

TWINNING CONTRACT

AM/14/ENP/ST/15

Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II



MISSION REPORT

on

Statistical Information Dissemination System

Activity 1.11: Quality assurance II

Mission carried out by

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Final version



National Statistical Service
Republic of Armenia



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List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
NSS	National Statistical System (of official statistics)
NSSRA	National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

1. General comments

This mission report was prepared within the Twinning Project “Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia – Phase II”. This was the ninth activity in component 1 and the actions planned for this activity were carried out as scheduled.

The purposes of the mission were:

- Continued work on quality management and quality assurance framework
- Continued discussion on the GSBPM
- Initial discussion on GAMSO and how to introduce it in NSSRA
- Discussion on how to introduce and conduct quality self-assessment in NSSRA

The MS expert would like to express her sincere thanks to all officials and individuals met for the kind and open support and valuable information which she received during the stay in Armenia, and which highly facilitated her work. The views and observations stated in this report are those of the MS expert and do not necessarily correspond to the views of EU, NSSRA or Statistics Denmark.

2. Assessment and results

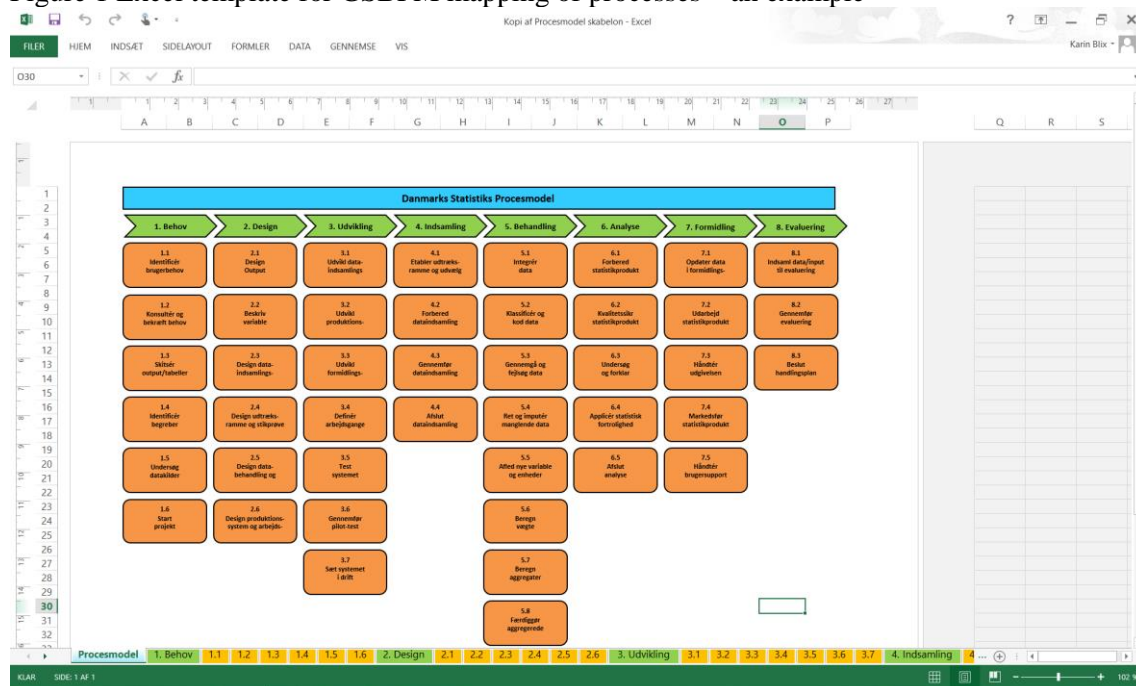
The first day of this mission was used with the Quality team of NSSRA. An assessment of the development since the last mission in August 2016 was given. The NSSRA staff have done a great job since previous mission.

The Quality team was quite new in August 2016 and just starting up. Now the team is in place and is working well. The team has worked intensely on converting the description of processes from text into the so called “swim-lanes”. Quite impressively the team have managed to convert the description of 14 statistical products leaving only 34 to be done (as 122 of the 139 statistical products with quality declarations are grouped into 31 products to be documented using the GSBPM).

The second day started by the expert giving an introduction to the different templates and tools used in Statistics Denmark for documenting processes with the so called swim-lanes. We talked about practical ways to organise files in order to have good structure in the production. The expert argued that it would be practical and beneficial to organise the files structure according to the GSBPM phases for each statistical product. If this is done – finding e.g. documentation about *phase 5.3 review and validate* will be easy for everybody. This will require a filing structure that is not individual, but in teams or following e.g. the divisions.

One solution that has been introduced to give an easy solution is made using macros in Excel. An illustration of this is given in figure 1. This template is “clickable” in the sense that you can click on the process you want to describe and you will get to the sheet for this process (you could also just choose the relevant sheet from the sheet overview). A description of what this process is about is given. You can choose to describe the process in text or in the “swim lanes”. A template for drawing the “swim-lanes” is not given.

Figure 1 Excel template for GSBPM mapping of processes – an example



The other template shown is from the software Enterprise Architect. This is a complex software with many possibilities. Statistics Denmark has made a template so it is almost ready for use – drawing the processes in the “swim-lanes”. One feature that this software has that is quite attractive is the possibility of presenting the documentation using HTML. Using this feature it is possible to place the process documentation on the intranet for the staff to use. An illustration of this is given in figure 2. In figure 3 and 4 an example of the HTML solution is given for the overview and for one single process.

Figure 2 EA template for GSBPM mapping of processes – an example

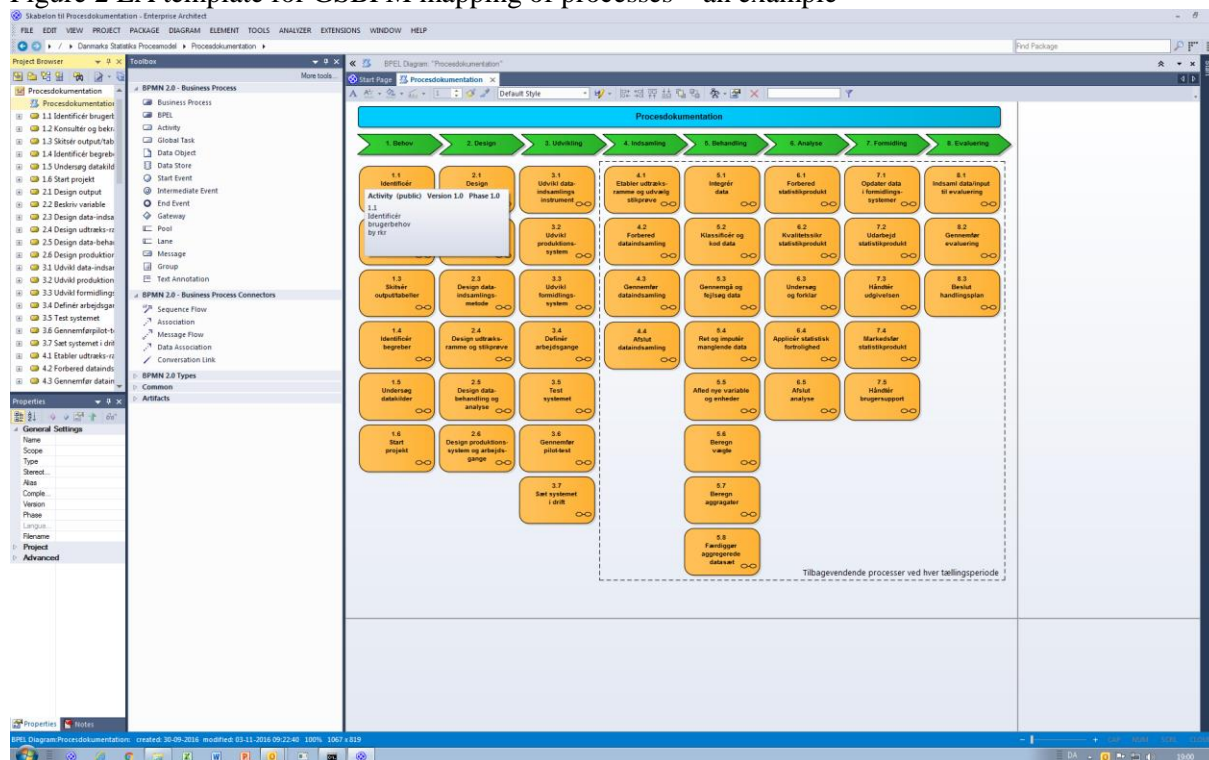


Figure 3 Example of HTML solution for the intranet. In this example colours are used to illustrate which processes are well documented – and not documented and also which processes are not relevant for this statistical product.

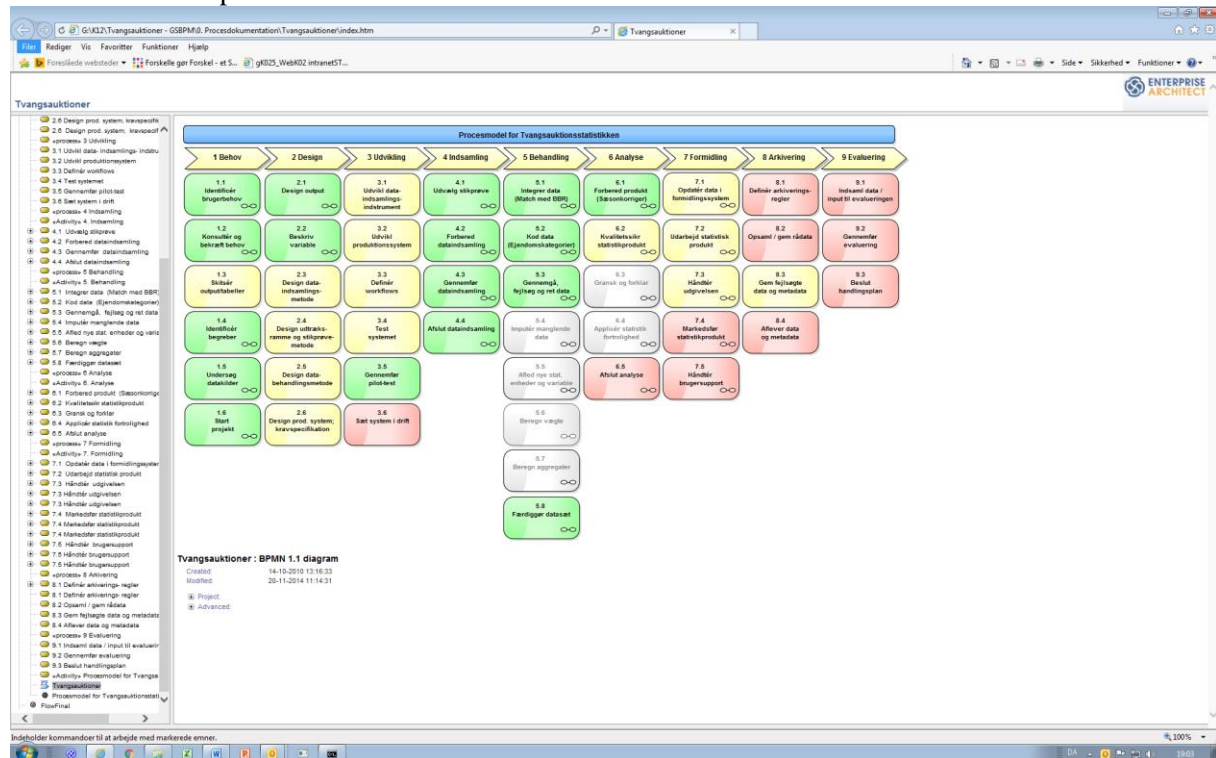
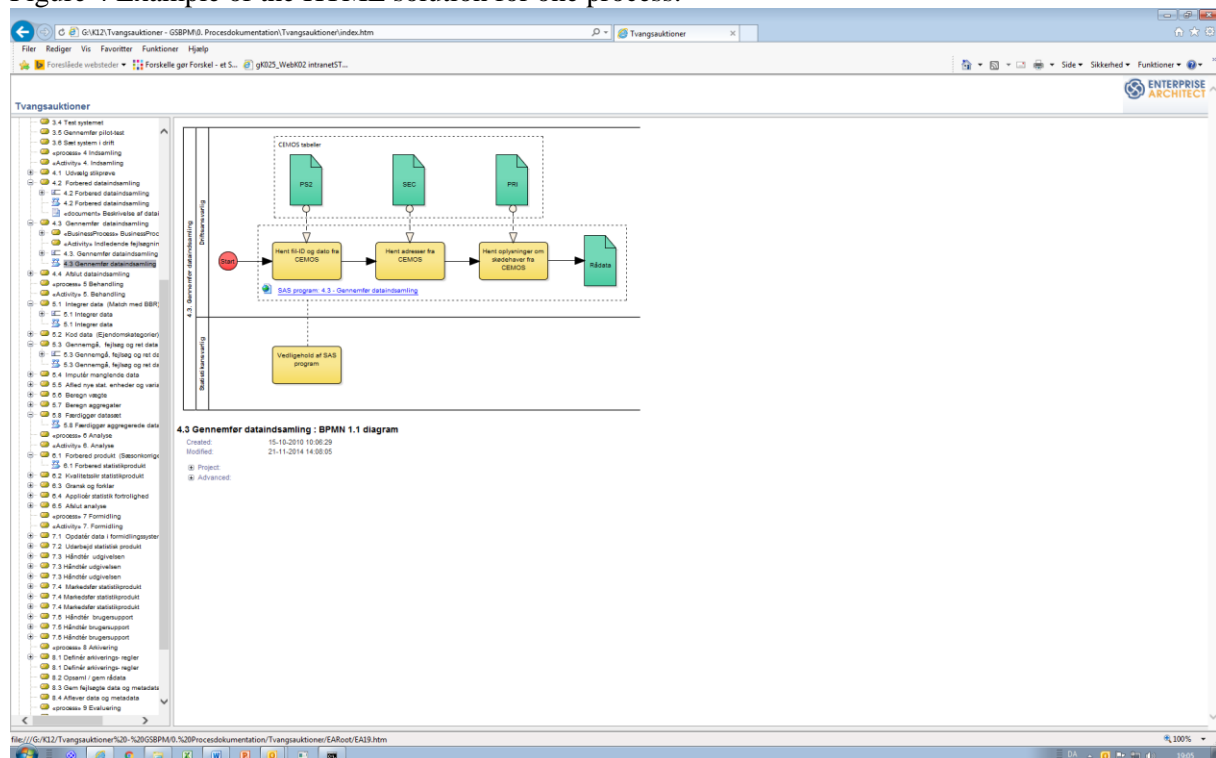


Figure 4 Example of the HTML solution for one process.



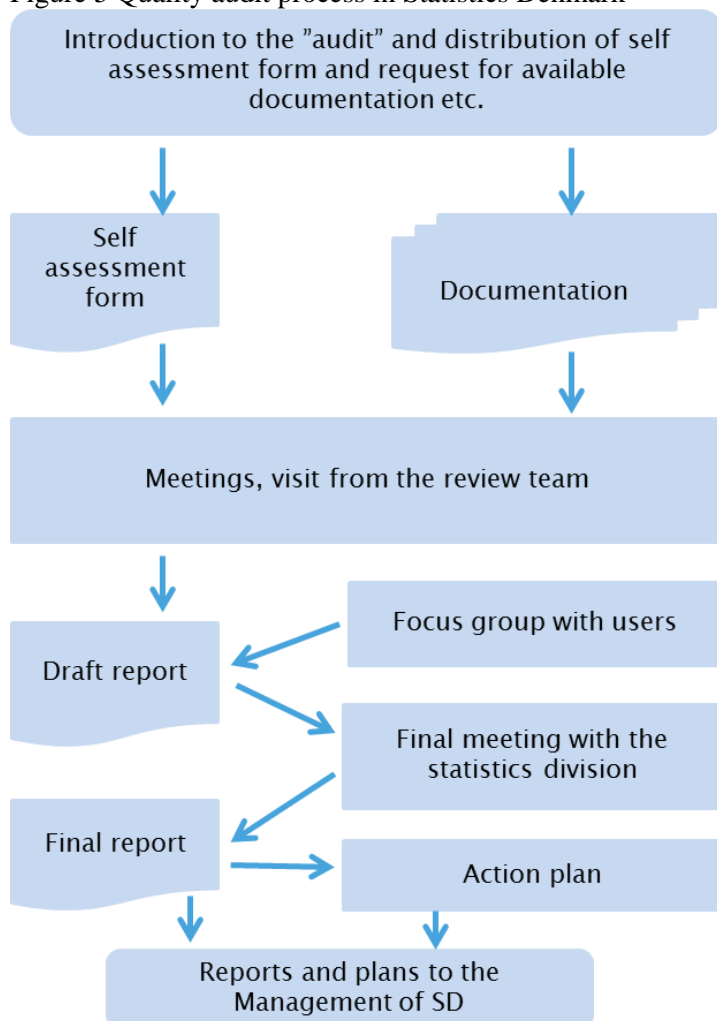
The different solutions were also discussed with IT – Mr. Vanush and Mrs. XX. The expert will see to it that more information is provided on the costs of EA and the number of licences in Statistics Denmark for the mission next week by Ms. Annie Stahel and Mr. Bo Guldager. The expert informed that EA is now also used for documenting IT-procedures in Statistics Denmark.

NSSRA are in a learning-by-doing process. It is important to have in mind that all steps and experiences (good as well as the not so good) are good starting points for further discussions and also that there is not only one solution.

To ensure continuity a system to monitor or develop the quality in the statistical system is needed. Such a monitoring system could take different forms – and in addition to quality declarations and process documentation it should include quality auditing. The system should find a rhythm of monitoring quality declarations and process documentation e.g. quality declarations are subject to quality assurance every time it is updated (basically when changes occur) or as a minimum every second or third year. The monitoring should be taken care of by the quality unit.

The expert gave an introduction to the system of quality auditing in Denmark – how it was introduced in the organisation and how the system has developed during the three years it has been in action. An illustration of the quality audit process in Statistics Denmark is given in figure 5. In Statistics Denmark the first audits were performed on statistical products with a simple production process. In this way the quality team can adjust the procedures to fit the organisation before it takes on more complex tasks. The process could take the following form: First, start with some quite simple statistical products to get a good and suitable routine. Then go on to the most important statistical products. When the most important statistical products have been audited, then products that could use improvement could be identified e.g. through the process of quality assuring the quality declarations.

Figure 5 Quality audit process in Statistics Denmark

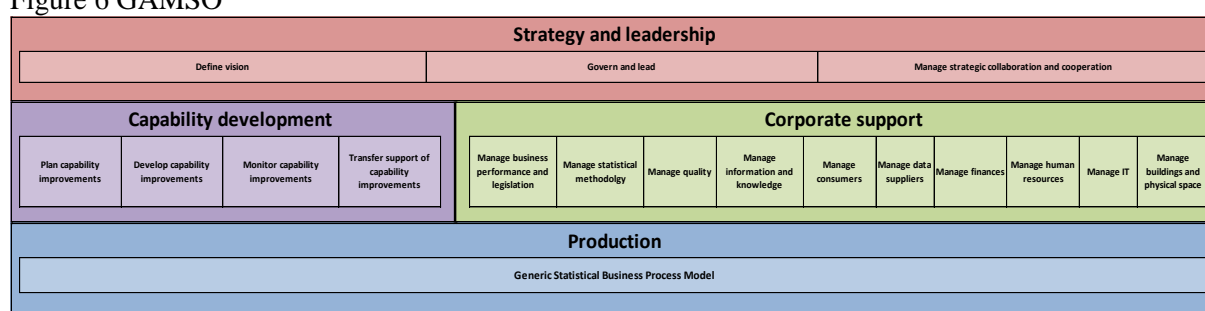


When quality audits are performed – it is important to have a system to follow up on the action plans. This could be done in different ways. The action plans should have deadlines in them – and so it could be followed up on the different deadlines. Follow up could also be done at specific dates e.g. every three months. If the ambition is to audit all the statistical products in the organisation, this is a long time project. Quality auditing is time and resource consuming both for the quality team and in the statistical units producing the statistics.

The quality team have tested the self-assessment questionnaire in the organisation. We had some discussion on some of the questions and talked about the need for self-assessment in the organisation. We talked about that the self-assessments are good, but not strictly required on each and every statistical product at present - other than e.g. in connection with quality audits.

A presentation on GAMSO was given by the expert. Each level of the model was discussed in relation to the organisation of NSSRA. An illustration of GAMSO is given in figure 6.

Figure 6 GAMSO



3. Conclusions and recommendations

The staff of NSSRA has done a great job since previous mission in August 2016. The quality team is in place and is working well and in the period from the last mission they have documented 14 statistical products using the GSBPM “swim lane”-model. NSSRA are in a learning-by-doing process in the quality management area and all steps and experiences (good as well as the not so good) are good starting points for further discussions.

To ensure continuity a system to monitor/develop the quality in the statistical system is needed. A monitoring system could take different forms – and in addition to quality declarations and process documentation it should include quality auditing. The system should find a rhythm of monitoring quality declarations and process documentation e.g. quality declarations are subject to quality assurance every time it is updated (basically when changes occur) or as a minimum every second or third year.

Whenever new statistical products are introduced – the quality unit should be involved to ensure that the new product is established using the GSBPM. When quality audits are performed – it is important to have a system to follow up on the action plans. Auditing all statistical products is a long term project.

It is recommended to start small. Starting small gives a possibility of finding a suitable model/routine for the audit process. To get started it is recommended to start with some quite simple statistical products – to get a good and suitable routine. When the routine is in place more complex products could be audited and it could be a good idea to go on with the most important statistical products. Later new candidates for auditing could e.g. be found via the quality assurance process of quality declarations.

It is recommended to perform a pilot test to map the NSSRA organization according to GAMSO.

Self-assessment is good, but not strictly required on each and every statistical product at present - other than e.g. in connection with quality audits. It is therefore recommended to use the effort on quality audits (with self-assessment) than on just self-assessments.

It should be considered which need there is of software for supporting the GSBPM documentation - Excel or something more advanced.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

<p style="text-align: center;">Terms of Reference</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EU Twinning Project AM/14/ENP/ST/15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10-12 May 2017</p>

Component 1: Statistical Information Dissemination System

Activity 1.11: Quality assurance II

0. Mandatory results and benchmarks for the component

Mandatory results:

- Statistical Information Dissemination System improved (July 2017)

Benchmarks:

- Statistical Information Dissemination System in place (July 2017)
- Statistical Information Dissemination System Strategy paper developed and adopted by the State Council on Statistics (July 2017)
- User satisfaction survey questionnaire updated, tested and published at the NSSRA website (July 2017)
- Staff of NSSRA trained on issues related to the Statistical Information Dissemination (July 2017)

1. Purpose of the activity

- Continued work on quality management and quality assurance framework
- Continued discussion on the GSBPM
- Initial discussion on GAMSO and how to introduce it in NSSRA
- Discussion on how to introduce and conduct quality self-assessment in NSSRA

2. Expected output of the activity

- Recommendations made on quality management assurance, on GSBPM implementation and on the work of the quality unit in the NSSRA

3. Participants

NSSRA

Component leaders

- Mr. Stepan Mnatsakanyan
- Ms. Anahit Safyan
- Ms. Ruzanna Shaboyan

Other staff

- Mr. Artur Amirkhanyan
- Ms. Anahit Grboyan

MS expert

Ms. Karin Blix, Expert, Statistics Denmark

Annex 2. Programme for the mission

Time	Place	Event	Purpose / detail
Wednesday, noon (10/5)	NSSRA	Meeting with RTA	To discuss the programme of the mission
Wednesday, afternoon (10/5)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Assessment of situation and presentation by BC of the work conducted since last mission. Presentation by BC of the expected outcome of current mission.
Thursday, morning (11/5)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Discussion on the "swim lane"-documentation of statistical processes. What will be the next steps to take?
Thursday, afternoon (11/5)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Discussion on GAMSO and how to introduce it in NSSRA Discussion on how to introduce and conduct quality self-assessment in NSSRA
Friday, morning (12/5)	NSSRA	Meeting with BC Component Leader and BC Experts	Preparation of final conclusions, recommendations and Mission Report
Friday, afternoon (12/5)	NSSRA	Debriefing with BC Project Leader	Discussion of MS Experts' findings and agreement on the reached conclusions De-briefing and presentation for BC Project Leader

Annex 3: Persons met

NSSRA:

- Stepan Mnatsakanyan, President of the NSSRA
- Anahit Safyan, Member of the State Council of Statistics
- Ruzanna Shaboyan, Head of Quality Management division
- Anahit Grboyanyan, Quality Management division
- Artur Amirkhanyan, Quality Management division

RTA Team:

- Peter Bohnstedt Anan Hansen, Resident Twinning Adviser
- Liana Atoyanyan, RTA Assistant
- Anush Poghosyan, RTA Language Assistant