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**First Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa
(StatCom-Africa I)**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
21– 23 January 2008

**Report of the First Meeting of the
Statistical Commission for Africa**

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Summary

The African Centre for Statistics (ACS) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) organised the first meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) from 21 to 23 January 2008, at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The theme of this first meeting of StatCom-Africa was “Scaling up Statistical Development in Africa”.

StatCom-Africa is the UNECA's subsidiary body in charge of its statistics subprogramme (Subprogramme 9). Following the UNECA repositioning exercise in August 2006, the statistics division was re-established under the rubric of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS). It was therefore imperative to put in place a new subsidiary body specifically devoted to statistics and statistical development on the continent. The last meeting of UNECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa from 2 to 3 April 2007, endorsed the creation of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) as the new subsidiary body in charge of statistics. StatCom-Africa is expected to provide a forum for discussions and decisions on all aspects related to statistical development, which are of interest to its members within the framework of the policies and procedures of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The meeting took stock of ongoing efforts in the field of statistics and facilitated the exchange of experiences and best practices by countries, sub-regional, regional, and international organisations, as well as development partners, in statistical development on the continent.

Key agenda items of the inaugural meeting of StatCom-Africa included the formal launching of the Statistical Commission and setting up of a strong bureau and various working groups according to priority needs in statistical development on the continent: (i) Development Indicators, (ii) Informal Sector, (iii) National Accounts, (iv) Data Management, (v) Statistical Training, and (vi) Gender Statistics.

During the conference, the African Centre for Statistics hosted an award ceremony on behalf of the African Statistical Community at which prizes were awarded to five statisticians who have done outstanding work in statistics in Africa.

The meeting came up with strong recommendations and called on African countries to mainstream statistics into national planning and budgeting processes to ensure statistical activities are adequately funded and seen as a key element in the development process, rather than as an add-on. Development partners were also called upon to provide sustainable technical and financial assistance for the collection, processing, analysis and use of data, particularly data necessary for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals.

StatCom-Africa will meet every two years, but its working groups will meet at least once a year to monitor progress and take strategic decisions on statistical work in Africa. The next meeting of StatCom-Africa is scheduled for 18 to 22 January 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAPA	Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s
ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
ACS	African Centre for Statistics
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFRISTAT	Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa
AHSCP	African Household Survey Capability Programme
ASCC	African Statistical Coordination Committee
ASSD	Africa Symposium on Statistical Development
AUC	African Union Commission
CCSA	Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities
CESD	Centre Européen de formation des Statisticiens Economistes des Pays en voie de développement
CODI	Committee On Development Information
CPI	Consumer Price Index
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ENSEA	Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée
FASDEV	Forum on Statistical Development in Africa
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAEG	Inter-Agency and Expert Group
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICP- Africa	International Comparison Programme for Africa
IFORD	Institut Régional de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INS	Institut national de la statistique
INSEE	Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques
INWENT	Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung
ISAE	Institute for Statistics and Applied Economics
ISI	International Statistical Institute
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NSA	National Statistical Association
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSO	National Statistical Office
NSS	National Statistical System
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
PALOP	Portuguese speaking African countries
PARIS21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21 st Century
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
REC	Regional Economic Community
RPHC	Round of Population and Housing Census
RRSF	Reference Regional Strategic Framework
SADC	Southern Africa Development Communities
SNA	System of National Accounts
STATCOM	Statistical Commission
STPA	Statistical Training Programme for Africa
SYSCOA	Accounting System of West African States
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine

UN	United Nations
UNCC	United Nations Conference Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNSC	United Nations Statistical Commission
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division

**Report of the First Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, 21 to 23 January 2008**

A. Attendance

1. The Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa I) held its first meeting at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Addis Ababa from 21 to 23 January 2008.

Member States:

2. The session was attended by delegates from the following 42 members States of UNECA: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, D.R. Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia,, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.
3. The country delegations mainly comprised Heads of National Statistics Offices (NSOs), National Statistical Councils, and Poverty Reduction Strategy Units.

Observers:

4. The meeting was also attended by observers from the following non-African states, as well as international, regional, sub-regional and national organisations and institutions.
5. Non-African States: Canada (Canadian International Development Agency), Germany (InWent), France (National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) and Ministry of Foreign Affaires), Mexico (National Statistical Office), Russia and the United Kingdom (Department for International Development (DFID)).
6. International, regional and sub-regional Organisations and institutes: Partnership In Statistics for development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), World Bank, EUROSTAT, African Development Bank (AfDB), African Union (AU), Islamic Development Bank, Google.org, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT), and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).
7. Training Institutes: Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques (IFORD), Makerere University's Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISAE), Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée (ENSEA), and John Hopkins University.
8. Statistical Associations: Association des Statisticiens du Cameroun (Cameroon), Ethiopian Statistical Association (Ethiopia), Association des Statisticiens du Gabon (Gabon), Ghana Statistical Association (Ghana), Statistical Association (Malawi), Association Sénégalaise pour la Statistique (Senegal), South African Statistical Association (South Africa) Tanzania

Statistical Association (Tanzania), Association des Statisticiens et Démographes (Togo), and Uganda Statistical Society (Uganda).

9. United Nations offices: United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), International Labour Organisation (ILO), ILO Sub-regional Office for Eastern Africa, UN Statistical Commission, World Food Programme (WFP) Liaison Office to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.
10. Others: Award winners, international statistics consultants, and others prominent personalities.

B. Opening session

Opening statements

11. The Chairman of the last subcommittee of Statistics of CODI-V, the Director of the National Statistical Office (NSO) of Senegal, opened the first meeting of StatCom-Africa and thanked the participants for positively responding to the invitation extended to them by UNECA. Statements were also made by the Director of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS), the Chief Economist of African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Executive Secretary of UNECA. The Chairperson of the UN Statistical Commission made the Keynote Address.

Remarks of the Director of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS)

12. Introductory remarks were made by Mr. Ben Kiregyera, Director of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS). He thanked Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, Executive Secretary of UNECA for his prominent role in revamping the statistics function at UNECA. He pointed that the meeting was a cause for double celebration. Not only did it give the statistical community the opportunity to celebrate UNECA's 50 years of service to statistics in Africa, but it also provided the opportunity to celebrate the creation of StatCom-Africa as a subsidiary body of the UNECA, with overall responsibility for guiding statistics and statistical development in Africa.
13. He noted that this first meeting of StatCom-Africa brought together delegations from 42 countries in Africa. As was traditional for this type of meeting, all directors of all statistical offices in Africa had been invited to attend. In addition, invitations had been extended to other persons who play an important part in the development of statistics on the continent: chairpersons of statistical boards, chairpersons of national statistical associations, the managers of poverty reduction units, the directors of regional statistical training centres, the directors of regional economic communities, and members of the editorial board of the African Statistics Journal. The Director of ACS also noted the participation of the Chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission, as well as many senior representatives from development partners.

14. He thanked partners for helping in the organisation of StatCom-Africa. These included: the AfDB, United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD), World Bank, Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), INWENT, French cooperation, International Labour Organisation (ILO), Google.org, AFRISTAT, and Statistics South Africa.

Statement by the Chief Economist of AfDB

15. The Director of the Statistics Department of AfDB made an opening statement on behalf of the Chief Economist of the AfDB. He noted the increasing demand for statistics at national, regional and international levels, the requirement for greater government accountability, and the fact that statistics was now at the centre of the global fight against poverty. These developments posed both an opportunity and a challenge for the statistical community. While acknowledging the efforts made by countries to improve their statistical systems, he stressed that much more needs to be done. Countries should adopt the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) as the efficient way forward, and governments need to allocate sufficient funding to support statistical activities. The AfDB would play a strong supportive role to StatCom-Africa and work with countries and development partners to develop statistics on the continent. The main areas of involvement will be in scaling up financial support for statistical development.

Opening statement by the Executive Secretary of UNECA

16. In welcoming participants, the UNECA Executive Secretary noted that the establishment of ACS and the holding of this first meeting of StatCom-Africa represented the culmination of a long process, aimed at revamping the statistical function at UNECA. In its efforts to support countries to meet their data needs, the UNECA had a Statistics Division at the time of its creation in 1958. In the 1970s and 1980s it assisted countries in many areas of statistics, and there were many notable achievements. Starting in the late 1980s, there had been a rapid decline in financial support for statistics, and countries experienced difficulties in participating in international statistical activities. There had been a corresponding decline in statistical activity and statistical output at UNECA. Many organisations expressed concern about the situation. The Executive Secretary highlighted in particular the contribution made by the Minister of Finance of South Africa in expressing his concerns.
17. With the establishment of ACS and the inter-governmental structure of StatCom-Africa, UNECA was now in a position to play a key role in supporting statistical development, both nationally and internationally. There had also been significant institutional changes in other regional organisations; the statistical function in the AfDB had now been raised to Division status, and a statistics unit had been set up in the AU Commission.
18. The Executive Secretary noted that the recently-adopted Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF) provides the framework to enable African countries to improve their statistics significantly by 2010, the date set for the mid-term review of the framework. There was a need to avoid duplication of effort, and to improve coordination between the development partners. In this regard, he was pleased to

note that representatives of the main institutions had met in Tunis in September 2007 to discuss coordination of statistical capacity building efforts in Africa. One notable outcome of that meeting was an agreement between UNECA and AfDB for the production of a joint annual statistical yearbook for Africa.

19. Finally he appreciated the contribution of the partners and thanked all the participants, and especially Mr. Ben Kiregyera, for the role he played in statistical development.

Keynote Address: “Global Statistical System and Role of the Statistical Commissions”

20. Mr. Gilberto Cavillo, Chairperson of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) made a keynote address on the global statistical system and the role of statistical commissions. He informed the meeting that for the last two years he has been serving in UNSC and in the Latin American Statistical Commission. He congratulated African countries for the creation of StatCom-Africa and assured them of the support of other statistical commissions. He transmitted the pledge of support and greetings from Mr. Paul Cheung, the Director of UNSD.
21. In his address he provided a short overview of statistical commissions at the regional level, and outlined key challenges ahead. In recent years there has been a sharp growth in the global demand for statistics, due in part to issues such as climate change and the HIV/AIDS crisis. He noted that the United Nations Statistical Commission was set up in 1947, and had four principal objectives: (i) to develop standards and methods of official statistics; (ii) to compile aggregations of national statistics; (iii) to strengthen the national statistical systems in member States; and (iv) to coordinate activities of the global statistical system. Among the recent changes he noted, there had been a shift in emphasis from a debate on indicators to one on statistical capacity building, and a new focus on cooperation between development partners. The work of two regional commissions was described: the Conference of European Statisticians, which is supported by the Economic Commission for Europe and which meets annually; and the Statistical Conference of the Americas, which is supported by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and which meets every two years.
22. Mr Cavillo discussed some of the main challenges facing the newly established StatCom-Africa. At country level, there was a need for more regional cooperation. New working groups may need to be set up to look at particular issues. StatCom-Africa will require the continuing strong support of the Executive Secretary, and the ACS secretariat must follow up on decisions reached at meetings of StatCom-Africa. The major challenge is to ensure that StatCom-Africa becomes the authoritative body for the discussion of all issues relating to statistics.

C. Award ceremony

23. A special ceremony was held to mark the 50th anniversary of UNECA. First, the Chair of the Friends of UNECA bestowed an award on the Executive Secretary, in recognition of his efforts as a champion of statistics in Africa and his major contribution in revamping the statistical function at UNECA. The ACS then bestowed Africa Statistics Awards on five persons who had, over many years, played leading roles in the development of statistics on the continent. The five persons honoured were: Mr Julien Amegandjin, Mr Oladejo Ajayi, Mr Kweku deGraft-Johnson, Mr Lamine Diop, and Mr Pali Lehohla. These awards were made on behalf of the statistical community in Africa, and with the concurrence of the African Statistics Coordination Committee.
24. Four of the award winners present, made statements on lessons learned from some of the best initiatives in statistical development in Africa.

Statement by Julien Amegandjin

25. Mr Amegandjin described the experience of two training institutions (Centre Européen de formation des Statisticiens Economistes des Pays en voie de développement (CESD) in Paris and Institut Régional de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques (IFORD) in Yaounde). He considered that the successes they achieved in the 1970s and 1980s were due largely to their modalities of financing, which provided a stable existence. IFORD was created by UNECA to train demographers. Donors funded it until 1982. All students had scholarships, which were part of the budgets of the institutions. Later, when the funding mechanism was changed and countries themselves were expected to pick up an increasing share (and finally 100 percent) of the training costs, the system collapsed. He emphasized the role of statistical associations in advocating for training as well as the role of individuals in advancing the activities of the training centres.
26. Training is key to producing good statistical manpower; beneficiary countries and the regional economic communities (RECs) should help the training centres through scholarships to trainees. He recommended that UNECA support these training programmes in sourcing funding.

Statement by Oladejo Ajayi

27. Mr Ajayi reviewed the main statistical developments in Africa in recent years. He noted the successes of UNECA in the 1970s and 1980s (African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP), Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA), African Census Programme, and the National Accounts Programme), which came to an end when funding was withdrawn. The main lesson learned from the failure of the Addis Ababa Plan of Action in the 1990s (AAPA) was that the preparation of action plans must be fully participatory, and there must be adequate advocacy and monitoring of the plan. He noted the various initiatives in statistics that had been started since 1999. The successful implementation of NSDS should

help to bring all stakeholders together, and provide a stronger advocacy for statistics. The Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF), in turn, signals a fundamentally redefined approach to statistical development, by guiding statistical capacity building activities, with the support of development partners. He called for dedication and hard work by the statistical community, to make statistics work for Africa.

28. He further indicated that partnership, sustainable funding of programmes, fight against selfish leadership, full participation of stakeholders, the commitment of governments and dialogue between the producers and users of data are important for statistical development in Africa.

Statement by Lamine Diop

29. Mr Diop highlighted three best initiatives: STPA, AFRISTAT and PARIS21. STPA provided a valuable framework for the exchange of ideas between training centres, and it helped the centres to mobilise additional support from donors. STPA also helped stimulate other training initiatives. STPA was adopted by UNECA in 1978 to train statisticians. It was funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The training programmes under STPA were designed for French and English speaking African countries. A training centre was also established for Portuguese speaking countries in Lisbon, Portugal. The STPA mobilised additional support from other donors. However, the funds were not adequate to run its programmes.
30. The AAPA which was put in place in the early 1990's helped in the establishment of AFRISTAT in 1993. AFRISTAT was set up following a decision by leaders of member countries to strengthen their economic integration. It has a dual mission: to improve the quality and flow of statistics in its member countries, and to strengthen their statistical capacity. It currently has 19 members, predominantly Francophone but also Portuguese, and is an example of a system that works. AFRISTAT has developed expertise in areas such as census and survey methodologies. It tries to create conducive environment for economic integration in the CFA zone. It has contributed a lot in the economic and social development of the sub-region. It has become the centre of excellence in statistical development. It carries out programmes for the benefit of its member States. It has recently adopted a strategic plan on poverty reduction and on the use of statistical information. Further, it has built a common system that is useful for data comparability.
31. PARIS21 was set up at the OECD by the international community in 1999. It aims to promote evidence-based decision-making. He noted its very active website and the many workshops it has held. Although PARIS21 and other institutions are active in the field, absorption capacity in Africa remains limited, due to weak management and a lack of skilled human resources. There was a need to provide adequate funds for statistical offices, organise and better manage the offices, and support statistical training centres.
32. Mr Diop stressed the need for better coordination, to address shortage of human resources, the need to better harmonise assistance by partners, the need for governments to equip NSSs with adequate human and financial resources. He further said that statisticians should work hard to take-up emerging challenges, the need for supporting training centres in terms of

scholarships, infrastructure and equipment, and the need to support countries that emerge from conflicts.

Statement by Pali Lahohla

33. Mr Lehohla recalled the exciting progress made in statistics in Africa in the past two years. The origin could be traced back to the report to the United Nations General Assembly in 2005 by the then Secretary General. It had urged action to fill the large data gaps that existed in Africa in respect of indicators for the Millennium Development Goals, and the lack of interest shown by African countries in conducting population censuses. At a later meeting, Statistics South Africa was tasked with helping to address the problem. This led to the establishment of the African Symposium on Statistical Development. So far three meetings have been held, all focusing on population censuses. Mr Lehohla emphasized the need for the statistical community to have a high sense of mission, in order to plan and execute an effective strategy of statistical development.
34. He mentioned the initiatives such as the International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa) and the RRSF. He pointed out the need to mobilise resources from development partners and the need for political support for the countries that emerge from conflicts. He stressed the need to continue to support UNECA, to implement its programmes in a sustainable manner and the need to mobilise funds.
35. He mentioned the peace agreement signed in Sudan that will help the country to undertake its 2008 Population and Housing Census. He urged countries to support Sudan in implementing the 2008 census programme.

D. Plenary Session I

Election of officers

36. The first meeting of StatCom-Africa elected the following Bureau by acclamation:

Chair: South Africa
Vice-chair: Morocco
Second Vice-chair: Niger
First Rapporteur : Uganda
Second Rapporteur: Cameroon

Agenda and organisation of work

37. StatCom-Africa amended its provisional agenda as contained in document E/UNECA/STATCOM/1/add.1. The agenda adopted read as follows:

- 1. Opening ceremony**
 - a. Welcoming Address by the Executive Secretary;
 - b. Statements of the Chief Economist of AfDB
 - c. Keynote Address on “Global Statistical System and Role of the Statistical Commissions”;
- 2. “Celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the UNECA”**
 - a. Award Ceremony
 - b. Statements on “Lessons learnt from some of the best initiatives in statistical development on the continent” by the Award Winners;
- 3. Election of Officers;**
- 4. Adoption of the agenda and organisational matters;**
- 5. Goals and Objectives of the StatCom-Africa;**
- 6. Visualizing World Development**
- 7. Reports on:**
 - a. African Statistical Coordinating Committee
 - b. Population and Housing Census
 - c. National Statistical Associations
 - d. Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
 - e. International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa)
 - f. Implementation of the Reference Regional Strategic Framework (RRSF)
 - g. Basic Economic Statistics and National Accounts
 - h. Environmental Statistics
 - i. Employment Statistics
 - j. Statistical Training
- 8. Breakaway sessions on:**
 - a. MDG Monitoring
 - b. National Accounts
 - c. Informal Sector
 - d. Data Management
 - e. Statistical Training
 - g. Gender Statistics
- 9. Report from the Working Groups**
- 10. Upcoming Major Events**
- 11. Programmatic Issues**
- 12. Provisional Agenda and Date for the Second Session of StatCom-Africa**
- 13. Main Conclusions and Recommendations of the First Session of StatCom-Africa**
- 14. Closing Ceremony**

Goals and Objectives of StatCom-Africa

38. The Secretariat of UNECA made a presentation on the goals and objectives of StatCom-Africa. StatCom-Africa is the subsidiary body of the UNECA in charge of Statistics and Statistical Capacity Building (subprogramme 9). It aims at providing expert advice on the programme of work of ACS and on statistical development in Africa. Its resolutions provide input to the African Conference of African Ministers.

Key issues:

39. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) As a subsidiary organ of UNECA, StatCom-Africa is meant to convene its sessions every two years. However, given the challenge of statistics faced by African countries, some participants suggested the need to meet more frequently, say every year.
- (b) For the year when StatCom-Africa holds its sessions, the StatCom-Africa will serve as a link to the global system, taking account of the inputs from the annual meeting of ASSD and from meetings of the African Statistical Coordination Committee. As a decision-making intergovernmental mechanism, its recommendations will be forwarded to the African Conference of Ministers for endorsement and provide a link from African countries to the global United Nations Statistical Commission.
- (c) For the year when StatCom-Africa is not organised, the Bureau of StatCom-Africa will serve as the mechanism to link African countries to the UN StatCom and the African Conference of Ministers, taking account of the recommendations made by the annual meeting of ASSD and meetings of ASCC.

Visualizing World Development

40. Hans Rosling, cofounder of the Gapminder foundation, and now working for Google.org, made a presentation of the software Gapminder. Gapminder is a non-profit venture promoting sustainable global development and achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by increased use and understanding of statistics and other information about social, economic and environmental development at local, national and global levels.

Key issues:

41. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) The importance of having more stakeholders and partners in the data dissemination process and new ways of presenting data and bringing it to the public was mentioned.

- (b) The Gapminder software is a product of seven years of work and is available for free on the Internet. Africa should be able to make use of this software before the continents. Africa lags behind in the use of Internet and by the time Africa progresses in the use of Internet; the Internet will shift from personal computers to cell phones. Therefore the effort is now to come up with a version that works on cell phones.

E. Plenary Session II

African Statistical Coordination Committee

- 42. The AfDB made a presentation of the outcomes of the meeting held in Tunis in September 2007 and that resulted to the creation of the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC).

Key issues:

- 43. The meeting discussed the following issues:
 - (a) At present the four regional organisations- UNECA, AfDB, AUC and ACBF- constitute the main membership of ASCC, with little representation from sub-regional organisations and NSOs.
 - (b) The importance of having sub-regional organisations in the coordinating committee was stressed. It was also mentioned that the African Statistical Coordination Committee should follow the work programme of the Coordination Committee of Statistical Activities, which is a global version of ASCC to avoid duplication of efforts. TOR should be prepared for the ASCC members.
 - (c) Clarification was required on whether the working groups of ASCC should conduct thematic and technical studies. Furthermore, concern was raised about the link between ASCC and the bureau of StatCom-Africa and the friends of UNECA
 - (d) It was suggested that the ASCC should also report on the measurement and the effectiveness of statistical capacity building in Africa, and the sustainability of financing of statistical capacity building.

Population and Housing Censuses

- 44. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat of the Friends of UNECA made two presentations on “Progress made on the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (2010 RPHC)” and on the “Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD)”.

45. Population and Housing Census in post conflict countries: Six countries, namely (Angola, DRC, Eritrea, Liberia, Sudan, and Somalia) promised to conduct a population and housing census in the near future. Excepting Angola, the other five countries have already proposed a census date. It was also mentioned that Sudan is a particularly different country in that it has one government and two systems namely southern and national. South Africa announced its commitment to support Sudan in its effort to conduct Population and housing census. Other countries that have the expertise are invited to contact the Statistician-General of South Africa by e-mail so they can extend their help.

Key issues:

46. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) Low participation in the 2010 census round by African countries, especially those emerging from conflict.
- (b) There is no specific strategy on how to conduct censuses in difficult situations, such as in countries with inadequate funding and in post-conflict countries.
- (c) At present only six post-conflict countries have been identified, requiring special attention.

National Statistical Associations

47. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat made a presentation on National Statistical Associations. It stressed the importance of strengthening NSAs and encouraged innovative ideas inline with donors' interests, involving institutions as members, and having student alumni forums.

Key issues:

48. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) The suggestion to have a resolution stating that every country should have a statistical association with an agreed upon code of ethics, which can be derived from the code of ethics of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), so as to avoid writing one from scratch. A general recommendation that can tackle the "Why" questions of the associations that died out should be made.
- (b) The African Statistical Association died out long ago and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) is trying to revive it, but is faced with the challenge of lack of documentation.

- (c) Financing statistical activities is a challenging task and the next FASDEV meeting should consider this issue. There should be a mechanism to measure statistical development that will help donors monitor the progress made by countries and provide support to those that need it most.
- (d) Limited appreciation of the role of the National Statistical Associations and inadequate support from NSOs
- (e) Lack of sustainable funding for the activities of NSAs and lack of attractive and engaging programmes of NSAs

F. Plenary Session II: Reports on various thematic areas

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

- 49. Under this agenda item, the UNECA made two presentations titled: “Overview of Progress towards the Targets of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa” and “MDGs Monitoring: Challenges and Opportunities for African Countries”.
- 50. The first presentation reviewed progress towards the targets of the MDGs, explored constraints to accelerating progress with emphasis on the need to ratchet up growth, highlighted key areas that deserve the attention of policy makers, and proposed some recommendations for consideration. The second presentation covered the new framework of MDG indicators, challenges and potential remedial measures, potential role of the UN Regional Commissions and status of MDGs Africa Working Group.
- 51. UNSD made a presentation on the United Nations MDG data collection system. The presentation focused on the global monitoring mechanism on the implementation of MDGs, the newly added MDG targets and indicators, UN MDG database and metadata and the need of transition from indicators debate to capacity building debate.

Key issues:

- 52. The meeting discussed the following issues:
 - (a) The need to involve countries in the process of producing reports on the status on implementation of MDGs;
 - (b) Make use of countries household surveys for monitoring MDGs;
 - (c) Importance of establishing coordinated and comprehensive national statistical systems under the lead of national statistics offices;

- (d) The need to develop well defined standard reporting systems with a common database;
- (e) Strengthening the national statistics offices with technical and financial capacity building programmes;
- (f) Collaborating with higher educational institutions during the design and implementation of concepts and methodologies; and
- (g) Prepare national brainstorming workshops and seminars by inviting sectoral organisations, national experts and institutions for effective statistical development.

International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa)

53. Under this agenda item, AfDB made a presentation on the final results of the International Comparison Programme for Africa, highlighting the objective of ICP-Africa, approach and result of the survey, and also the use ICP data and the way forward.

Key issues

54. The discussion mainly focused on:

- (a) Mechanisms to integrate ICP-Africa in the regular work on national statistical offices;
- (b) ICP Africa to support national accounts and price statistics activities in NSOs.

Implementation of the RRSF

55. AfDB and UNECA reported on the design and implementation of the RRSF. The presentation highlighted the objective of RRSF, levels of RRSF implementation, monitoring processes, relationship of RRSF strategies and NSDS features and the results of December 2007 NSDS progress report survey.

Key issues:

56. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) Governments' commitment in the design and implementation of NSDS;
- (b) Information sharing on experiences of countries that have been successful in the development and implementation of NSDS; and
- (c) The importance of the participation of sectoral organisations in the development of NSDS to share ownership.

G. Plenary session III: Basic economic statistics and national accounts

Administrative sources

57. IFORD presented a paper titled: “Revisiting Administrative Data Sources”. The presentation underlined the differences of statistical sources with emphasis on administrative sources. The presenter provided examples of components and sources of administrative data, and advantages and problems involved in the use of the administrative sources.

Key issues raised

58. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) The importance of administrative data sources, usually produced by sectoral ministries, as a key element in the NSS. They have some strong advantages (their durability, very little burden on respondents, and interviewers do not need to go out to collect the data), but also some disadvantages (sometimes imprecise definitions, poor coverage, etc.)
- (b) Possibility of ethical or legal impediments to the use of administrative data.
- (c) It is often difficult to use administrative sources due to difficulties in extrapolation of information to cover the whole country.

Business registers in UEMOA and Senegal experience

59. Senegal presented the work undertaken by UEMOA member countries to establish business registers with emphasis on the feasibility study and the implementation phase. The experience of Senegal was given to underline the process at country level. The feasibility study highlighted the following issues: heterogeneity of accounts used in the UEMOA, plurality of balance sheets for the same company, poor appreciation of the productive sector, inadequacy or absence of an enabling institutional environment, the accounting standards and the accounting profession, closing dates of different accounting periods.

60. In UEMOA member States, a common accounting framework is now in use, namely the Accounting System of West African States (SYSCOA) with harmonised accounting closing dates. Furthermore, the presenter highlighted the importance of establishing a proper institutional environment for the SYSCOA, at both national and community levels.

Key issues raised

61. The meeting:

- (a) Appreciated the experience of UEMOA countries and underlined the importance of reliable business registers in the provision of basic data for the compilation of reliable national accounts statistics.
- (b) The paper presented by Senegal should be translated in English and widely disseminated.

Environment statistics

62. Under this agenda item, UNECA presented a report on the development of a core list of environment indicators. The presenter recalled the various capacity building initiatives held in the area of environment statistics. He emphasized on the outcomes of the workshop held in Addis-Ababa in July 2007 that recommended the establishment of a regional task force on environment statistics that will work on a core list of environment indicators, methodology sheets, and data collection and dissemination processes of environment data in Africa.

Key issues

63. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) Need to agree a core set of environmental indicators, because of the important role that environmental issues play in programmes and policies on sustainable development.
- (b) African Statistical Yearbook should have a theme on environment.
- (c) Further work must be undertaken to identify data gaps.
- (d) Task force on environmental statistics be established, with three main functions: to identify and describe a core list of environmental indicators for Africa; to prepare a work programme on environmental statistics for the Africa region; and to work closely with the Inter Sectoral Working Group on Environmental Statistics.
- (e) Countries participation in the methodological work involved in defining the appropriate set of indicators.
- (f) Technical assistance to enable countries to develop their environmental indicators.

Employment statistics

64. Under this agenda item, ILO made a presentation titled: “Key Issues Concerning Employment Statistics in Africa,” highlighting the challenges of improving employment and labour statistics in Africa. The presenter informed the meeting of ILO capacity building effort and the structure of its technical assistance in Africa. He emphasized on Africa’s commitment to employment statistics as celebrated during the 2007 African Statistics Day and how StatCom-Africa could help in labour statistics. The presenter invited African countries to ratify the ILO convention 160 on employment statistics. He finally called on

African countries to attend in large numbers, the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

Key issues:

65. The meeting discussed the following issues:

- (a) Only three African countries have ratified ILO Convention 160, which sets out the range of labour statistics that should be collected in each country. Those who ratify are obliged to collect and publish the range of labour statistics (including CPI) set out in the Convention. Ratification may therefore assist countries to prioritise their needs and secure the necessary resources for this work.
- (b) Urgent need for information on employment, unemployment, underemployment, etc. which can best be collected through labour force surveys. Also a need for establishment surveys, to assess the demand for labour and the number of new jobs created.
- (c) For the MDGs, a new target has been included under MDG 1 (Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people), with four indicators to measure progress.
- (d) Problems experienced by policy makers and statisticians in explaining why unemployment rates are so low in Africa when the official ILO definition is used. Attempts by some countries to change the definition of unemployment so as to produce a figure that accords more with reality.
- (e) The 18th session of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians, scheduled for 24 November to 5 December 2008 in Geneva, and the need for Africa to be well represented in the discussions that take place on new statistical standards such as for measuring child labour and working time.

H. Break out sessions:

- 66. Six working groups were set up on the following thematic issues: (i) Monitoring MDGs , (ii) National Accounts, (iii) Informal Sector, (iv) Data Management, (v) Statistical Training, and (vi) Gender Statistics.

I. Plenary session IV: Reports of the working group

- 67. The rapporteurs of the working groups presented to the plenary a summary of the discussions, key outcomes and recommendations that emerged during the group sessions. See annexes for the recommendations of the working groups.
- 68. The meeting discussed and adopted the recommendations of the working groups, and endorsed the establishment of the different working groups.

J. Plenary Session V: Major upcoming events and programme issues

Major events:

69. Under this agenda item, two presentations were made. South Africa presented on the 57th Session of the International Statistics Institute (ISI) to be held in Durban, South Africa from 16 to 22 August 2009; and the African Union Commission presented on the African Charter for Statistics.
70. South Africa invited the statistical community of Africa to this unprecedented event in sub-Saharan Africa. The organisers are envisaging a massive participation of around 3000 delegates from around the world. Effort will be made to bring a large number of young and female statisticians to this event. The importance of empowering women in the area of statistical development was also mentioned. Encouraging women to study statistics and mathematics and increasing their voice in decisions related to statistical development in Africa should be given due attention.
71. The draft African Charter for Statistics was submitted to head of national statistical offices and keys sub-regional and regional players in statistics, in Rwanda. The comments and recommendations of that meeting are included in the version that will be submitted to the joint AUC-UNECA conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development this year, before submission to the African Union Summit of Heads of States for adoption.

Programmatic issues

72. Under this agenda item, the secretariat made two presentations: (i) implementation of the work programme 2006-2007 and the work programme 2008-2009, and (ii) the follow up report to the recommendations of the fifth and last meeting of CODI

Agenda and date of the second meeting of StatCom-Africa

73. Under this agenda, the Secretariat of UNECA, presented for discussions the provisional agenda and date of the second meeting of StatCom-Africa.
74. The agenda derived from the main conclusions of the present sessions. The established working group will be reporting on work undertaken. The proposed date for the second meeting was 18 to 22 January 2010.

Key discussions points:

75. The meeting emphasized the need to reflect the implementation of the NSDS in the agenda of the next meeting of StatCom-Africa.

K. Closing session: Main conclusions and recommendations

76. The meeting discussed and amended the draft recommendations presented by the rapporteur of StatCom-Africa I. The meeting adopted the following resolutions as set out below.
77. On behalf of the Executive Secretary of the UNECA, the Director of ACS closed the first meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa.

Conclusions and Recommendations of the First Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa I)

Preamble

Noting with satisfaction the establishment of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) following the repositioning exercise that took place at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) during the year 2006;

Having examined reports on (i) statistical development in Africa, (ii) millennium development goals (MDGs), (iii) the International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa), (iv) the implementation of the Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF), and (v) basic economic statistics and national accounts;

Considering reports from working groups on the MDGs, National Accounts, Informal Sector, Data Management, Statistical Training, and Gender Statistics;

Taking cognizance of a number of programmatic issues including (i) the implementation of the 2006-2007 and the planned 2008-2009 programmes of work, (ii) the follow-up report of the fifth and last meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI-V), the former subsidiary body of the UNECA in charge of statistics;

A. African Statistics Award

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the establishment of an African Statistics Award that will recognise the achievement in statistics of African statisticians to the benefit of Africa;
- (b) Commends the Executive Secretary of the UNECA on whom was bestowed an award for his efforts as a champion of statistics in Africa and for his major contribution in revamping the statistical function at UNECA;
- (c) Bestows *Africa Statistics Awards*, on behalf of the African statistical community, on five persons who had, over many years, played leading roles in the development of statistics on the continent namely Mr Julien Amegandjin, Mr Oladejo Ajayi, Mr Kweku deGraft-Johnson, Mr Lamine Diop, and Mr Pali Lehohla.

B. Bureau of StatCom-Africa

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

(a) Commends the outgoing Bureau of the Subcommittee on Statistics of CODI-V for their leadership and excellent work undertaken

(b) Elects the following Bureau of the first meeting of StatCom-Africa:

Chair: South Africa

Vice-chair: Morocco

Second vice-chair: Niger

First rapporteur : Uganda

Second rapporteur : Cameroun

C. Statistical Commission for Africa

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

(a) Takes note of the goals and objectives of the StatCom-Africa as the apex body in charge of statistics and statistical development on the continent;

(b) Recommends that, in line with the statute for the UN subsidiary bodies, StatCom-Africa should meet every two years and serve as Africa's link to the global statistical system, through the UN Statistical Commission;

(c) Agrees that, in the year when StatCom-Africa is not meeting, the Bureau of StatCom-Africa, in collaboration with the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) and the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC), will prepare a report to be presented to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development and to the global UN Statistical Commission by the Bureau of StatCom-Africa. In the year that StatCom-Africa meets, the Bureau will report to StatCom-Africa on the progress between the two sessions.

(d) Agrees that the ASSD should focus primarily on supporting the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, but recommends that it should also serve as a platform for discussions pertaining to other statistical issues including possible topics of interest for StatCom-Africa.

D. Statistical coordination

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

(a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of the African Development Bank (AfDB) on the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC) and endorses the establishment of such a committee;

(b) Agrees that the membership to the ASCC should be expanded to include regional and sub-regional organisations, the Friends of UNECA, and should report to the bureau of StatCom-Africa;

- (c) Requests the ASCC to ensure that their work programme is in line with that of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) which is a global version of ASCC, to avoid duplication of efforts;
- (d) Requests that Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASCC be prepared and that the Committee work out a reporting mechanism on the measurement, effectiveness and progress of statistical capacity building in Africa.

E. Implementation of the Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF)

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of the AfDB on the implementation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics;
- (b) Recognises that financing statistical activities is a challenging task in Africa and calls on the Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV) meeting to consider this issue. It recommends that a mechanism be put in place to measure statistical development which would help donors monitor the progress made by countries and to provide support to those that need it most;
- (c) Reiterates the call of CODI that countries (which have not done so yet) design a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) as the overarching framework for statistical capacity development in the region. A study on the effectiveness of different National Statistical Systems (NSSs) already in place should be undertaken to inform countries on lessons learned from the implementation of the existing NSDSs.
- (d) Recommends that all NSDSs should include explicitly the strategies for the production of sectoral statistics.

F. International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa)

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of the AfDB on the ICP-Africa;
- (b) Reiterates the recommendation of CODI-V and urges UNECA and AfDB to set up a National Accounts Programme at the regional level, building on existing successful initiatives such as the work by Afristat, and that the ICP programme supports the compilation of quality national accounts;
- (c) Reiterates the call of CODI-V to countries to continue ICP as a regular activity of NSOs with special emphasis on data dissemination and quality improvement.

G. Statistical Associations

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of UNECA stressing the importance of statistical associations in statistical advocacy and statistical development;
- (b) Requests that high level policy and decision makers, especially from statistical offices, central banks and ministries of finance, planning and economic development be engaged in the activities of national statistical associations of their respective countries;
- (c) Requests that by 2009 every African country should revive dormant national statistical associations, or establish new ones;
- (d) Requests the NSOs to provide significant support to national statistical associations, including financing, office spaces, and logistical support;
- (e) Urges national statistical associations to increase the number of corporate members in the associations, so as to provide a sound financial base;
- (f) Urges statistical offices and associations to increase their international networking with, and support from, international and bilateral organisations, including the International Statistical Institute (ISI), so as to increase their visibility and sustainability of funding;
- (g) Recognises the need for the participation of national statistical associations in meetings of StatCom-Africa as they play significant roles in the statistical systems.
- (h) Requests that the UNECA, with the collaboration of other partners, revitalizes the dormant African Statistical Association, and that all national statistical associations be encouraged to join.

H. 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the reports of the secretariat of the Friends of UNECA on the status of census undertaking in Africa and on the outcomes of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD);
- (b) Requests increased advocacy at the highest level to ensure the commitment of African governments to undertake population censuses in the 2010 round;
- (c) Requests UNECA and Friends of UNECA to develop a clear strategy for the conduct of censuses in post-conflict countries, including sharing knowledge on best practices; and support census undertaking in post-conflict countries and in other countries in difficult situations including urgent technical expertise required foremost by Sudan.

I. Millennium Development Goals monitoring

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report by UNECA on the progress towards the targets of the millennium development goals in Africa and the UNSD's report on UN MDG data collection system;
- (b) Urges countries to mainstream statistics into national planning and budgeting processes, by ensuring that statistics are prioritised and adequately funded from the national budget;
- (c) Urges development partners to provide sustainable technical and financial assistance for the collection, processing, analysis and use of data for MDG monitoring within the framework of National Statistical Systems.

J. Basic economic statistics

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Takes note with appreciation of the report prepared by Senegal on business registers, and IFORD on administrative data sources;
- (b) Urges countries to establish and undertake regular updating of business registers as a priority of national statistical programmes;
- (c) Encourages countries to utilize administrative sources of data as a supplement to data collected through traditional statistical surveys.

K. Environment statistics

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Takes note with appreciation of the work undertaken in the area of environment statistics by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNECA and UNSD to develop a core set of environmental indicators for data collection and dissemination in Africa;
- (b) Endorses the proposal by the UNECA secretariat that a task force on environmental statistics be established, with three main functions: to streamline the core list of environmental indicators for Africa; to prepare a work programme on environmental statistics for the Africa region; and to work closely with the Inter Sectoral Working Group on Environmental Statistics;

- (c) Recommends that countries be given the opportunity to participate in the methodological work involved in defining the appropriate set of indicators;
- (d) Requests UNECA to provide technical assistance to enable countries to develop their environmental indicators.

L. Employment statistics

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the reports of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on key issues concerning employment statistics in Africa;
- (b) Urges countries to undertake regular annual production of employment statistics through censuses, surveys (especially labour force surveys), and administrative records;
- (c) Recommends that countries continue to use the official ILO definition of unemployment, in order to maintain consistency with the System of National Accounts (SNA), but that a variety of other indicators (on underemployment, underutilization of labour, etc.) be produced to give a more complete picture of the employment situation;
- (d) Encourages its members to participate actively and fully at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) by identifying concerns relating to measurement of employment, and take steps for the ratification of the ILO Convention No. 160 on Labour Statistics (1985).

M. Creation of working groups on thematic areas

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes and endorses the creation of the following working groups:
 - MDG Monitoring in Africa;
 - Statistical Training and Capacity Building;
 - Data Management;
 - Informal Sector;
 - National Accounts; and
 - Gender Statistics
- (b) Endorses the specific recommendations from these groups as presented at the plenary.

N. Other issues

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Takes note of the presentation of the African Union Commission (AUC) on progress made towards the finalization and submission for adoption of the African Charter for Statistics to African Heads of States;
- (b) Takes note of the information provided by South Africa on the 57th Session of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) to be held in Durban in August 2009 and calls upon all African countries to substantively contribute to the success of this continental event. Efforts should be focused on encouraging women statisticians and young statisticians to attend the ISI in large numbers.

O. Date and provisional agenda for the second meeting of StatCom-Africa

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- a) Decides that the second meeting of StatCom-Africa shall be held in Addis Ababa from 18 to 22 January 2010;
- b) Approves the provisional agenda for the second meeting of StatCom-Africa as set out in the annex below.

Provisional agenda for the second StatCom-Africa meeting

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the Agenda and Other Organisational Matters.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations

Note by the Secretariat on the organisation of work of the meeting

3. National Accounts Statistics

Documentation

Report of the working group on national accounts

4. Informal Sector and Surveys

Documentation

Report of the working group on informal sector

5. Data Management

Documentation

Report of the working group on data management

6. Statistical Training

Documentation

Report of the working group on statistical training

7. Environment Statistics

Documentation

Report of the task force on environment statistics

8. 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census

Documentation

Report on population and housing census

9. Coordination of statistics

Documentation

Report of the African Committee on Statistical Coordination

Report of the RRSF implementation

Report on the African Charter for Statistics

Report on the NSDS implementation in Africa

10. MDG Monitoring

Documentation

Report of the working group on MDG monitoring

11. Gender Statistics

Documentation

Report on gender statistics

12. Employment Statistics

Documentation

Report on employment statistics

13. Programme Questions (African Centre for Statistics of the UNUNECA)

14. Provisional Agenda and Dates of the 3rd Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa III)

Annexes: Reports of the Working Groups

Annex 1:

Report of the Working Group on Development Indicators

Rationale

Many challenges hamper the capacity of African countries to report on progress or lack of progress in reaching the MDGs. These include and are not limited to lack of data on some indicators, data discrepancies between national and international organisations, methodological issues, capacity building, and statistical coordination within the NSS and between NSSs and international organisations.

The working group on MDGs is aimed at helping the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) deal with challenges confronting African countries in monitoring and evaluation of progress made towards the MDGs.

Membership

- African countries:
- Sub regional and regional organisations:
- International organisations:

Bureau

Chair of the Group: Kenya

Rapporteur: 1. Lesotho 2. Niger

The ACS is serving as the Secretariat to the Group.

Objectives of the Group

The main objective of the group is to support StaCom-Africa in its quest to address challenges facing African countries on MDGs monitoring.

Specific objectives are:

- Problems posed by the overall reporting mechanism on the MDGs;
- Lack of data on a number of indicators;
- Lack of some sub national data in support of targeted policy decision making;
- Discrepancies between country published data and those generated by international organisations;
- Inadequacy of mechanisms for validation with NSOs;

- Estimates made by international organisations for missing country data;
- Lack of coordination among statistical producers and users within the country, between countries and international organisations; and among international organisations
- Lack of harmonisation of concepts, methodologies, standards;
- Lack of sustainability of data production for MDG indicators;
- Lack of human and financial resources undermine statistical capacity to generate, process, package/disseminate MDG indicators by NSS

Deliverables

- Detailed Terms of reference by end of March 2008

Working modalities

- One annual meeting of the group
- Support some members to attend IAEG and any other international MDGs meetings
- Online discussion forum (the Secretariat has to provide for this). The online MDGs forum should be running by August 2008 for members to be able to start active discussions.

The Group will be reporting to StatCom-Africa.

Annex 2:**Report of the Working Group on Informal Sector**

The Group on the Informal Sector met on Tuesday 22 January 2008; it was composed by Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, AFRISTAT and UNECA.

BACKGROUND

The Informal Sector is the main supplier of employment in the region. Its contribution to the reduction of poverty is very significant. However, the informal sector is not fully considered in the compilation of national accounts despite its considerable contribution to the gross domestic product.

During the session, two presentations were made respectively by AFRISTAT and UNECA. These presentations focused on the methodologies used and the issues encountered in the measurement of the informal sector.

KEY ISSUES

Different issues have been highlighted but there are two main difficulties: methodology and definition.

In the region, the main tool used for measuring informal sector is the 1-2-3 Survey whose methodology is to collect, at the first step, information from households and, at the second step, the informal unit production.

However, other methods of direct measurement of the informal sector or informal employment are also used:

- Household Surveys
- Enterprise Surveys
- Mixed Household and Enterprise Surveys
- Employment Surveys

Many definitions are used according to the objective targeted. It has been agreed that there is not a consensus even in the region; the definition varies from country to country. Also at global level, there is not an agreed definition. However, ILO gave a definition based on employment. In this order, several criteria are used:

- Social Security
- Bookkeeping
- Registration
- Size of the Unit

There is also another consideration related to the informal employees in the formal sector to be taken into account; the main challenge is to identify informal activities as well as informal employees working in the formal sector.

The group noticed also the issue concerning the measurement of the output in contribution to the GDP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The group expressed a real need for harmonisation of definitions and methodologies within the region.
2. The group recommended the necessity to revisit existing methodologies carried out by South Africa, India, Ghana, AFRISTAT, etc.
3. Discussions on the informal sector need to be deepened by the working group under the leadership of AFRISTAT.
4. The group called upon other countries to join the group to reinforce the pertinence of the discussions since the informal sector is very important in the region
5. The group called upon StatCom-Africa to earmark funds to support the informal sector working group to meet

Annex 3:

Report of the Working Group on National Accounts

The Working Group on National Accounts began its work by setting up its bureau as follows:

President: AfDB

Rapporteur: AFRISTAT

Attendance:

It was attended by representatives of the following countries: Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mauritius, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe;

The following organisations attended the meeting: AFRISTAT, AfDB, and the African Union Commission,

The meeting was also attended by the following external partners: INSEE, and Johns Hopkins University (USA).

Background:

The working group noted that the major challenge for African countries is to define an African strategy for the implementation of the SNA 93 to ensure the continuous production of national accounts and the use of up to date methodology for this production. Countries are facing a very strong demand for the monitoring of the PRSP and MDGs. The group also noted a variable capability of countries in producing national accounts.

Agenda:

The working group examined five points that seemed urgent to address this concern:

1) **Strengthening the capacity of NSOs in national accounts:** The discussions highlighted: the high mobility of national accountants, and the lack of training on the concepts and principles of the SNA 93; the technical assistance problems and the multiplicity of tasks of the national accountants. To overcome these difficulties, the following solutions were proposed: country assessment, organisation of workshops and seminars on national accounts; capacity building for the analysis of national accounts, the use of powerful software tool for the compilation of national accounts; specific support to fragile countries; the motivation of national accountants; strengthening of South-South cooperation and consideration of other areas including satellite accounts, the regional accounts and non-profit institutions.

2) **Improvement of basic data:** The working group noted deficiencies at the basic data level used in compiling national accounts: the problems of quality, timely availability of data, the lack

of consistent set for a good analysis of aggregates and problems related to the change in the base year of accounts.

3) **Methodological problems:** Given the problems of basic data and the lack of human resources, it is necessary to develop and implement different methodologies for each country: the use of adjusted classifications of activities and products; taking into account of sample of enterprises; better consideration of the data of the informal sector, the development of databases on methodologies, the definition and use of appropriate indicators and definition of adequate results tables.

4) **Implementation of SNA93:** Widening to all countries implementing the SNA93 and taking into account the revision of the SNA 93 underway.

5) **Coordination of technical and financial partners:** Better coordination support of technical and financial partners is necessary in the context of NSDS in countries.

The working group will draw up terms of reference (TOR) and the timetable for its activities.

Recommendations:

To ensure the implementation of a sustainable system of production of national accounts and dispose of reliable economic aggregates for all countries, the working group recommended:

1 - The development within three months of the African strategy for the implementation of SNA93. This task is assigned to the AfDB, UNECA, the African Union Commission, AFRISTAT and the Regional Economic Communities.

2 – To reflect in the revision of the SNA 93 specific issues for developing countries, particularly in Africa such as agriculture and catastrophic events.

Annex 4:**Report of the Working Group on Data Management**

The Working Group No. 4, composed of nine people (see attached list), considered the theme on data management. The bureau was established as follows:

- President: Akou Adjogou, ECOWAS
- Secretary: Dorothy Ouissika, AFRISTAT
- Rapporteur: Buzingo Déogratias, INS, Burundi

Two presentations were made:

- Data Platform / World Bank and AfDB, presented by Mr. Issa Ouedraogo, InWent Consultant;
- StatBase / UNECA, presented by Mr. Molla Hunegnaw, UNECA.

At the end of the presentations, and after an analysis of the challenges and needs of countries, the group recognised the importance of databases in the storage, management and dissemination of data. They noted the highly technical nature of the issues raised in the presentations and among them the lack of people with extensive experience in the field of database with the exception of the two presenters. However, they established the following findings:

- The existence of a variety of applications (DEVINFO, STATBASE, DataPlatform, FIVIMS, ISMI, LDB), and according to their specialization and objectives;
- the project approach, external financing, most of the experiences of setting up databases conducted in countries;
- Low appropriation of tools;
- Low mastery of tools, which does not allow a complete knowledge of their content and use for the real needs of the country;
- Difficulties in regular updating of databases.

It followed from the above that countries faced difficulties in choosing the appropriate type of databases. The group also noted the existence, in the countries and within the regional and sub-regional organisations, of centralized databases which offer no possibility of communication between them (exchange of data and metadata).

The group therefore recommended:

1. The establishment of a strategic reference framework for data management under the auspices of the UNECA;
2. The development by each country of a data management strategy;
3. The establishment by UNECA of a group of experts to assess countries' utilization of databases and to provide a guide to help countries in making their choices.

List of participants :

Noms et prénoms	Institutions	Pays
Mohammed H. Ratab	NSO	Tanzania
Zaam Ssali	Office of the Prime Minister	Uganda
Begizen Yaregal	Statistical association	Ethiopia
Buzingo Déogracias	INS	Burundi
Jose Awong Alene	AUC	Ethiopia
Dorothee Ouissika	AFRISTAT	Mali
Issa Ouedraogo	InWent	Germany
Molla Hunegnaw	UNECA	Ethiopia
Akou Adjogou	ECOWAS	Nigeria

Annex 5:

Report of the Working Group on Statistical Training

Proceeding

1. The working group on statistical training met on 22 January 2008. The following bureau was elected:
Facilitator: PARIS21
Rapporteur: ENSEA
2. Two presentations were made: (i) PARIS21 Task Team on Statistical Training by PARIS21, and (ii) SADC Project on Statistical Training by SADC.

Key discussions points:

3. The participants appreciated the SADC project on statistical training. It was suggested that SADC share its experiences with other regional economic communities.
4. The participants were concerned by the slow progress of the recommendations of PARIS21 task team on statistical training;
5. Studies undertaken by ACBF on training as well as the statistical training project for PALOP countries were also highlighted.

Recommendations of the working group

6. The working group recommended:
 - (a) The 2008 theme of the celebration of the African Statistics Day should be on statistical training.
 - (b) The creation of a statistical training centre for PALOP countries. It was further recommended to brainstorm on short-term actions in order to train statisticians from PALOP (Portuguese speaking African Countries: Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe)
 - (c) A working group be created in close collaboration with the PARIS21 task team on training in order to facilitate reporting mechanisms to StatCom-Africa
 - (d) A forum of Directors of NSOs and Statistical Training Centres be created as was the case during the implementation of the STPA
 - (e) The need to put in place permanent financing mechanisms for statistical training.
 - (f) Mechanisms for the harmonisation of curricula

Annex 6:**Report of the Working Group on Gender Statistics****I. Introduction**

Several gender awareness raising initiatives have not resulted into appreciable change in statistical programmes of NSOs and other data producers. For the awareness programmes to work there is need to:

- (i) Accompany them with practical examples of how to engender statistics,
- (ii) Tap into existing initiatives, and
- (iii) Formulate focused programmes at both national & regional levels

Lessons must be learned from some best practices in the area:

- (i) Annual gender statistics meetings of statisticians, users, training institutions at the regional level in Latin America (hosted by Mexico)
- (ii) Frequent meetings make them more conscious about gender issues and enables them to learn from shared experiences on how to be gender responsive on all issues.

II. The working groups made the following recommendations:

1. Regional programme to be set up by UNECA
2. Regional high level policy dialogue conference on gender statistics under the auspices of UNECA
3. Setting up of a gender statistics network based on GESNET
4. Set up a working group on gender statistics
5. Development of country gender statistics strategies drawn from the regional programme

III. The meeting discussed and proposed the following components for the Regional Programme on Gender Statistics**1. Training Component**

- i. Engendering Curricula for:
 - a) Statistical training centres
 - b) NSO in-service training programmes
- ii. Development of a Gender Statistics course module for:
 - a) Statistical training centres
 - b) NSO in-service training programmes
- iii. Refresher (On-the-job) gender statistics courses for the already employed statisticians

2. Awareness creation Component

- ✓ Development, production and utilization of gender advocacy materials
- ✓ Conducting workshops and seminars for various target audiences.

3. Networking Component

- ✓ Creation of a gender statistics network involving all stakeholders (Africa GESNET initiative)

- ✓ Uploading useful resources/literature to be accessible to all.
- 4. Engendering statistics in NSOs**
 - ✓ Mainstreaming gender in the NSO structures
 - ✓ Setting up an auditing unit in NSOs
- 5. Engendering Censuses, surveys and administrative record systems. Gender responsive**
 - ✓ Data capture instruments
 - ✓ Field processes,
 - ✓ Analysis
 - ✓ Report writing
 - ✓ Dissemination processes
- 6. Research**
 - ✓ Compile and disseminate statistics on gender
 - ✓ Conduct gender-related impact analysis
 - ✓ Develop methodologies for the production of gender statistics

IV. The discussion on the Africa Regional conference on Gender Statistics made the following proposal:

Purpose: A High-level Policy dialogue aimed at sensitising policy makers, such as NSO executives, key sector executives, training centres and key users.

A task force (working committee) to be formed to workout the details of the regional programme and the regional conference.

V. Country Programmes

The regional agenda should work as a guide to the different national activities on gender statistics.

A mechanism for monitoring and evaluation should be set up at both national and regional levels