



Data for All: Ensuring Data Accessibility and Availability for All Enhancing the Statistical Literacy of Visually Impaired Communities

Department of Census & Statistics
Ministry of Economics and Plan Implementation

In marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021, the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) launched its first ever braille and large-print publications named “DCS at a Glance”, with the aim of enhancing the statistical literacy of visually impaired communities. The publications contain a trove of information about national censuses, sample surveys and how they are conducted, as well as various socio-economic indicators. These offer a glimpse into the complex and interconnected world of data and statistics gathered, compiled, and disseminated by DCS, which is Sri Lanka's largest and the most important organization in the national statistical system. The two publications were launched by the Department with the support of the UNFPA, on 03 December 2021 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH).

The braille and large-print publications printed in Sinhala, Tamil, and English were accompanied by a newly introduced podcast by DCS Management, answering pertinent questions about the department and its work. The podcast will be released via the DCS Facebook and Instagram social media accounts. This accessibility outreach is a strategic effort by DCS to enable data access for all and is a part of the strategic communications directive followed by DCS with the support of the UNFPA since 2020.

Speaking on this, Mr. P.M.P. Anura Kumara, Director General, Department of Census and Statistics stated, “To achieve a nation’s sustainable development objectives, it is important to have timely and accurate data to formulate and implement policies that afford benefits for all, including persons with disabilities. In addition to compiling and publishing official statistics, DCS also strives to fulfil the responsibility of enhancing statistical literacy among all citizens.”

Also speaking at the event, Ms. Sharika Cooray, Officer in Charge and National Programme and Policy Analyst, on Women's Rights and Gender stated, “In times of crisis such as this, when resources are strained and institutional capacity is limited, vulnerable populations face disproportionate impacts with far-reaching consequences that are only further amplified. Access to information is a crucial first step in empowering persons with disabilities to make informed decisions. We believe accessibility outreach followed by DCS is an essential building block in ensuring we leave no one behind.”

DCS: The Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) is Sri Lanka’s largest collector and disseminator of official statistical data relating to population, agriculture, industries, trade and services, national accounts, prices, and other social and economic activities. DCS is a central government agency and is the largest and the foremost organisation within Sri Lanka’s National Statistical System. The Department has a network of dedicated ministerial offices, district offices and regional hubs throughout the nation. It employs 1257 full-time staff members and numerous other part-timers, interns, and volunteers. In the planning and evaluation of development strategies of the country, the Department does a substantial amount of work both on and off field.

UNFPA: The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the UN’s sexual and reproductive health agency. It strives to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

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Mr. Anura Kumara Director-General of DCS addressing the gathering

The Vision of DCS

"To be the leader in the region in producing timely statistical information to achieve the country's development goals."

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The Mission of DCS

"Making contribution in the socioeconomic development of the country by providing accurate timely statistics, more Effectively by means of new technology, and utilising the services of dedicated staff under a strategic leadership to become a prosperous nation in the globalised environment."

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