DATA ARCHIVING IN UGANDA
Information retrieval process at UBOS before Data Archiving
The National Databank

- Uganda Bureau of Statistics is currently running a program to strengthen statistics across sectors under the Plan for National Statistical Development.

- UBOS has the mandate to produce official national figures and therefore is responsible for capacity building and coordination of statistical activities across the sectors to avoid duplication.
- As part of this strategy, creating a National Databank is underway to promote preservation of data.
- This Databank will link 6 ministries and divisions with an allowance for growth and expansion.
- The preliminary stages of this process involve documentation and archiving of available data.
Challenges of data documentation and archiving in UBOS

- Undoing the ‘Data owner’ theory where data belongs to the person who produced it eg John or Mary or Raymond and not UBOS
- ‘Data owner’ theory created a gap in continuity of flow of data because only one person had the details of the genesis of a given survey
- This theory also exposed data security since the ‘data owner’ kept his/her official datasets on his/her computer
- Data owners most importantly did not see the necessity of documentation centralization of datasets.
Introduction of Microdata Management Toolkit

- As part of capacity building UBOS staff were trained on the benefits and operation of the Microdata management Toolkit in order to be the best promoters of the data preservation cause. The road to success is never smooth and UBOS faced a number of challenges:
  - As a result of the ‘data owner’ theory, there were inconsistencies in a given dataset because the ‘owner’ had actually lost track of the original.
  - Lack of supporting documentation to generate meaningful metadata.
  - There were instances where a survey had all the supporting documentation but the dataset itself was missing.
  - Lastly the toolkit was rejected because most data owners feared losing authority over ‘their’ data.
Once a statistician visited a doctor and they had the following conversation

Patient: "Will I survive this risky operation?"

Surgeon: "Yes I'm absolutely sure that you will survive the operation."

Patient: How can you be so sure?

Surgeon: "9 out of 10 patients die in this operation, and just yesterday my ninth patient died!"
That in summary is how we had to convince them to come on board. We assured them that before the Toolkit came to us it had been tried and tested elsewhere and was definitely the way forward for us.