Message from SG

#  2017: Sustaining data production for policy and business decision-making

The start of a new year provides another opportunity to assess the progress we are making towards delivering on our statutory mandate as custodian of Nigeria’s official statistics and coordinator of the national statistical system. As the year unfolds, and policymakers implement policies to address various economic and social challenges across the country, National Bureau of Statistics is also renewing its commitment to providing accurate, reliable and timely data to support these efforts.

To this end, we have published today our 2017 [data release calendar](http://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/information/calendar), which has undoubtedly emerged from being an internal management control tool for ensuring timeliness of data releases, into an increasingly important anchor for policymaking and business decisions. The challenges of the economic landscape in 2016 notwithstanding, we were able to meet the expected release dates for over ninety percent of our reports. Our commitment to timely data release remains steadfast in 2017.

Data users may also notice we have significantly increased the number and type of published reports on the NBS website, increasing the disaggregation of broad indicators in some areas (for example, consumer prices data) and expanding the scope of analysis for others (for example, trade data). In 2016, we released 107 reports (or roughly 1 every 3 working days), over 2000 core indicators, as well as numerous stand-alone infographics. This was in response to requests for more data, as well as more reader-friendly statistical publications, ensuring that public data is accessible to a wider audience. Importantly for us, the rising demand by our government and citizens also point to growing trust and confidence in NBS’ data products as well as the need to continually project the integrity, impartiality and professional independence of the Bureau.

 Likewise, we have strengthened our dissemination outlets including launching the NBS data applications (for *iOS* and *Android*), linked data portals, a friendlier website and highly-interactive social media presence (particularly *facebook* and t*witter).* All of these efforts are geared towards ensuring we expand the reach and utility of our data products. As a consequence however, greater demand is also being placed on our limited resources. We are therefore inclined to be more creative and prioritize in order to ensure that data with the greatest demand are available in a timely and user-friendly manner.

Our partnerships and collaboration initiatives also yielded fruitful outcomes in 2016 including the successful release of results from the general household survey as well as online recruitment trends, to highlight a few. Collaboration with several ministries, departments and agencies were also initiated or strengthened during the past year resulting in new datasets and reports. As we noted at this time last year, the prevailing economic situation demands more (not less) attention to socio-economic data not only to ensure that optimal choices are made and policy prescriptions are having the intended impacts, but also to engender citizen feedback and improve public accountability. Statistical offices across the country will continue to require priority technical and financial resources if they are to perform effectively to meet the challenge of the times.

Finally, in addition to our government and supportive partners, we must acknowledge the commitment of hardworking staff as well as numerous field respondents- individuals, households and businesses- across the country. We are looking forward to the rest of the year with high expectations, to deliver critical data to ensure the success of various government initiatives, as well as the decisions of business, investors and citizens.

Happy New Year!

**Dr. Yemi Kale**

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