

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	REGIONAL
▪ TC Name:	Statistical Use of Administrative Records: The Opportunities and Challenges in a Digital Government
▪ TC Number:	RG-T3664
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Mejia-Guerra, Jose Antonio (IFD/ICS) Team Leader; Beuermann Mendoza, Diether Wolfgang (CCB/CCB); Chretien, Louis-Francois (LEG/SGO); Mahfouz, Giovanna L. (IFD/ICS); Rivera, Katia (IFD/ICS); Yee Amezaga, Karla Mirari (IFD/ICS) Beuermann Mendoza, Diether Wolfgang (CCB/CCB); Chretien, Louis-Francois (LEG/SGO); Mahfouz, Giovanna L. (IFD/ICS); Rivera, Katia (IFD/ICS); Yee Amezaga, Karla Mirari (IFD/ICS)
▪ Taxonomy:	Client Support
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	.
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	24 Mar 2020.
▪ Beneficiary:	National Statistical Offices of El Salvador, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	OC Strategic Development Program for Institutions(INS)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$200,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	24 months
▪ Required start date:	July, 2020
▪ Types of consultants:	Individual, Firms
▪ Prepared by Unit:	IFD/ICS-Innovation in Citizen Services Division
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	IFD-Institutions for Development Sector
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	No
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	No
▪ Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	Social inclusion and equality; Productivity and innovation; Institutional capacity and rule of law

II. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- 2.1 **Justification.** Up-to-date and quality official statistics are an essential input for the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policies in a country. They are also essential to monitor progress in the context of the internationally agreed development agenda, which in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) has established the need for producing quality statistics in a timely manner to measure the achievement of the indicators that support each of these goals. The 2030 Development Agenda has also established the objective of “leave no one behind”, which implies the need to have granular data that allows for geographic disaggregation and disaggregation by different groups within the population (ethnicity, sex, etc.).
- 2.2 Traditionally, official statistics have been produced predominantly from censuses and sample-based surveys in the region. While these continue to be the most direct and common sources, data collection through these methods requires costly field

operations and face-to-face data collection, which in times of emergencies, such as pandemics or natural disasters, can be seriously affected or completely inviable. For example, the current crisis generated by the COVID-19 has forced countries like Brazil and Belize to postpone their population censuses until 2021; in the United States and Mexico, field activities were restricted.

- 2.3 As a result, the advantages of generating statistics from existing administrative sources¹ have attracted attention in recent years, particularly in these times of emergency and with an increasing demand for updated information. Governments at different levels generate information from their daily interactions with citizens, in many areas of public interest such as civil registry (births, marriage, deaths), education, social security, health, employment, environment, migration, tourism, etc. These administrative records, collected for the purpose of managing an organization, have significant potential as a source of statistical data, as the experience of countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Canada, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea have shown, following the principle for data collection “ask once, use many times”.
- 2.4 Despite these advantages, in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) administrative records have remained the source of statistics that are less frequently used compared to census and sample-based surveys. Therefore, there is an urgent need to help NSOs achieve greater statistical use of administrative records that accompany other efforts to invest in innovation in data collection methods for remote data collection.
- 2.5 This limited use of administrative data could be attributed to the following factors: (i) the lack of geographical and/or thematic coverage of existing administrative records; (ii) the lack of data collection methods that fulfill quality standards required for using administrative records for statistical purposes; (iii) the lack of interoperability among the different sources of administrative records; and, (iv) outdated and incompatible legal frameworks that restrict access to data.
- 2.6 Thus, the region should explore ways to strengthen the ties between national statistical offices (NSOs) and other authorities to better define concepts, design questionnaires and determine data validation rules in an integrated and more strategic framework for the construction of statistical information systems that can take advantage of administrative records² for a more coordinated and prompt government response. This is particularly relevant in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, where the transition to digital governments has become more necessary than ever, which will imply a more intense flow of information on citizens' interactions with governments, and better interoperability between the data systems used by different government agencies.
- 2.7 **Objective.** The objective of this project is to work together with specific LAC countries, through their National Statistical Offices (NSOs), to determine an action plan that

¹ The National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico defines the advantages of using administrative records for statistical purposes as: (i) continuity and thematic coverage of data captured about events that can be of interest for public policy purposes; (ii) geographic coverage, particularly at a national level; (iii) relatively low cost for data collection; (iv) availability of data that are already classified by areas of responsibilities of the corresponding organizations/agencies as defined by the law; and (v) the possibility to expand the conceptual coverage of data collection with relative ease. (*Proceso estándar para el aprovechamiento de los registros estadísticos*, INEGI, 2012)

² *Estudios Estadísticos y Prospectivos: Registros administrativos, calidad de los datos y credibilidad pública, presentación y debate de los temas sustantivos de la segunda reunión de la Conferencia Estadística de las Américas de la CEPAL*. (2003).

complements ongoing national strategies and focuses on capacity development, to support the transition to more integrated statistical systems that make a more intensive use of administrative records to produce timely official statistics, which contributes to a more coordinated and rapid response and more efficient provision of services by government agencies.

- 2.8 The initiatives in this TC are directed to NSOs. However, it is expected that in their role as coordinators of the National Statistical Systems (NSS), NSOs can contribute to disseminate the acquired knowledge and expand the reach and impacts of the TC to other national institutions and actors.
- 2.9 **Bank's experience.** The Bank has been working over the years to become the lead institution in promoting the statistical use of administrative records in LAC. The Bank has also explored ways to work with partners that can transfer knowledge on the topic from countries that have advanced in producing statistics from this source, including Nordic countries (Sweden and Denmark), Spain, and the Republic of Korea. These and other countries could also share valuable knowledge and experience on the use of administrative registers in times of emergency.
- 2.10 The Bank has also promoted the standardization of a knowledge base on the subject. In 2012, in coordination with the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI), the Bank financed the translation into Spanish, the publication and distribution of the book *Register-based Statistics. Statistical Methods for Administrative Data*³. The Bank has also supported projects to improve the quality and use of administrative records to produce agricultural statistics ([Development of a methodology to implement agricultural data systems, ATN/OC-14750-RG](#)) and population and housing statistics in the Andean countries ([Population and Housing Statistics Produced with the Use of Official Administrative Registries, ATN/OC-14340-RG](#)), both financed through the Regional Public Goods Initiative. These operations were limited in sectoral scope (agriculture) and country coverage (Andean sub region).
- 2.11 Other examples of projects that the Bank has supported in this topic are (i) the implementation of the [Tool for Assessing Statistical Capacity \(TASC\)](#), a self-assessment tool that allows NSOs and the entities of the NSS of the country to measure and evaluate their institutional and operational capacity to produce and disseminate basic statistics, including administrative registers; (ii) the co-organization of the event ["Latin America and the Caribbean-Africa Peer Exchange on Administrative Data"](#), in collaboration with the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, the Center for International Strategic Thinking (Cepei), and INEGI of Mexico, to promote the exchange of experiences and lessons learned on issues related to the production and use of administrative registers, and (iii) support to Paraguay to make a diagnosis of the current situation of the main administrative records and the design of an online course (in progress) to train NSO and NSS officials for a more efficient integration and use of these registers. This TC is aligned with and will support other efforts in progress to promote the strengthening of national statistical systems and more openness and accessibility of official data, such as [Sociodemographic statistics: A common approach for Central American Integration System \(SICA\) countries, ATN/OC-16346-RG](#); [Legal Identity for All: Who is missing?](#),

³ Wallgren, Anders and B. Wallgren (2007): *Register-based Statistics: Administrative Data for Statistical Purposes*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Spanish version available in digital format: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/app/biblioteca/ficha.html?upc=702825086206>

[ATN/OC-16303-RG; Support for Innovation in the Population and Housing Census in Brazil, ATN/OC-17552-BR; RG-T3659 \(Supporting Data Openness of Latin America and the Caribbean\)](#) (in preparation).

- 2.12 Moreover, new developments and lessons learned from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of continuity and innovation of the work of NSOs in the context of the crisis, will be taken into account for the design and implementations of all activities in this TC. With respect to this, the IDB has organized two webinars with representatives from NSOs to share their responses to the pandemic (links [here](#) and [here](#)), and the TC will take advantage of knowledge created by other external partners, such as [ECLAC's Knowledge Transfer Network](#), among others.
- 2.13 The work of the Bank in the topic has contributed to create more interest and commitment in countries throughout the region to invest in the statistical use of administrative records, particularly in the area of population statistics. Moving forward, it is crucial to have more in-depth dialogues with countries, to determine key challenges and priorities, and develop together tailored and actionable plans with innovative solutions, for a more coordinated, cost-effective, and intensive use of administrative records for statistical purposes. This is particularly important in the current emergency scenario, where timely data needs to be collected and be accessible for a fast and coordinated government response. The development of administrative records also gains importance in the context of the implementation of the 2020 population census round, which presents an opportunity to innovate through the integration of administrative records data with census information. Hence, the need to continue working on the subject.
- 2.14 **Strategic alignment.** This operation is consistent with the Bank's Update to the Institutional Strategy (AB-3190-2), and is aligned with the development challenges of 'Social Inclusion and Equality' and 'Productivity and Innovation' as it will contribute to improve the integration and use of administrative data from all population groups and sectors of the economy, to produce more accurate, disaggregated and timely statistics that inform policy making, promote more inclusion of different groups of society, and strengthen the coordination between all the stakeholders in the national economic and business activity.
- 2.15 The TC is also aligned with the cross cutting area of 'Institutional Capacity and the Rule of Law', given that strengthening statistical capacity within these countries can promote more transparent policy making, greater accountability, improved public service delivery and greater confidence in public institutions.
- 2.16 The TC is aligned to the *Strategic Program for Institutional Development* (INS) (GN-2819-1) in its cross-cutting theme of 'Institutions and the Rule of Law'.
- 2.17 The TC is aligned to the principles and lines of action for strengthening its clients' country systems contained in the *Update of the Bank Strategy for Strengthening and Use of Country Systems* (GN-2538-31), for example, the principles of 'Agreement with the countries, involving joint responsibility and gradual implementation', since participation will be based on interest and commitment shown by the country to performing actions to strengthen its systems and promote the necessary country development priorities, taking into consideration the specific circumstances and capacities of the country and the National Statistical Office; and the principle of 'Adoption of good practices and international standards', since the technical assistance, the regional seminar and learning materials produced will provide an

opportunity for the countries to exchange lessons learned and best practices for the statistical use of administrative records.

- 2.18 Close communication was maintained with the Bank's country offices for the selection of the countries that will receive technical assistance, to guarantee the relevance and alignment of the activities financed by this TC in the programmatic and operational priorities of the Bank, and to promote that other areas of government benefit from the strengthening of the NSOs and the NSS in the use of administrative registers.
- 2.19 This subheading should provide a brief overview of the proposed loan/guarantee associated with the OS-TC including its stage of preparation and current status.

III. Description of activities/components and budget

- 3.1 **Component I. Identifying areas of opportunity and defining a roadmap (US\$120,000.00).** Based on the theoretical framework available (*Wallgren and Wallgren, 2007*) and on previous work performed by the Bank, this component will finance the carrying out of in-depth dialogues with selected countries to: (i) collect detailed information about the country's current situation on the topic (diagnosis); and (ii) determine an action plan for the country that focuses on capacity development. Countries were selected based on different factors,⁴ such as: (i) interest in the project shown by the country; (ii) level of progress in administrative data initiatives, (iii) ability to generate results; (iv) relevance of the activities financed by this TC in the operational priorities and dialogue between the IDB and each country; and (v) feasibility of institutional and budgetary arrangements to ensure the sustainability of the solutions generated. The results from this component will support countries in their transition to a more intensive use of administrative records for statistical purposes and other related uses, for example in situations of national emergencies; contribute to strengthen the institutions responsible for the production of official statistics, the NSOs; and help guide further work of the Bank in the region.
- 3.2 **Component II. Peer to peer exchanges and production of learning materials. (US\$80,000).** This component focuses on the development of technical skills among the employees of NSOs. Under this component a regional seminar will be organized to give an opportunity for all countries in the region to present their advances on the statistical use of administrative records and to exchange lessons learned and best practices. The event will also feature the participation of practitioners from academia and other regions, with emphasis on those that have had significant advances in this topic (i.e. Nordic countries, Spain, and the Republic of Korea). Another element of this component will be the generation of learning materials that compile theoretical definitions; best practices; actionable recommendations; study cases, and innovative methodologies and software/technological tools, to improve the use and integration of administrative records for statistical purposes and other related uses, for example in situations of national emergencies. The learning materials will be produced by consultants with proven expertise in the subject.
- 3.3 The intellectual property of all TC products generated will belong to the Bank. The products of Component I (the country diagnosis and the action plan) are mainly intended to inform NSOs and Bank's strategies and not for publication. The products of Component II (the learning materials and any materials developed for the regional

⁴ Countries with which the Bank has a current dialogue on the statistical sector will be given priority.

seminar) are intended to be published and be publicly disseminated (through Bank, National Statistical Offices, and other regional partners' dissemination channels). The INS Fund will be properly acknowledged in the TC's knowledge and dissemination products.

- 3.4 **Budget.** The total amount of funding needed for this TC is US\$200,000 (non-reimbursable) to be financed with resources from the OC Strategic Development Program for Institutions (INS). There will be no local counterpart financing.

Indicative Budget (US\$)

Component	Description	IDB/INS	Total Funding
Component I	Identifying areas of opportunity and defining a roadmap.	120,000	120,000
Component II	Peer to peer exchanges and production of learning materials	80,000	80,000
Total		200,000	200,000

IV. Executing agency and execution structure

- 4.1 This project will be executed directly by the Bank, through IFD/ICS, in coordination with the country offices (COFs) of participating countries. The IDB has extensive experience in the provision and coordination of technical assistance, to conduct the selection and hiring of quality consulting services (in accordance with Bank policies), and in the development of advances in capacity building and the institutional strengthening of NSOs. The IDB can also contribute to the generation of innovative solutions by attracting experts who are producing advanced knowledge on issues related to the use of administrative registers for a coordinated emergency response and to support the implementation of population censuses in other parts of the world. The Bank will have the final word to select, hire, evaluate and pay consultants/firms, and while it can receive input or feedback from the beneficiaries, this will not constraint its ability to manage the relationship with the consultants. This decision is aligned with appendix 10 of GN-2629-1 which establishes that the Bank can be responsible for the execution of a TC at the request of the beneficiary countries.
- 4.2 The Bank will contract the consultancy services enumerated in the Procurement Plan (Annex IV) in accordance with the current policies and procedures. Acquisitions and services will be carried out in accordance with the Bank's applicable policies and procedures, including the Policy for the Selection and Contracting of Consulting Firms for Bank-Executed Operational Work (GN-2765-4) and its operational guidelines (OP-1155-4), Complementary Workforce Policy (AM-650), and the IDB Corporate Procurement Policy (GN-2303-28).
- 4.3 The TC will be executed by the Team Leader in coordination with the IFD/ICS Sector Specialist in the selected countries.
- 4.4 The Team Leader will ensure that Non-Objection Letters are formally received prior to the start of any activity in that country.

V. Major issues

- 5.1 The main risk is linked to the low interest from countries to participate in the project. To mitigate it, the project will work exclusively with governments that show interest in the initiative; will work closely with government counterparts within the NSOs to develop recommendations and work plans for capacity development that are both compatible with the country's priorities and other related ongoing national strategies, and offer institutional, technical and budgetary feasibility. All these components seek to promote a better incorporation and greater sustainability of the proposed actions over the long term.
- 5.2 The second risk is that the NSOs' interest is not matched by access to administrative records from the other organizations in government that own them. The way to mitigate the risk is to work with agencies with which the NSO has already partnered and has requested official records from and/or where there is a current legal framework supporting this exchange of information (for example, a Memorandum of Understanding).
- 5.3 A third risk is related to potential delays or logistical difficulties in the proposed activities, related to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Close communication will be maintained with NSO officials to properly coordinate and adjust the work plan. If necessary, the work meetings, technical assistance or regional seminar will be adapted to a remote/online format.

VI. Exceptions to Bank policy

- 6.1 There are no exceptions to Bank's policies.

VII. Environmental and Social Strategy

- 7.1 There are no environmental or social risks associated with the activities outlined in this operation; therefore, its environmental classification is "C", according to the Environment and Safeguard Compliance Policy (OP-703). See Safeguard Filters [SPF](#) and [SSF](#).

Required Annexes:

[Request from the Client_68740.pdf](#)

[Results Matrix_42823.pdf](#)

[Terms of Reference_42754.pdf](#)

[Procurement Plan_67317.pdf](#)