



**INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND**  
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**A brief on the Africa Regional Technical Assistance Centers' (AFRITACs)  
involvement in statistical capacity building**

### **The Africa Regional Technical Assistance Centers (AFRITACs)**

In May 2002, the IMF launched its Africa Capacity-Building Initiative in response to calls by African leaders, including through the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD), to help strengthen the capacity of African countries to formulate their own homegrown poverty reducing strategies, in the Fund's core areas of responsibility.

The main objectives of this initiative are:

- to make expertise available to African countries to help them develop their own capacity-building programs for macroeconomic management within the PRSP process;
- to raise the effectiveness of individual technical assistance (TA) projects through fast response, close monitoring and follow-up, and more transparent reporting of outcomes;
- help address part of the identified TA needs by increasing the volume of the IMF's TA to sub-Saharan Africa and refocusing it on capacity building;
- to increase ownership by recipient governments through the creation of appropriately designed mechanisms for country representation in the decision-making process for capacity-building TA programs;
- to improve the cost-effectiveness of TA by enhancing proximity to the countries to be served; and
- to collaborate with existing capacity-building efforts in sub-Saharan Africa, with a view to improving donor coordination.

This initiative consists of the establishment of five Africa Regional Technical Assistance Centers (AFRITACs). As an initial step, two AFRITACs have been set up on a pilot basis. The East AFRITAC which is located in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania covers six countries in East Africa (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda) and the West AFRITAC, located in Bamako, Mali, services ten countries in West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Togo). This regional approach allows for close follow-up, continuity and consistency over matters, including those related to regional harmonization and integration.

The AFRITACs' governance structure is designed to foster ownership and accountability in TA program on the part of the countries and in doing so, complement existing capacity building effort by other TA providers.

Each Center is guided by a Steering Committee, which is made up of representatives from the participating countries, supporting donor agencies and the IMF, as well as observers. The ~~AFDB~~ World Bank, the ACBF and other regional institutions are invited to participate as observers.

Funding for the two Centers consists of contributions from the host countries, the IMF, and 16 bilateral and multilateral donor agencies.

## **2. AFRITACs activities**

A capacity-building needs assessment was carried out in Nairobi (June 2002) and Dakar (July 2002) to identify priority areas for the centers work, which culminated in a high-level ministerial conference in Paris in July 2002. The skill mix of the resident experts reflects the priority areas. Each Center has a Coordinator and a team of four to five resident experts, of whom one is for statistics. The resident advisors deliver technical assistance directly through short visits, oversee the provision of short-term TA and coordinate with donors and IMF headquarters.

The needs for technical assistance have differed considerably among the countries. Whilst demand for technical assistance was greatest for real sector statistics among the East African, it was for fiscal statistics, among the West. All the sixteen AFRITAC member countries have adhered to the Fund's General Data Dissemination System (GDDS). The metadata of fourteen countries are already posted on the Fund's DSBB website.

### **(a) East AFRITAC activities by country**

#### ***Tanzania***

Producer Price index

Regional National Accounts

Processing of the CPI  
Data dissemination  
Institutional coordination

*Rwanda*

Producer Price index  
National accounts  
Government Finance Statistics

*Kenya*

Maintenance of business registers

*Uganda*

Quarterly National Accounts  
Producer Price Index  
Rebasing of the national accounts and implementation of 1993 SNA

*Ethiopia*

Short- term economic indicators  
National Accounts

*Eritrea*

Development of a strategic plan for the national statistical system

**(b) West AFRITAC activities by country**

In the GFS sector, the assistance provided focuses mainly on expanding the institutional scope of the summary table of fiscal operations (TOFE), implementing the new 2001 GFS manual, and resuming or improving the dissemination of GFS.

Technical assistance in the real sector is largely covered by AFRISTAT, the African Statistics Observatory based in Bamako. Activities conducted by AFRISTAT include assistance to the incorporation of the results of surveys into the national accounts, support to the implementation of CPI methodology and preparation of enterprises directories, as well as implementation of SNA 93 modules.

One seminar on the implementation of the 1993 System of National Account will also be organized in collaboration with AFRISTAT.

*Benin*

National accounts statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

***Burkina Faso***

National accounts statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

***Guinea***

National accounts statistics  
Government Finance Statistics  
GDSS (drafting and reviewing metadata)

***Guinea Bissau***

National accounts statistics  
Prices statistics  
Balance of payments statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

***Mali***

National accounts statistics  
Mining statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

***Mauritania***

National accounts statistics  
Consumer price statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

***Niger***

National accounts statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

***Senegal***

Government Finance Statistics

***Togo***

National accounts statistics  
Government Finance Statistics

**3. Coordination arrangements among partners**

***Country-level, topic-specific coordination***

AFRITAC resident advisors maintain a good overview of all ongoing capacity-building projects in their respective field of expertise. If duplication or other coordination issues are detected, the resident experts will bring them immediately to the attention of national

authorities and the TA providers concerned and drawing on their technical expertise, suggest possible ways to achieve better results and more efficient use of resources.

***Country-level, macro-sector coordination.***

The AFRITAC Coordinators maintain a close relationship with participating countries, act as liaison with relevant Fund departments, and work with bilateral and multilateral donors and other TA providers to ensure effective coordination of TA. The resident advisors are required to be pro-active in identifying what other donors are undertaking in their respective areas of expertise that intersect or overlap with AFRITAC TA.

They work closely with the Fund's resident representative, both assist the national authorities in formulating a rolling TA program that will cover ongoing and prospective capacity-building projects that are or could be supported by AFRITAC, the Fund's TA departments and other TA providers. This program is reviewed semiannually in the context of the PRSP process or other existing channels of coordination. Where the intended results are not being achieved, those projects can be redesigned or dropped, and new ones added.

***Multi-country, sub-regional coordination***

The Steering Committee provides a forum where capacity-building efforts are compared and assessed across the countries in the sub-region. Such an assessment is a crucial input in determining the allocation of the centers' resources among the participating countries in the sub-region and is also useful for participating donors in directing their own activities for those countries. The Steering Committee also provides a unique opportunity for participating countries to compare the effectiveness of their capacity-building programs.

**4. Joint projects**

The following are some of the joint projects that have been or will be undertaken with regional institutions:

- Conduct of a workshop on management of statistical offices jointly with the African Capacity Building Fund (ACBF).
- Workshops on the implementation of 1993 SNA with active participation of the East African Statistical Training Center, the Capacity Building International, Germany (Inwent) and the ACBF.
- Active participation on workshops organized by the Bank of Tanzania and the Statistics offices.
- Workshop on the implementation of the 2001 Government Finance Statistics Manual with the collaboration of ACBF.
- Collaboration with the AFRISTAT, the African Statistics Observatory based in Bamako on technical assistance on the real sector.