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# Administrative records

DEM 2110



# Outline

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- “ Introduction
- “ Uses/ benefits of administrative data
- “ Challenges
- “ Conclusion



# Introduction

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- “ The United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics **Principle 5: Source of official statistics** states
- “*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.*”
- “ <https://unece.org/statistics/fundamental-principles-official-statistics>



# Administrative records

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- “ information that is not primarily collected for statistical
- “ These are records/ registers that are maintained by private or government agencies for administrative purposes
- “ These records apply directly to the administration of the organizations



# Administrative records

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- “ **Administrative data** therefore refers to data primarily collected for the administration of a particular function
- “ Many types of social statistics are compiled from various administrative records as by-products of the administrative processes



# Cont

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- “ **Examples** include health statistics compiled from hospital records, employment statistics from employment exchange services and education statistics from enrolment reports of the ministries of education.
- “ Others include: Tax office records of tax payers, Social security administration records, City directories, Church membership records, Postal records, Telephone subscribers, Water, electricity records etc.



# Uses/Benefits of Administrative Data

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- “ Administrative records can be very cost-effective sources of data e.g. data collection costs. The cost of complying with information (e.g. by using administrative data rather than sending out a questionnaire).
- “ Much detail is available (e.g. geographic detail) compared with sample surveys. Administrative sources often give complete or almost complete coverage of the target population.



# Uses/Benefits cont

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- “ To produce statistical outputs by combining administrative data with other data, possibly from sample surveys OR the census (e.g. using the balancing equation).
- “ To assist with the establishment and maintenance of sample frameworks.
- “ Reduce respondent burden.
- “ As an information source that might be used with quality assurance.
- “ As a source of longitudinal information.
- “ Increases the frequency and timeliness of data.



# Challenges

- “ The reliability of statistics from administrative records depends on the completeness of the administrative records and the consistency of definitions and concepts. It therefore, suffers from the following
  - A major disadvantage of the administrative records method for general use lies in the inaccessibility of federal income tax records, even in summary form, to the general public.
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# Cont

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- “ There are limited variables that are available from administrative sources. It only contains variables that are relevant to the organization for administrative purposes.
  - . These variables may not match with the preferred statistical concepts.
  - . Statistical requirements that need to be maintained such as standardization of concepts and definitions, adhering to timeliness and complete coverage are not usually considered or adhered to.
- “ Vulnerability to changes in legislation or administrative practice. it is limited in content.
- “ Administrative data may not be timely.



# Cont

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- “ Quality Management given the imperfections in administrative data sources
  - . Coverage may be less desired
  - . Inconsistencies
  - . Missing data
  - . Lack of timeliness
  - . Misreporting
  - . Data entry
- “ Such systems are not well established in most developing countries



# Conclusion

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- “ Zambia has great potential of using administrative records for demographic and other statistical work.
- “ This is possible if there is political will.
- “ Resources could be saved and used for other developmental issues if the administrative system is developed.
- “ There is need to establish good relationships with the owners of the data.



# Recommended References

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- “ Dennis Trewin (2000). **Administrative Data - Opportunities and Challenges**
- “ John .F. Long (2000). **Demographic Applications of Administrative Records**
- “ Shryock. H.S and Siegel. J.S (1972): **The Methods and Materials of Demography.**
- “ <https://unece.org/statistics/fundamental-principles-official-statistics>

