

Improving Literacy and Making Data Meaningful: The Case of Ajman's Pioneering Experience as a Model for the Mena Countries

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Abstract

The Ajman Statistics Center has been striving since its inception to promote statistical data, enhance statistical maturity quality and raise the level of statistical literacy among the concerned entities. In this regard, it has recently, initiated a project focusing on statistical maturity, to promote and upgrade the level of statistical information and data produced by the government and semi-government bodies in the emirate of Ajman, and to ensure their compliance with the international standards and procedures of quality, in order to provide high quality statistics, as well as to develop and promote the efficiency of the statistical capabilities of the concerned government and semi-government bodies' staff.

To facilitate this project, Ajman Statistics Center conducted a number of training workshops for the employees of the relevant government and semi-government bodies in the Emirate of Ajman, in order to introduce the main and secondary standards of measurement of the statistical maturity index and the requirements thereof, as well as the form of the statistical maturity evaluation and the weights of the main elements of the index, which include three main and nine secondary standards, as well as 32 requirements for applying the index, in accordance with the evaluation of the statistical maturity standards and the auditing mechanism.

Ultimately the Center formulated the three phases of the project evaluation, namely, the entities' self-evaluation, the evaluation to be carried out by the relevant staff of Ajman Statistics Center and the final evaluation to be carried out by a few neutral statistical experts recruited from other establishments and institutions in the UAE.

The project was launched in 2020 and 2021, giving the following results:

- 2 entities in 2020, and 4 in 2021 achieved the level of Statistical Maturity, which confirmed the full commitment to implementing the main criteria, the sub-criteria and all the requirements.
- 5 entities were classified at the level of development in 2020, and 5 in 2021,
- 5 entities were classified at the establishment level in 2020 and 2 in 2021.

Keywords: UAE, Ajman, Statistical Maturity, Index, Entities, Administrative Records, Main and Sub Criteria, Requirements, MENA Countries.

Introduction

Ajman Statistics Center was deeply concerned about Ajman statistical data management, quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and handling. So, it decided to focus on Statistical Maturity level among the local government and semi-government entities, to pave the way for enhancing statistical maturity, through measuring and tracking the administrative records of the government and semi-government entities.

To this end, it initiated the Statistical Maturity Project, which

aimed to label entities according to their level of compliance with the statistical rules, regulations, and quality standards, as set out in the Center's guidance. The participants in this project amounted to 12 government and semi-government entities in 2020, and 11 in 2021. In view of the Center's vision, this paper was written and designed to deal with reforming, revising, improving, and updating Statistical Maturity, as well as to fill in the long-standing gap in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region's literature.

The Statistical Maturity Project was meant to assess and evaluate the statistical capabilities and data quality of Ajman government and semi-government entities, which played a pivotal role as a micro statistical coordinating role, by establishing a consistent and reliable mechanism for monitoring and measuring statistical maturity and data quality across the Emirate, which is one of the seven emirates comprising the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

It is the smallest emirate in the Union, having the highest population density (Alhubaishi, S. Hajar, 2018). Although its natural resources are scarce and limited, its future economic horizons are wide-open, enormous, and promising. It is currently enjoying a mushroom growing economy, depending largely on the talents and capabilities of its human capital resources. However, as part of its own 2021 Vision and part of the greater UAE 2030 Vision, Ajman is becoming more future-focused and is striving to diversify its investments in the areas of high-tech advanced technology, (Keith J. Fernandez, 2018).

To this end, the Center initiated a project to focus on three stages of evaluation of organizational level of maturity, against a set of pre-defined criteria, sub-criteria and requirements, namely, first self-assessment, which was to be carried out by each concerned entity itself, second assessment which was to be conducted by the Statistics Center relevant staff and third final rating was to be carried out by hand-picked neutral external reviewers.

This evaluation resulted in identifying data quality and statistical maturity gaps, labeling the quality of administrative records owned by each entity. The dilemma was to find a classification scale for measuring statistical maturity, based on a tailored statistical capacity building program, and qualification mechanisms for government and semi-government entities [1].

The Essence of Statistical Maturity

Forward

Statistical maturity refers to a tool that enhances data quality in a statistical system. In other words, it is a framework for assessing and classifying the statistical maturity of government and semi-government entities, based on the general framework for the quality of statistical data. The Statistical Maturity Indicator is an index that rates and measures the statistical maturity level and examines its match and fitness with the approved international standards.

The Vision and Strategy of Ajman Statistics Center, called for providing accurate information and reliable statistical data, to support the decision-making process in the Emirate of Ajman. To achieve this, a Statistical Maturity Manual was prepared, to follow and measure the reliability of statistical data, together with an indicator that targeted rating the quality of the available administrative records. The goal was to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in the data exchange system and administrative records, to provide high-quality statistics and indicators that support the decision-making process and enhance the emirate's competitiveness.

The Statistical Maturity Indicator Objectives comprise enhancing the data dissemination and exchange, improving the quality and level of data produced by government and semi-govern-

ment entities, ensuring that they adhere to the approved quality standards and procedures to provide high-quality statistics and develop statistical capacities and efficiency of government and semi-government entities' employees.

As for Ajman, Statistical Maturity is a tool targeted to enhance data quality in its statistical system. Its index came within the framework and the strategic objectives of Ajman Vision 2021, to measure and follow-up the statistical maturity of the government bodies, to help them develop and release official statistics that is in line with the international standards.

To this end, the Center's CEO, assigned an ad hoc task force, to carry out this project, together with holding teleconference meetings with the concerned government and semi-government entities in Ajman, to inform them with the project objectives designed to measure the maturity level of the official records, as well as to introduce to them the significance, uses and extent of applications of the statistics, to provide high quality data that support the process of decision-making and competitiveness [2].

Moreover, the CEO recruited a few experts and specialists in the statistical field, from all over the United Arab Emirates, to evaluate the statistical maturity of the government and semi-government entities, after completing their self-assessment of the administrative records and submitting them to the ad hoc task force.

The Statistical Maturity Project

The main objective of this project was to promote the level of sharing statistical information and data, to upgrade the quality of the statistical data produced by the government and semi-government bodies and to ensure their compliance with the international standards and procedures of quality, in order to provide high quality statistics, as well as to develop and promote the efficiency of the statistical capabilities of the relevant staff of the government and semi-government bodies.

In this context, the Center's CEO initiated a number of training workshops for the statistical employees of the government and semi-government entities in the Emirate, in order to introduce and explain to them, the nature of the main and sub-criteria of measurement of the statistical maturity index and the requirements thereof, as well as the form of the statistical maturity evaluation and the weights of the main elements of the index, which included three main criteria and nine sub-criteria, as well as 32 requirements for applying the index, in accordance with the evaluation of the statistical maturity standards and the auditing mechanism. The workshops also involved discussing several practical modalities of the statistical maturity index.

The framework for assessing and classifying the statistical maturity of government and semi-government entities was based on the general framework for the quality of statistical data capabilities of the staff of the concerned entities. Through the assigned workshops, the main criteria of measuring the statistical maturity index, its sub-criteria, and requirements were all highlighted. Moreover, the form of assessing the statistical maturity and the weights of the main criteria, sub-criteria, and requirements of the index, were introduced [4].

This included the three main criteria, the nine sub-criteria and

the 32 requirements, needed to apply the Index, in accordance with the evaluation of the statistical maturity criteria and the auditing mechanism. The workshops also included practical models of the statistical maturity index. The Statistical Maturity Index was planned to aid and support Ajman government and semi-government entities and stand as a model for the UAE other emirates, as well as for countries in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), to follow suit.

The Organizational Frameworks Set of Standards, for Assessing Maturity

The organizational maturity concept is very important in evaluating statistical maturity. It denotes the progress of organizations in terms of developing and upgrading their people, processes, technologies, and capabilities, by executing quality practices. However, when working on achieving high performances, organizations tend to neglect complexities involved in deploying a performance management system and the relationships it has with the other key organizational activities.

Performance management processes in organizations can be assessed using maturity levels by, measuring the implementation of performance management tools, analyzing the availability of internal performance management processes in place, assessing the structures, procedures, and interactions utilized to direct performance management systems, and evaluating the performance management architecture and systems integration.

The Modernization Maturity Model

In a meeting to discuss with her team the outlines of the statistical maturity project, the CEO asked them how a statistical organization gets started, or make further progress with modernization? After a heated debate, they all agreed that the first step for the organization is to know the starting point. The modernization maturity model has been developed as a self-assessment tool for this purpose. It can be used to assess organizational maturity against different criteria and dimensions.

It is a self-evaluation tool to assess the level of organizational maturity against a set of pre-defined criteria. There are multiple aspects of maturity in the context of modernization, and as such, the model had developed several distinct dimensions. Within each dimension, organizations may have different levels of maturity. Maturity Levels comprise 5 levels, namely,

- Initial Awareness Level, in which a few individuals become interested in the standard, whereas the organization is unaware of them.
- Pre-implementation Level, in which use of the standard is basic and limited to a few individuals.
- Early Implementation Level, in which use of the standard is spreading in an inconsistent manner by individuals and single business units, where the corporate-wide use of the standard is being prepared.
- Corporate Implementation Level, in which use of the standard is in place, and awareness of the standard is widespread in a consistent manner across the organization.
- Mature Implementation Level, in which the standard is perceived as an important part of business, delivering value across the organization, well understood, integrated into business processes and practices, and used in a consistent

manner.

After returning from her annual leave, the CEO called for an extraordinary meeting with the ad hoc task force, to discuss the launching of Ajman Statistical Maturity Project, to assess and develop the statistical capabilities and data quality of government and semi-government entities, which were the micro data providers and official statistics producers.

The ad hoc task force was asked to work together, to identify data quality and statistical maturity gaps, label the quality of administrative records owned by each entity and classify them on a statistical maturity scale; prepare statistical capacity building programs, and establish qualification mechanisms. The CEO was keen to enhance the Center's statistical coordination role, and its consistent and reliable mechanism for monitoring, measuring, preparing, and producing high quality official statistics.

She emphasized that the main objective of the project was to promote the level of sharing statistical information and data, to upgrade the quality of the statistical data produced by the government and semi-government bodies and to ensure their compliance with the adopted standards and procedures of quality, in order to provide high quality statistics, as well as to develop and promote the efficiency of the statistical capabilities of the staff.

Moreover, she asserted that the statistical maturity index was concerned with evaluating, measuring and following-up the statistical maturity of the government and semi-government bodies, to develop and release official statistics that were in line with the adopted international standards and the manuals issued by Ajman Statistics Center. In this context, she pointed out that the index targeted all Ajman government and semi-government entities' administrative records.

The Need for Statistical Maturity

The need for statistical maturity in Ajman was increasingly becoming a necessity, as the CEO of the Center, called the ad hoc task force head for an extraordinary meeting, to discuss the launching of Ajman Statistical Maturity Project, to assess and develop the statistical capabilities and data quality of government and semi-government entities, which were the micro data providers and official statistics producers.

The ad hoc task force head was asked to work with his team, to identify data quality and statistical maturity gaps, label the quality of administrative records owned by each entity and classify them on a statistical maturity scale; prepare statistical capacity building programs, and establish qualification mechanisms. The ad hoc task force head was keen to enhance the Center's statistical coordinating role, and its consistent and reliable mechanism for monitoring, measuring, preparing, and producing high quality official statistics.

She emphasized that the main objective of the project was to promote the level of sharing statistical information and data, to upgrade the quality of the statistical data produced by the government bodies and to ensure their compliance with the adopted standards and procedures of quality, in order to provide high quality statistics, as well as develop and promote the efficiency of the statistical capabilities of the staff of the government bodies.

She as asserted that the statistical maturity index was concerned with evaluating, measuring and following-up the statistical maturity of the government bodies, to develop and release official statistics that were in line with the adopted international standards and the manuals issued by Ajman Statistics Center. In this context, she pointed out that the index targeted all Ajman government and semi- government entities' administrative records.

She asked her team to work within Ajman 2021 vision and in line with the best global practices in coordination with the concerned entities, in implementing their self-assessment of the statistical quality procedures, to pave the way for the preparation of administrative records to develop records that support official statistics by providing the data sets needed to prepare the statistical indicators and tables required by the decision makers, the private sector and society at large.

She drew her team's attention to follow the directives of the CEO, to assess the entities' statistical quality of administrative records, which include a list of the procedures conducive to improvement in the quality of their administrative records. These procedures were in fact consistent with the best practices in statistical quality.

The assessment stages included training government entities on quality standards and maturity, evaluation of maturity procedures, preparation of reports and monitoring improvement actions, provision of technical support for challenges, performance

of technical audit and final evaluation, classification, and determination of the statistical maturity level. Finally, the ad hoc task force head, asked her team to work hard, to prepare a "Manual of Statistical Quality Standards and Procedures for Entities Administrative Records", consistent with best practices in the statistical quality and including a list of standard procedures, that will improve the statistical quality of administrative records, as was requested by the CEO

The need for statistical maturity in Ajman was increasingly becoming a target. On the day of their scheduled meeting, the ad hoc task force head reached her office around 8:30 a.m. With only 3 hours left to start the meeting with her task force members, she received a call from the CEO, who asked her to join for a meeting, at 9:30 a.m. in her office. She sounded extremely enthusiastic, while explaining the phases related to the progression of ideas in the idea of main and sub-criteria of statistical maturity and the corresponding requirements.

The Statistical Maturity Criteria

The statistical maturity criteria were classified according to 3 main criteria in 2020, namely, Organizational and Operational Framework, Data Provision and Availability, and Data Quality Standards.

The following 3 Tables present the details of each of the above main criteria, showing each sub-criteria and the corresponding base weights, together with the requirements and their corresponding weights.

Table 1: First Main Criteria: Organizational and Operational Framework in Data Management, containing 2 sub criteria and 5 requirements, as follows:

SR	Main Criteria	Sub-criteria	Base weight	Base weight	Weights
1	Organizational and Operational Framework	Governance of the regulatory framework for data management	10%	Defining the tasks, responsibilities, and authorities of those involved in preparing statistical data	3%
				Developing the competencies and capabilities of the data management team working in the field of data management	3%
				Provide the necessary technical infrastructure to manage the required data and resources	4%
		Governance of the regulatory framework for data management	10%	Designing data management processes, which include (design, collection, processing, and availability)	5%
				Laws and regulations exist to protect data	5%

Table 2: Second Main criteria: Data provision and availability, containing 2 sub criteria and 6 requirements, as follows:

SR	Main Criteria	Sub-criteria	Base weight	Base weight	Weights
2	Data provision and availability	Linking to the electronic data platform	15%	Appropriateness of data to meet all needs such as artificial intelligence and digital transactions (spatial - individual - transactions - aggregate)	5%
				Determine the validity of data access according to its classification	5%
				Electronic connectivity with the electronic data platform and the use of a directory for data exchange	5%
		Availability of data	15%	Provisions statistical data according to its classification	5%
				Availability of data according to the approved schedule	5%
				Use approved forms to provide data	5%

Table 3: Third Main Criteria: Data quality standards, containing 5 sub criteria and 21 requirements, as follows:

SR	Main criteria	Sub-criteria	Base weight	Requirements	Weights
3	Data Quality Standards	Methodoloical Integrity	10%	The existence of sound and regular methodologies and procedures for checking and examining the source data and statistical outputs	3%
				Concepts, definitions, or statistical terms used by the entity are consistent with internationally recognized standards	2%
				Preparing administrative records data to be suitable for statistical purposes and reviewing them periodically	3%
				Providing and applying the results of measuring the extent of application of statistical methodologies, standards, classifications, and concepts	2%
		Guarantee of the data appropriateness	10%	Identification of current and potential users	3%
				Determine the priorities of data users and understand the nature of their requirements and needs for statistical data	3%
				Providing and applying the results of measuring the indicators to ensure the relevance of data	4%
		Accuracy and reliability	10%	The existence of proper and regular methodologies and procedures for auditing administrative records data in order to ensure confidence in the data	2%
				The entity conducts regular and periodic checks and audits of data accuracy	1%
				The agency applies all standards and procedures for quality and accrual of statistical data on a regular basis	2%
				Examining and auditing the log data periodically and regularly to discover errors contained in the data, address them and document	2%
				Provision and application of the results of measuring quality indicators for this standard	1%
				Documenting procedures for the results of examination, auditing and evaluation of the data and discussing them periodically in order to improve and develop the level of accuracy of the data	2%
		Consistency and comparability	10%	Consistency or compatibility of statistical data over an appropriate period of time	3%
				The existence of a document indicating the extent of the difference in coverage, concepts and statistical classifications used to achieve congruence in the concepts and classifications used	2%
				provision of adequate procedures to verify the consistency of the statistics data by matching the variables, indicators and tables produced within the same entity	3%
				Provision and application of the results of measuring the consistency of statistical data	2%
		Modernity and timeliness	10%	Determining appropriate timelines for the availability of statistics in accordance with international statistical standards	3%
				Preparing an agreed schedule with the users indicating the dates of availability and availability of data, with a continuous follow-up mechanism to ensure that the data is provided in the agreed timelines.	3%
				Informing users of any possible delays to provide them with data, explaining the reason and new dates, provided that it does not exceed critical and important dates for publication.	2%
				Provision and application of the results of measuring the freshness of the data and the extent of commitment to it	2%

Sumary

Background

In the past period, the statistical reality in the UAE was a bit gloomy, as the statistical work was carried out by unqualified, untrained, and unspecialized human elements. Thus, the statisti-

cal tasks were assigned to the employees as additional work or load outside the scope of their official tasks, due to the absence of statistical units or departments within the organizational structures of government and semi-government entities.

However, following 2007, Ajman established a statistics department and developed a strategic document to advance the status of statistical work, by building a comprehensive, accurate and integrated statistical system. This new system, worked to support the development process and contribute effectively to decision-making and greatly contributed to supplementing the decision-making process with statistical data, that had a primary role in the field of population policy-making and socio-economic development.

This Department of Statistics took over the responsibility of building human statistical capacity, as many training courses and workshops were held to train and qualify employees to carry out statistical work in their departments. Later, this department was replaced by Ajman Statistics Center(SCC). Besides, it also took it upon itself to build the statistical infrastructure, by directing other departments to establish statistical units to carry out tasks of statistical nature [5].

In an attempt to assess the prevailing situation, the Center visited all government and semi-government departments and institutions in the emirate of Ajman, to find out the reality of statistical work and to develop a preliminary vision for a strategy of building statistical capacity in the emirate.

Organizational Interoperability

Organizational interoperability is important in enhancing and upgrading statistical maturity. It can be interpreted in two ways, namely by referring to how data governance and data management functions that touch upon interoperability, are distributed across an organization or by viewing it, as the ways in which the whole organizations, or individual departments within them, engage with the broader data ecosystem or national statistical system, to decide the degree of interoperability they would like to achieve between their collective data assets.

The Maturity Assessment identified seven dimensions of organizational interoperability as:

Strategic Objectives, Leadership and Management, Oversight and Accountability, Legal Compliance, Data Ethics, Procurement, and Links to Broader Data Ecosystems.

The Shape of Statistical Organizational Maturity, Performance and Management Perspective

While collecting data on Organizational Maturity Performance and Management Perspective, the Task Force Head remembered that initially after the launch of the first and second statistical maturity projects in 2020 and 2021, there were few adopters and limited knowledge about the initiative. However, in 2024, she feels extremely happy and delighted to see multiple adopters of the idea across other emirates of the UAE. So, she decided to dig in deep and shed more light on the essence of Statistical Organizational Maturity, to discuss with her team, before presenting it later before the CEO.

The concept of organizational maturity refers to the evolutionary process of an organization building its people, processes, technology readiness and capability, to the adoption of quality practices. In this regard the organization's maturity relates to the adoption level of devoted performance management tools, the shaping of internal performance management processes,

the mechanisms, processes and relations through which performance management systems are run and administered, the build of the performance management architecture itself and the degree of performance management system integration [6].

However, Organizational maturity frameworks provide a transitional set of common characteristics against which maturity can be assessed. The performance management perspective on organizational maturity provides five levels of evolutionary growth. Each level is characterized by the organization's tools, processes, governance, architecture, and integration. The 5 levels comprise, namely:

Initial Level, which refers to either nonexistent or very limited performance measurement practice in the organization. KPIs are vaguely defined for the organization with no formal consensus regarding the calculation methodology, nor any centralized evidence of the KPIs monitoring. The emergent level is characterized by poor formulation of organizational objectives and misalignment between different levels of the organization, due to ineffective communication. Some of the basic performance measurement practices such as KPI are slowly employed by the organization.

Structured Level defines the most suited performance management tools for the organization. Such an organization will have already gained control of its main performance management processes, which seems to happen rather naturally.

Awareness Level among employees is moderate to high, in relation to organizational main objectives and performance levels. Employee performance is tracked, involving assessment of individual objectives and KPIs. Rewards are offered to employees as well as training opportunities to ensure performance improvement.

The "Integrated level of organizations carries out a dynamic process of continuous change and increasing efficiency through waste reduction. The integrated maturity level revolves around the strong culture of learning and improvement, which captures innovative ideas. Employee performance evaluations are aligned to the entity's strategy and the performance is stimulated through a combination of financial and non-financial rewards.

The optimized Level refers to re-engineering and re-positioning of the whole processes for the better benefit of the organization. Strategic planning is an important organizational process, which is well integrated with other key processes. Awareness of what the organization desires to achieve is high even among front-line employees, which triggers positive behaviors from employees.

This kind of knowledge would provide employees with several intangible benefits like exposure to new ways of thinking and working together with healthy competition.

The Statistical Maturity Phases

The Statistical Maturity Phases comprised, identifying statistical maturity for the government and semi-government entities, carrying out internal rating by the entities themselves, providing technical support for the emerging challenges, and the final rating from the Center's side (statistical maturity classification).

The phases of Statistical Maturity Ratings were composed of 3 distinctive phases, namely:

Maturity Phase, which was described as the Full Commitment of the entities for organizational and operational framework data management, Provision and Availability for users and the Application of All Data Quality Requirements. This was rated as the Good Commitment Level, that is, all the statistical maturity standards procedures were applied, that is 90% or more.

Development Phase, which was described as the Partial Commitment of the entities for organizational and operational framework for data management, Provision and Availability for users and the Application of Most Data Quality Requirements. It was classified as Average Commitment level, that is, most statistical maturity standards procedures were partially applied, that is 60%-89%.

Incorporation Phase, which was described as the Existence of Some Practices of the regulatory and operational framework for data management, Provision and Availability for users and the Application of Some Data Quality Requirements. It was identified as Poorly Applied Level, that is less than 60%.

Findings, 2020 and 2021

The statistical maturity results on the entities' levels were, Certified Rating Documents from Ajman Statistics Center to the entities, including the Evaluation Report of each entity, the Rating of entities according to their Statistical Maturity levels, and the Future Technical Support Plan for each entity.

Results for the years 2020 and 2021 showed noticeable improvements for government and semi-government entities during this period. They had also revealed comprehensive reports for statistical maturity level, regarding the overall results for Statistical Maturity Indicator of the three main criteria, in terms of the standards, weights, the final scores, the final score percentage and the commitment level, were as follow:

The Year 2020 Results

The government and semi-government entities were rated "Average" in 2020, as follow:

Criteria / Year	2020	2021	Rate of Change
First Criterion	68.5%	79.1%	+15.4%
Second Criterion	65.3%	81.8%	+25.3%
Third Criterion	63.9%	79.1%	+23.7%
Overall Average	65.3%	79.9%	+22.5%

Conclusion

As a part of its vision and strategy, Ajman Statistics Center initiated a project to measure and evaluate government and semi-government entities' statistical maturity, to provide high quality data, to be used in decision making process. Accordingly, online Orientation workshops, dealing with main criteria and sub-criteria together with practical models of the statistical maturity index and other requirements, were held, to set the ground for assessing the quality of their administrative records, and raise their awareness about the maturity extent and the importance and uses of high-quality data [7].

For the First Main Criterion of Organizational and Operational Framework, it scored 13.8% out of 20%.

For the Second Main Criterion of Data Provision and Availability, they scored 19.6 % out of 30%.

For Third Main Criterion of Quality of Data, they scored 32.0 % out of 50%.

Thus, the Mean Percentage Score for the 3 maturity phases amounted to 65.4%, which implies that Ajman's overall statistical maturity was in the Average Commitment level, that is, most statistical maturity standards procedures were partially applied (Development Phase).

The Year 2021 Results

The government and semi-government entities were rated "Average" in 2021, as follow: Average Commitment Level
For the First Main Criterion of Organizational and Operational Framework, it scored 15.8% out of 20%.

For the Second Main Criterion of Data Provision and Availability, it scored 24.5% out of 30%.

For Third Main Criterion of Quality of Data, it scored 39.5 % out of 50%.

Thus, the Mean Percentage Score for the 3 maturity phases amounted to 79.9%, which implies that Ajman's overall statistical maturity commitment level was still in the Average Commitment level, that is the Development Phase.

However, the year 2021 showed noticeable increases over the year 2020 in the 3 main criteria, namely the First Criterion increased by 15.4%, the second criterion increased by 25.3%, and the third criterion increased by 23.7%, whereas the overall average increase of the three criteria amounted to 22.5%, as in the following Table.

2020

In the year 2020, 12 government and semi-government entities participated in the statistical maturity project, and were evaluated according to their commitment, in fully implementing the main and sub-criteria, and their requirements.

The results were as follows:

- 2 entities achieved the level of statistical maturity, which represented the entities' full commitment of implementing the main criteria, the sub-criteria, and all requirements.
- 5 entities were classified at the level of development, which implied that they were still halfway to full statistical maturity.

- And 5 other entities were classified at the establishment level, which meant that they were still in the infancy stage of statistical maturity.

2021

Likewise, 11 government and semi-government entities participated in the 2021 project, and were evaluated according to their commitment, in fully implementing the main and sub-criteria, and their requirements.

The results were as follows:

- 4 entities achieved the level of statistical maturity, which represented the entities' full commitment of implementing the main criteria, the sub-criteria, and all requirements.
- 5 entities were classified at the level of development, which implied that they were still halfway to full statistical maturity.
- And 2 other entities were classified at the establishment level, which meant that, they were still in the infancy stage of statistical maturity.

Moreover, the task force has formulated a number of guides and models to ensure the entities' future full commitment with statistical maturity standard procedure and requirements. These guides and models included:

- Guide to the Statistical Maturity Index in the Emirate of Ajman.
- Guide to Administrative Records Quality.
- A Model for evaluating the Main Standards, Levels of Commitment and Statistical Maturity.

Having the above final statistical maturity rating results, together with the statistical maturity manual which depicted the details

of each of the above main criteria, sub-criteria and the corresponding base weights, together with the requirements and their corresponding weights, the ad hoc task force members were confident that they have gathered all the statistics current and future requirements related to statistical maturity, for presentation before the CEO.

While heading towards the CEO office, and as they stood outside, a member of the task force asked his colleges if the CEO would be happy about the project current results and its future updates ? The task force head replied by smiling nervously but confidently and holding the door open for the members to enter, as the CEO welcomed them inside.

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