The third National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS3) is a product of intensive research and consultations. It aims not only at coordinating all statistical activities in Rwanda during the period of 2019/2020-2023/2024, but also at providing general information about the journey of statistical development in Rwanda since 2005, and a better understanding of statistical needs of various development programs at national, regional, continental and global levels.

The NSDS3 Strategic Framework

The NSDS3 strategic framework is designed as a self-reinforcing system of statistical development priorities, comprised of 4 pillars and 12 strategic objectives. Together, the framework captures all NSDS3 activities and associated budget requirements, both within NISR and across the NSS.

Vision, Mission and Core Values

The NSDS3 strategic framework references the concept of a data value chain to promote a holistic approach to statistical development. The vision and mission of NSDS3, mobilised by NISR's core values, address this aspiration, with the goal of translating data supply to substantive policy impact.

Vision

To unlock the potential of a productive data value chain as a vehicle for evidence-based decisions that drive national transformation for sustainable development.

Mission

To expand and deepen NISR's role as the leader of the NSS, facilitating effective statistical development and coordination system-wide.

NISR Core Values

- Uphold institutional integrity and independence[1]
- Focus on client service
- Apply the highest professional standards
- Provide value for money

- Teamwork

These values will continue to be fostered among staff, mainstreamed in performance contracts and demonstrated by NISR leadership. Adherence to these values will enable NISR to achieve the NSDS3 vision and mission with a focus on delivering timely, accurate official statistics in accessible formats for decision-makers and the general public.

The concept of independence, covered in Section 3.7.1, refers to programmatic independence in data production. NISR is not operationally independent, as it relies on financing from the GoR and functions under the purview of the Minister of Finance.

Pillars and Strategic Objectives

The NSDS3 strategic pillars consolidate the initiatives described in Chapter 3 under the 4 themes, as outlined in Table 12 (below). Rather than treating strategic objectives (SOs) in isolation, these themes provide a lens to frame the NSDS3 agenda as a whole, outlining the ways the SOs work together to strengthen the NSS. This approach aligns with the concept of the data value chain, where progress in one domain yields benefits in upstream data collection and publication, as well as downstream uptake and impact.

Pillar I: Produce statistics to support evidence-based decision-making

Pillar I expands on work in previous strategies to make data supply more responsive to user and policy-driven demand. This includes activities to enhance the coverage, frequency and granularity of official statistics, improve NSS data production under the sector statistical plans, and strengthen NSS performance through Imihigo planning and evaluation.
Pillar I captures SOs 1-3. SO.1 focuses on official statistics produced and released by NISR. SO.2 captures administrative systems development and other NSS data products. SO.3 covers NISR's leadership in Imihigo validation and evaluation phases.
Strategic Objective 1: Sustain and enhance core data production at NISR
SO.1 covers all surveys, censuses and administrative statistics compiled and published by NISR. These activities build on progress achieved during NSDS2, and reflect the data requirements specified in national, regional, continental and international policy frameworks outlined in Chapter 2. Examples of SO.1 activities

include the following:

- Implement the RPHC
- Implement periodic surveys, including the RDHS, EICV6 and EICV7
- Implement annual surveys including Seasonal Agriculture Survey (SAS), IBES, Establishment Census and LFS
- Rebase GDP
- Meet requirements for SDDS status

Strategic Objective 2: Enrich and expand data supply across the NSS

SO.2 covers data production activities led and/or owned by NSS institutions, with a particular focus on NST-1 sectors. This includes high-intensity engagements led by NISR for CRVS and select sectors identified in Section 3.1, as well as low-intensity activities to guide and monitor sector-level statistical development. The sector statistical plans are the primary instrument to implement SO.2, providing a framework to improve NSS coordination and accountability. Examples of SO.2 activities include the following:

- CRVS systems development
- Administrative systems projects in health, agriculture, education, environment and justice sectors
- Sector plan implementation: data production component

Strategic Objective 3: Leverage NSS data products to lead Imihigo indicator selection and performance evaluation

Indicators for Imihigo will largely be derived from official statistics produced under SOs 1 and 2. Therefore, SO.3 covers all NISR-led activities in Imihigo indicator validation and evaluation phases. During the validation phase, NISR will verify Imihigo indicator frameworks to ensure selected indicators meet SMART criteria and follow a logical sequence. The evaluation phase includes mid-term (6-month) and final (12-month) evaluations for each GoR fiscal year. Examples of SO.3 activities include the following:

- Imihigo indicator validation
- Local, Central and Joint Imihigo midterm evaluations and feedback
- Local, Central and Joint Imihigo final evaluations with scores and district rankings

Pillar II: Lead a national data revolution to scale data uptake and impact

Under Pillar II, NISR will lead a range of initiatives to leverage new partnerships, technology, methods and data sources to enrich Rwanda’s data value chain and

promote innovation. This includes DRP interventions to expand access to data and technology, support ethical data use and apply novel methods to research and analysis for the public good.

Pillar II encompasses SOs 4-6. SO.4 covers issues in data governance and management, including interventions to crowd in big data and other non-traditional data sources, upgrade technology and improve systems. SO.5 covers the development of policies, standards and legal frameworks to support data sharing, integration and protection. SO.6 covers the launch of the Data Science Campus (DSC).

Strategic Objective 4: Harmonise best practices in data governance across the NSS

SO.4 covers investments in IT infrastructure and systems to support the data revolution, while expanding quality assurance and data governance workstreams from NSDS2. The development of the NDP will route NSS data products into a single platform housed and maintained by NISR. Efforts to strengthen sector-level data governance, standards and systems (e.g. MIS development) captured in the sector statistical plans are also captured here. Examples of SO.4 activities include the following:

- Establish sector data governance frameworks, including the NISR/MINECOFIN annual sector review mechanism and sector TWGs
- NDP launch and MIS integration
- Sector plan implementation: data revolution component

Strategic Objective 5: Enable data openness, integration and interoperability through enhanced legal and policy frameworks

SO.5 responds to the DRP mandate to facilitate data openness and integration while protecting sensitive information and intellectual property. To that end, NISR will lead an effort to evaluate current policies and the legal framework governing data sharing and protection. Based on this assessment, new frameworks and standards will be developed to expand access to data across stakeholder groups — including government, development partners, civil society, academia, the private sector and the general public. Examples of SO.5 activities include the following:

- Evaluate the legal framework for data publication, release and re-use
- Establish policies for data sharing across institutions
- Develop guidelines and standards for data protection and ethical use

Strategic Objective 6: Equip and operationalise a public Data Science Campus to facilitate data access and promote innovation

SO.6 captures all required investments to establish the DSC at NISR. This involves equipping the campus with specialised technology and software, as well as

developing new workstreams in training and research. In addition, the DSC will expand partnerships and advocacy initiatives to socialise members of the NSS and the wider public to the data revolution. Examples of SO.6 activities include the following:

- Equip the DSC with appropriate software and hardware
- Recruit data scientists and programmers to support DSC projects
- Develop DSC workstreams and ‘quick win’ projects in partnership with NSS institutions

Pillar III: Build statistical capability across the NSS to improve data uptake and use

Pillar III captures the full operationalisation of the NISR Training Centre and Capacity Building Programme (CBP). This includes training programmes in data literacy, statistical methods and data science, as well as soft-skills development in programme management and communication. Pillar III also incorporates activities captured in the NISR Communication and Dissemination Strategy (CDS) to target the disconnect between data publication and uptake.

Pillar III captures SOs 7-9. SO.7 covers soft-skills development and CDS activities. SO.8 covers the CBP statistical methods stream. SO.9 rounds out DRP implementation with the CBP data science stream.

Strategic Objective 7: Improve data uptake and statistical literacy through strategic communication, dissemination and advocacy

SO.7 activities will aim to sustain and expand progress achieved in NSDS2 in outreach and statistical advocacy through the CDS. This includes maintenance of data portals and static publications, as well as new initiatives to reach a wider audience and strengthen communities of practice. SO.7 also establishes CBP trainings in data literacy, programme management and communication to strengthen NSS dissemination channels. Examples of SO.7 activities include the following:

- Develop and launch the data literacy and programme management streams of the CBP
- CDS implementation
- Implement two USS rounds

Strategic Objective 8: Enhance capacity for data production and statistical analysis

SO.9 activities focus on capacity building in core statistical methods, facilitated by the launch of the NISR Training Centre. The CBP statistical methods stream will

provide short, practical trainings in survey design, data processing, visualisation, inference and product-specific analysis. In addition to the CBP, SO.8 includes specialised training initiatives outlined in sector statistical plans, as well as government-sponsored graduate education in statistics for NISR staff. Examples of SO.8 activities include the following:

- Develop and launch the statistical methods stream of the CBP
- Sector plan implementation: capacity building component
- Funding for formal graduate training in statistics at HEIs

Strategic Objective 9: Introduce new methods and techniques in data science and analytics

SO.9 captures human capital component of the DRP, which aims to build capacity in data science and analytics. During NSDS3 implementation, SO.9 activities will include the development of the CBP data science stream, which will be led by the DSC and strategic partners. SO.9 also covers government-sponsored graduate education in data and computational sciences for NISR staff. Examples of SO.9 activities include the following:

- Develop and launch the CBP data science methods stream via the DSC
- Funding for formal graduate training in data science and related disciplines at HEIs

Pillar IV: Strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable statistical development

To effectively implement and sustain the ambitious agenda captured in Pillars I-III, Pillar IV outlines a suite of interventions to strengthen the enabling environment for statistical development. This includes strategic investments in essential human, financial, and operational resources to support NSDS3 implementation.

Pillar IV covers SOs 10-12. SO.10 focuses on the growth of Rwanda’s statistical workforce. SO.11 captures all planned upgrades to NISR infrastructure and assets, as well as operational logistics. SO.12 addresses resource mobilisation and partnerships.

Strategic Objective 10: Build and sustain a workforce to support sustainable statistical development

SO.10 activities cover human resources (HR) for statistical development, with an aim to develop a national cadre of statisticians. This includes NISR HR operations, NISR management functions (e.g. leadership, finance etc.) and improvements in staff retention mechanisms. SO.10 also covers internal capacity building for operational

staff in areas of program or financial management to strengthen institutional performance. Examples of SO.10 activities include the following:

- NISR human resource operations, including restructuring, recruitment and retention
- Recruitment of sector statisticians
- Sector plan implementation: operations component

Strategic Objective 11: Invest in operational infrastructure, assets and logistics to support sustainable statistical development

SO.11 covers the acquisition of appropriate infrastructure, assets and equipment, as well as NISR logistics, to support NSDS3 implementation. Due to ongoing transitions to paperless data collection both within NISR and among MDAs, SO.11 includes investments in technology (i.e. software and hardware) to increase efficiency in data production. Examples of SO.11 activities include the following:

- Equip the NISR Training Centre and upgrade key assets and IT infrastructure across NISR facilities
- Purchase of vehicles, mobile devices, software and other materials to support field-based data collection

Strategic Objective 12: Mobilise resources and strategic partnerships to support sustainable statistical development

SO.12 underpins the entire framework by securing financing and partnerships to execute all NSDS3 activities. NSDS3 is designed to target the needs of a wide arrange of stakeholders and partners, calling for extensive NSS participation and support. Activities captured in SO.12 also cover a substantial portion of the NISR SPIU portfolio, including M&E of NISR operations and sector plan implementation. Examples of SO.12 activities include the following:

- Fully finance the NSDS3 budget through domestic finance and strategic partnerships
- Monitor and evaluate NSDS3 implementation

Implementing NSDS3

NSDS implementation is the stage when the goals of the strategy are delivered in practice. To
that extent, these implementation arrangements are a critical component of the NSDS design,
which consist of NISR operational strategies and the NSDS3 MEL framework targeting the
following objectives:

● Deliver results, achieve the NSDS3 vision and mission and contribute to the realisation
of strategic objectives;
● Manage available financial, human and physical resources effectively;
● Monitor and evaluate progress to overcome barriers to implementation, capitalize on
opportunities to advance statistical development and support institutional learning.

Reference documents (PDF)

- NSDS3_Rwanda_Document_September2019.pdf (pdf, 10.04 MB)
  LAST UPDATED: 15 Feb 2025
- NSDS3 PROJECTS.xlsx (xlsx, 30.92 KB)
  LAST UPDATED: 15 Feb 2025

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