



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA
SOMALI NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS

2026

NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS 2026



SOMALIA STATISTICS CODE OF PRACTICE

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PART I : ABOUT THE CODE

The Code of Practice for Statistics (hereafter referred to as the Code) sets out the professional and ethical standards that individuals involved in producing official statistics within Somalia's National Statistical System (NSS) should apply to deliver statistics that serve the public good. Official statistics serve as a public asset when they provide insights that enable wide use in enhancing understanding and guiding policy and practical measures. Official statistics refer to statistical information produced, validated, compiled, and disseminated by the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics (SNBS), or by other governmental agencies, and formally recognised or endorsed by SNBS in accordance with Articles 28 and 29 of the Somali Statistics Law, 2020.

The Code is not merely for official statistics. All entities that produce statistics can draw on it, whether academic institutions, private or non-profit organisations. It lays out the preconditions for building confidence in data, analysis, and statistics, whether as producers or users. The Code is grounded on the fundamental tenets of quality, value, and trustworthiness. This framework is useful for analysts and organisations both within and beyond the official statistical system.

PART II: LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 47 of the Somali Statistics Law, 2020¹, mandates the SNBS to develop, adopt, publish, and monitor compliance with this Code. The Code is aligned with the *United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*² and the *African Charter on Statistics*³. It also reflects internationally recognised best practices applied in national statistical systems worldwide. Furthermore, the Code is consistent with relevant provisions of the Somali Statistics Law, 2020, and the Law for the Somali Civil Servants No. 11, particularly Articles 23, 24, and 25.

The Code aligns with universally accepted principles of good conduct: integrity, selflessness, impartiality, objectivity, accountability, openness, and honesty. In relation to statistical work, these principles are interpreted as follows:

- 1. Integrity:** putting the public interest above organisational, political or personal interests
- 2. Selflessness:** not using one's official position as a supplier of Official Statistics to seek personal gain, or financial or other material benefits for family or friends
- 3. Impartiality:** acting solely on the merits of the statistical evidence and in the public interest
- 4. Objectivity:** Applying scientific methods to collect statistics and basing statistical advice on rigorous and impartial analysis of the evidence
- 5. Accountability:** being responsible and answerable for all decisions and actions pertaining to statistical matters
- 6. Openness:** being transparent about the use of statistical techniques and tools
- 7. Honesty:** being truthful and open about the statistics and their interpretation.

1 Somali Statistics Law, 2020 (2020), <https://nbs.gov.so/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Somali-Statistics-Law.pdf>.

2 United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (2014), <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/68/261>.

3 AFRICAN CHARTER ON STATISTICS (2015), https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36412-treaty-african-charter_on_statistics_eng.pdf.

Compliance with the Law and Need for Integrity

The Code assumes and requires that staff comply with applicable laws and their respective job descriptions as modified from time to time, behave with integrity, strong moral principles and honesty and exhibit loyalty to their organisations and maintain effective and collaborative relationships with colleagues. Together, these standards sustain public trust in the official statistics agencies and their staff.

The code serves two purposes. First, it provides a ready reference for producers of official statistics in the NSS on good practices supporting professional and ethical standards of behaviour. Second, it serves as an easily accessible and understandable document that helps users and the general public understand how producers of official statistics in the NSS carry out their functions.

Adoption and implementation of the Code

The SNBS shall ensure the formal adoption, implementation, and periodic review of this Code in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including MDAs and Federal Member States. Mechanisms shall be established to monitor compliance, provide guidance, and support continuous improvement across the NSS.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code sets out principles and best practices that producers of official statistics must follow. These principles are intended to ensure that the range of official statistics meets users' needs; that the statistics are produced, managed, and disseminated to high standards; and that the statistical data are well explained.

The Code is arranged according to the following twelve principles:

1. **Meeting users' needs**
2. **Statistical Methods and Quality Assurance**
3. **Professional Independence**
4. **Impartiality and Objectivity**
5. **Integrity**
6. **Confidentiality and Security of statistical data**
7. **Adequacy of resources**
8. **Non-excessive burden on respondents**
9. **Accuracy and reliability**
10. **Timeliness and punctuality**
11. **Accessibility and clarity**
12. **Coherence and comparability**



Principle 1: Meeting Users' Needs

The production, management and dissemination of official statistics should meet the requirements of informed decision-making by government, public services, business, researchers and the public.

What does this mean?

Produce and publish impartial and practical official statistics to serve as key resources for policy, research and decision-making for government, the private sector, research and academic institutions, and the public.

Practices:

- A.** Identify and engage the main stakeholders in the process of producing and disseminating official statistics.
- B.** Establish formal and documented processes to consult stakeholders on their needs and concerns and keep them informed.
- C.** Consult SNBS for guidance in setting statistical priorities and in the process of statistical production.
- D.** Prepare and publish a release calendar that takes into account users' needs and provide mechanisms that ensure adherence to the calendar.
- E.** Ensure that appropriate strategies are in place to service user needs through a combination of print, electronic and other media for users to have appropriate access to the statistics they need.
- F.** Without compromising confidentiality, provide SNBS with access to records maintained by government institutions and other organisations that could be used for official statistical purposes.

Principle 2: Statistical Methods and Quality Assurance

Statistical methods should be consistent with scientific principles and internationally recognised best practices and be fully documented. Quality should be monitored and assured, taking account of internationally agreed practices.

What does this mean?

Provide accurate and standardised information about data sources and methodologies used.

Practices:

- A.** Provide relevant information to facilitate interpreting and using the data.
- B.** Promote comparability within Somalia and internationally by, for example, adopting common standards, concepts, sampling frames, questions, definitions, statistical units and classifications (including common geographic referencing and coding standards). Make the reasons for any deviations from standard models publicly available.
- C.** Describe the provenance of data sources and the methodologies applied to the data clearly and openly.

D. Where time series are revised, or changes are made to methods or coverage, produce consistent historical data where possible.

Principle 3: Professional Independence

To retain trust in official statistics, producers of official statistics 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.

What does this mean?

Align practices with recognised professional, scientific, and ethical standards pertaining to statistical data.

Practices:

A. Collect, consolidate, and disseminate Official Statistics using recognised best practices for official statistics and to conform to international statistical standards.

B. Publish details of the production methods adopted.

C. Apply continuous improvement practices for evolving official statistics in the areas of data collection, compilation, dissemination and quality assurance.

D. Inform the Director General of SNBS about complaints that relate to professional integrity, quality or standards, whether or not they can be resolved directly.

Principle 4: Impartiality and Objectivity

Official statistics and information about statistical processes should be managed impartially and objectively.

What does this mean?

Producers of official statistics must produce and disseminate statistics with professional independence and in an objective, professional, and transparent manner, treating all users equitably.

Practices

A. Sources, concepts, methods, processes and data dissemination paths must be chosen on the basis of statistical considerations and national and international principles and best practices.

B. Changes in statistical methods, classifications and data revisions must be explained clearly to users well in advance of the release of the affected statistics.

C. Statistical releases and statements made in press conferences must be objective and non-partisan.



- D.** Make official statistics equally available to all, subject to statutory provisions for pre-release access.
- E.** Announce changes to methods or classifications well in advance of the release of the changed statistics.
- F.** Publish a Revisions Policy for those outputs that are subject to scheduled revisions. Provide a statement explaining the nature and extent of revisions at the same time that they are released.
- G.** Correct errors discovered in statistical reports, and alert stakeholders promptly.
- H.** Ensure statistical release dates are according to a pre-announced release calendar. All users have equal access to statistical releases at the same time; any privileged pre-release access is publicised.

Principle 5: Integrity

To retain trust and maintain user confidence in official statistics, the public interest should prevail over organisational, political and personal interests at all stages in the production and dissemination of official statistics.

What does this mean?

Ensure that the public interest takes precedence over organisational, political, and personal interests at every stage of the production and dissemination of official statistics.

Practices:

- A.** Issue statistical reports separately from any other statement or comment about the figures and ensure that no statement or comment – based on prior knowledge – is issued to the press or published ahead of the publication of the statistics.
- B.** Ensure that those producing statistical reports are protected from any political pressures that might influence the production or presentation of the statistics.
- C.** Ensure that the relevant Head of statistics unit/department has the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.
- D.** Apply continuous improvement practices for evolving Somalia official statistics in the areas of data management, quality assurance, and data analytics.
- E.** Share methods and procedures for collecting, processing, storing and presenting statistical data openly and transparently.
- F.** Follow all statutory obligations and internationally endorsed guidelines governing the

collection of data, confidentiality, and release.

Principle 6: Confidentiality and Security of Statistical Data

Private information about individual persons (including households, enterprises, private and public agencies, and other respondents) collected and compiled in the production of official statistics is confidential and should be used for statistical purposes only.

What does this mean?

The privacy of data providers (households, enterprises, administrations and other respondents), the confidentiality of the information they provide and its use only for statistical purposes are absolutely guaranteed.

Practices

A. Ensure that official statistics do not reveal the identity of an individual or organisation or any private information relating to them, taking into account other relevant sources of information.

B. Inform respondents to statistical surveys and censuses about the legal basis for the survey/census and the confidentiality provisions for the data that are collected.

C. In every case where confidential statistical records are exchanged for statistical purposes with a third party, prepare written confidentiality protection agreements.

D. Keep confidential information secure. Only permit its use by trained staff who have signed a declaration covering their obligations under the Somali Statistics Law, 2020.

E. Ensure that arrangements for confidentiality protection are sufficient to protect the privacy of individual information, but not so restrictive as to limit the practical utility of official statistics unduly. Publish details of such arrangements.

Principle 7: Adequacy of Resources

The resources allocated to official statistical activities should, within the broader financial constraints of government expenditure, be sufficient to meet the requirements of this code, maintain statistical programs on a sustainable basis, and be used efficiently and effectively.

What does this mean?

Statistical programmes should be supported by staffing, funding, and technology that are sufficient and sustainable, and those resources should be used efficiently and effectively.

Practices

A. Ensure that statistical services have adequate staff, financial and computing resources to produce, manage and disseminate official statistics to the agreed standards in the country.



- B.** Consult users before changing the allocation of resources to statistical activities. Include specific resources for awareness creation and user consultations in budgets.
- C.** Ensure that appropriately skilled people are employed in the statistical production process.
- D.** Ensure routine clerical operations (e.g. data capture, coding, and validation) are automated to the extent possible.
- E.** Ensure proactive efforts are made to improve the statistical potential of administrative data to avoid duplication and minimise costly data collection methods.
- F.** Ensure that records are maintained showing the relationship between the statistical planning process, the work programme, the allocation of resources, and the outcomes.
- G.** Seek to balance quality (for example, accuracy and timeliness) against costs (including both costs to government and data providers), taking into account the expected uses of the statistics.

Principle 8: Non-Excessive Burden on Respondents

The cost burden on data suppliers should not be excessive and should be assessed relative to the benefits arising from the use of the collected statistics.

What does this mean?

Producers of official statistics should aim to minimise the administrative burden for data providers. The statistics, questionnaires, and forms for completion, and the administrative burden for individual respondents, enterprises, and other organisations, should be kept to a minimum.

Practices

- A.** The rights and responsibilities of respondents must be spelled out and the use of statistics to them must be explained.
- B.** Seek participation in statistical surveys through informed consent, rather than using statutory powers, wherever possible.
- C.** Promote statistical purposes actively in the design of administrative systems in order to enhance the statistical potential of administrative records.

D. Adhere to procedures in place within statistical authorities and the national statistical system to streamline and harmonise business and household surveys and censuses to avoid duplication.

E. Ensure administrative sources are used whenever possible to avoid duplicating requests for information.

F. Consider the costs of proposed new data requirements (to data providers) against the potential benefits.

G. Ensure data sharing within statistical agencies is adopted in order to avoid multiplication of surveys and censuses.

Principle 9: Accuracy and Reliability

Official Statistics must accurately and reliably portray reality.

What does this mean?

Producers of official statistics must aim to present an accurate picture of reality. By using appropriate methodology for data collection and compilation, the resultant statistics are expected to be as close as possible to the real values.

Practices:

A. Statistical methods should be consistent with scientific principles and internationally recognised standards and best practices.

B. Sources of data, intermediate results and statistical outputs must be assessed and validated.

C. Sampling errors and non-sampling errors are measured and systematically documented.

Principle 10: Timeliness and Punctuality

Official Statistics must be disseminated in a timely and punctual manner.

What does this mean?

Statistics are published as soon as possible after the collection of the relevant data. The release of the statistics complies with the release calendar for the publication of statistics that has been approved and published beforehand.

Practices:

A. The timeliness of the agency's statistics must comply with international data dissemination standards or other relevant timeliness targets.

B. Action plans must be developed and implemented.



- C.** Prepare and publish a statistical release calendar.
- D.** Periodicity of Official Statistics takes into account user requirements as much as possible.
- E.** Any divergence from the dissemination time schedule is publicised in advance, explained and a new release date set.

Principle 11: Accessibility and Clarity

Official Statistics should be presented in a clear and understandable form, disseminated in a practical and suitable manner, and be available with supporting metadata and guidance.

What does this mean?

The statistics are presented in a clear, understandable form and published through suitable and user-friendly channels.

Practices

- A.** Ensure statistics and the corresponding metadata are presented and archived in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.
- B.** Ensure modern information and communication technology (ICT) is used for dissemination in addition to traditional hard copy when appropriate.
- C.** Make statistics available in as much detail as is reliable and practicable, subject to legal and confidentiality constraints, offering choice and flexibility in the format according to the level of detail required by the user.
- D.** Establish a well-publicised information or user support service to handle requests for data and to provide answers about statistical results.
- E.** Ensure access to micro-data is allowed for research purposes, and this access is subject to specific rules or protocols that are publicised.
- F.** Ensure that for any statistical services for which a charge is made, clear pricing policies that comply with legislation and relevant policy are adopted and publicised.

Principle 12: Coherence and Comparability

Official statistics should be consistent internally and over time and comparable internationally. It should be possible to combine and make joint use of related data from different sources.

What does this mean?

Coherence and comparability refer to the internal consistency of a statistical collection, product, or release, as well as its comparability with other sources of information, within a broad analytical framework, and over time, to support analysis; these characteristics are obtained through the use of national and international standards.

Practices:

- A.** Ensure time series statistics are kept comparable over a reasonable period by maintaining methods and standards.
- B.** Need to apply concepts, definitions and classifications or other mechanisms for promoting coherence and consistency that are available in the country.
- C.** Ensure international comparability of the data through adoption of international concepts, definitions, classifications, terminologies, and scientific principles.



