

Some Challenges of the Production, Analysis and Dissemination of Social Statistics in the ‘Developing World’

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This paper presents selected results of a sociological study of data collection, analysis and dissemination processes in the field of social statistics for development (education, health, poverty, and crime) in the so-called “developing world.” We are currently engaged in a multi-country study of these processes as they are experienced by social statisticians working for governments, international organizations, and academia. Our study reveals the complex interactions resulting from data production’s increased freedom from political interference, the increase in global scientific and ethical debates, and aspirations of scientific and methodological freedom. Our study also revealed misgivings regarding the objectives and methodology of cross-national comparisons.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, International development, National statistical offices, Social and economic development, Social studies of science.