time series statistics are available.

5.9 Apart from the above changes, the resolution recommends, with appropriate denominators, the compilation of many new indicators including (a) Combined rate of time-related underemployment, (b) Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force, and (c) Composite measure of labour underutilization (with time-related underemployment, unemployment and potential labour force in the numerator), where potential labour force comprises all persons who were outside labour force but were either seeking employment although not currently available or were currently available but not did not seek employment.

5.10 The draft report of the conference included five resolutions namely, Resolution I concerning work statistics, Resolution II concerning further work on statistics of forced labour, Resolution III concerning further work on statistics of cooperatives, Resolution IV concerning further work on labour migration statistics, and Resolution V concerning the functioning of the ICLS and the updating of its Standing Orders. With certain minor comments and suggestions duly noted by the ILO for suitable incorporation, the ICLS adopted the Report of the Conference.

5.11 The ICLS Resolution lays emphasis on establishing a national data collection strategy that allows for reporting: (a) on a sub-annual basis, main aggregates of employment, labour force, labour underutilization, etc; (b) on an annual basis, detailed statistics of labour force and labour underutilization; and (c) on a less frequent basis, for the purpose of in-depth analysis, participation and working time in own-use production work, unpaid trainee work and volunteer work, and statistics on particular topics such as labour migration, child labour, gender issues in work, transition in and out of employment, etc.

5.12 As per the ICLS Resolution, the schedule of inquiry of the Employment Unemployment Survey (EUS) needs modifications to capture data on various forms of work and other associated correlates. Further, conducting the EUS with increased frequency and short reference period of data collection seems to be the bare necessity. Implementation of the same would call for deployment of resources to carry out this exercise on an annual basis with provision to generate sub-annual/ quarterly estimates.

5.13 Some of the real challenges which are to be addressed in the Indian Statistical system are as follows:

- The first and foremost challenge lies in designing an appropriate schedule of inquiry for meeting the data needs. Although a shorter schedule would have sufficed to meet the demands for sub-annual/ quarterly estimates, but to accommodate the need for annual requirements, there may be no other option but to consider a schedule of inquiry with additional variables.
- Identification of five different forms of work including own-use production of services, which is outside SNA production boundary, would be required and these need to be appropriately captured.
- To facilitate measures relating to time-related underemployment (namely, those who, during a short reference period, wanted to work additional hours, whose working time in all jobs was less than a specific hours threshold, and who were available to work additional hours given an opportunity) and volume measures, relevant question(s) on working time need to be added. Further, some items of information including income may have to be added to measure indicators relating to decent work/ quality of employment.
- To compensate for inclusion of many new items of information, it may be necessary to drop some existing questions/ items so that the size of the schedule would be reasonable.
- Pre-testing of the modified schedule may also be necessary for appropriate feedback before finalization.
- Sampling strategy with sample size and resource implications for the generation of reliable quarterly/ annual estimates of level and more importantly change parameters needs to be worked out and deliberated.
- Finally, at least for one or two years at the time of transition from the existing approach of data collection system to the new one, both the existing schedule of inquiry of the EUS and the modified one have to be canvassed so that comparable time series with the past

is maintained. The methodological aspects in this regard for canvassing the alternative schedules of inquiry need to be finalized. In particular, decision is to be taken regarding the sample size of households per FSU and the set of persons to be deployed for canvassing the respective schedule types involving many different concepts and definitions. It needs to be ensured that the responses to one schedule type do not affect those of the other.

Recommendations of the Commission

5.14 The enhanced scope of measuring work, employment and unemployment through a set of existing and new indicators given in the 19th ICLS has been noted by the NSC. It was felt that the new framework is more inclined towards weekly status approach of measuring employment-unemployment. The NSC desired that the new approach to be developed for Indian labour force surveys should be suitably integrated with the concept of employment followed in enterprise surveys, and that the Dantwala Committee report, which has been the basis for the present labour force surveys, may be revisited. It was also felt that the list of indicators given in the 19th ICLS are relevant in the Indian context and that Quarterly and Annual Surveys may have to be planned to measure all the indicators. In order to deliberate on all these issues, including redesigning the schedules of inquiry and working out additional resource requirements, the NSC recommended that the NSSO may prepare a consultation paper and organize a Workshop to take the views of all stake-holders and users of data.

Green national accounting

5.15 The MOSPI constituted an Expert Group on Green National Accounting for India, under the Chairmanship of Prof. Sir Partha Dasgupta, in August 2011. The Group submitted its report in March, 2013. The recommendations of the Expert Group Report can be broadly summarised into four categories, as given below.

- (i) Initial focus will be on preparation of physical supply use tables (PSUTs) in respect of land, forest and timber and minerals, which will be possible in a short time period.
- (ii) To have a five-year medium-term plan for preparation of (a) monetary supply use tables for land, forest and timber and minerals and (b) physical supply use tables for soil, water, carbon and energy.
- (iii) To initiate exploratory research on valuation and development of a more complete set of national accounts.
- (iv) To have a ten-year long-term plan for (a) environmental accounts in respect of aquatic resources, air and biodiversity and (b) institutionalizing mechanism for periodic collection of data/ periodic studies and surveys.

5.16 An International Workshop was organized by the MOSPI at Delhi during April 5-6, 2013 to discuss the Expert Group Report. Taking into account the recommendations of the Expert Group and the suggestions that emerged in the Workshop, the CSO (SSD) identified the following steps for implementation.

- (1) Preparation of asset accounting including measuring changes in assets in forest and land on pilot basis.
- (2) Next, a beginning may be made with preparation of PSUTs for those sub-sectors of environment where data are readily available. Fairly good amount of related data already do exist in the Government setup, and what is required is to pool them together for preparation of complete tables. PSUTs for forest sector and land can be taken up at the first instance.
- (3) There is a need to have dialogue with States/ UTs, even in case of selected sectors (not a closed list) on which work has to start, as the tables which will be generated have to take into account their requirements and also the data available with them.
- (4) On the issues of additional data needs, both Central Ministries as well as State Governments are to be taken on board to cope up with the challenges. Assessment of data needs has to be done for different sectors.
- (5) Other sectors, where even physical data are not available, may be taken up later after ensuring data flow and also various related issues may be worked out.
- (6) When regional/ local studies are blown up for national level estimates, there is a need to have opinion and consensus building with regard to valuation, and to ensure time consistency of data. System of having continuous public dialogue and engagement with research may be drawn up.
- (7) How studies can be converted into a regular data flow system may be planned.
- (8) Monetary accounting exercise will be done for those sectors for which PSUTs are already made. Before this, valuation studies will be undertaken for the sectors for which PSUTs have already been prepared.
- (9) Discussions and dialogue on continuing basis with Central Ministries such as Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Ministry of Mines, etc., with regard to pooling of existing data available with them and with other sources which pertain to different sectors of environment and for putting in place a system for collection of new data sets.
- (10) Consultation with States/ UTs in order to take into account their requirements for environmental accounting at State level and also to cope with challenges with regard to collection of new data sets.

- (11) Preparation of an action plan for implementation and carrying out research studies for (a) consolidating micro level studies to scale up for national level figures and (b) valuation purposes.

Recommendations of the Commission

5.17 In its 62nd meeting, the NSC noted the aforementioned implementation plan proposed by the CSO (SSD). It was also noted that the United Nations Statistics Division released a Final Draft Framework for the Development of Environmental Statistics. Taking into consideration these developments, the NSC made the following recommendations:

- (a) The work in respect of First Accumulation Accounts could be coordinated with the concerned Ministries/ Departments and carried out in the CSO (SSD). However, when the subsequent work-plan is taken up, it would be better that the job is carried out in the CSO (NAD).
- (b) The MOSPI may take concrete steps for capacity building, its sustainability and continuous engagement with the subject matter experts and institutions.
- (c) Plan for providing additional resources for taking up the above work may be worked out by the MOSPI.
- (d) A detailed statement on resource requirements (stage-wise) and on other measures may be prepared and submitted for the consideration of the NSC.

Separate website for the Commission

5.18 The details of the activities of the NSC are being uploaded in the MOSPI's official website namely, 'mospi.gov.in'. With the objective of providing a separate website for the NSC, the MOSPI got the Domain name '**statcom.gov.in**' registered with the GOV.IN Domain Registrar of the National Informatics Centre on 23.06.2008.

5.19 The issue of placing the activities of the NSC in the public domain through its newly registered website was considered by the NSC in its 29th meeting held in January, 2010. In this meeting, the NSC approved a list of 42 items to be disclosed through the new website. The matter has been reviewed once again by the NSC in its 60th meeting and it was felt that the NSC has to have its own website so that its activities could be placed in the public domain and the public (experts, in particular) could get better access to the NSC. Moreover, the NSC should have an independent website in order that its arms length relationship with the Government is not only maintained, but also seen to have been maintained.

5.20 Launching the new website for the NSC involves web-designing, hosting and future maintenance. Once the new website gets launched, the details of the NSC will not appear in the MOSPI website, but only a link to the

new website would be displayed in that. In view of this, the NSC desired that the MOSPI may take further steps for outsourcing the work of web-designing, hosting and future maintenance of the new website through tendering process.