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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

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

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
20– 24 January 2008

**Follow-up Report on the Resolutions of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee on
Development Information (CODI-V)**

I. Introduction

1. The fifth and last meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI) was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 29 April to 4 May 2007. The pre-CODI meeting, devoted to the Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa (ABSA), took place on 30 April 2007; and the post-CODI meeting devoted to Statistical Capacity Building, co-organized with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC), was held on 4 May 2007. The meeting reviewed and took action on the following items:
 - a) Follow up to the recommendations of CODI-IV;
 - b) Reports on Parliamentary documents: (i) Report on the Implementation of the Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF), (ii) Report on the implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993.
 - c) Terms of Reference of the new subsidiary body in charge of the statistics subprogramme (ECA's Subprogramme 9): the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa)
 - d) Report on activities: (i) statistical activities during the period 2006-2007 and the proposed work programme for the biennium 2008-2009, (ii) First Results of the International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa) (iii) Resolutions on Statistics of the 2007 Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.
 - e) Emerging issues: (i) The African Statistical System and African Charter for Statistics, (ii) The African Symposium on Statistical Development, (iii) The theme of the 2007 African Statistics Day.
2. The Sub-committee on Statistics called upon the Secretariat to undertake a number of activities in the following areas: (a) Statistical Activities at ECA (b) Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa), (c) Coordination of statistical activities in Africa, (d) National Accounts and International Comparison Programme, (e) The 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, (f) Celebration of the African Statistics Day, (g) The African Charter for Statistics, and (h) Statistical Training.
3. The present document reports on the implementation of these activities in the last eight (8) months, the constraints faced and some corrective measures to improve delivery of the objectives of the Sub-Committee. The report will first list recommendations from CODI V, before reporting on actions taken pursuant of them.

II. Statistical Activities at ECA

4. Under this item the Sub-Committee:

Rec.1) ***While commending*** ECA for reestablishing the statistics division, as the African Centre for Statistics (ACS), calls for the provision of adequate human and financial

resources to the ACS to enable it to deliver its programme in accordance with its strategic and business plans.

Rec.2) Endorses the 2008-2009 statistical programme of work of the ECA and calls upon regional, sub regional, and other development partners to collaborate with ECA in its implementation.

Rec.3) Calls upon African countries to collaborate with ECA in the implementation of the ACS work programme, with special emphasis on South-South cooperation and the provision of timely country data and reports to ECA.

Activities undertaken:

5. In terms of human resources, the management of ECA will provide the African Centre for Statistics with two positions of regional advisors on Censuses and Statistical Organization respectively. Various development partners have committed themselves to providing the Centre with advisors in statistical capacity building, household survey and statistical advocacy.
6. The management of the ECA is committed to providing the Centre with sufficient financial resources, both regular and extra-budgetary, to implement its work programme for 2008-2009.

III. Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa)

7. Under this item the Sub-Committee

Rec.4) Endorses the terms of reference of the subsidiary organ of the ECA in charge of statistics, the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa), as a platform for statistical development in Africa, a key part of the global statistical system.

Rec.5) Recommends that the ACS conducts a study on the composition and interrelation with members of the African Statistical System underlining the links with the global Statistical System.

Rec.6) Recommends that ECA convenes meetings of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) on an annual basis, and that relevant subcommittees be established and by laws be put in place to undertake sound technical contribution on emerging issues in the area of statistics. StatCom-Africa should strive to link its meetings with the UN Statistical Commission and coordinate with the United Nations Statistics Division in this regard.

Rec.7) Recommends that ECA review the status of StatCom-Africa's African observers so as to recognize their specificity and encourage their active participation in statistics and statistical capacity building in Africa.

Rec.8) Recommends that NSOs be represented at the annual meeting of the joint AUC/ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development: the modality of this representation is subject to consultation with member States.

Rec.9) Recommends that ECA and partners consider the rationalization of statistical fora. In that regard the relevance of ABSA was raised in the context of a well functioning StatCom-Africa.

Activities undertaken:

8. The first meeting of StatCom-Africa is convened from 20 to 24 January 2008. It is recommended that StatCom-Africa will be held annually and prior to the Statistical Commission of the United Nations as a process of linking the two meetings.

9. No work has been undertaken on the relevance of ABSA in the context of a well functioning StatCom-Africa; or on the composition and interrelation with members of the African Statistical System underlining the links with the global Statistical System.

IV. Coordination of statistical activities in Africa

10. Under this item the Sub-Committee

Rec.10) Calls upon ECA to take a coordination role and to set up with its regional and subregional partners an effective statistical programming so as to avoid duplication of efforts and effectively tap into existing fora and seminars, including ABSA, StatCom-Africa, Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) and the Forum on Africa Statistical Development (FASDEV).

Rec.11) Recommends the implementation of the RRSF endorsed by the ECA's Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Activities undertaken:

11. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and ECA jointly convened a meeting on the coordination of statistical activities in Africa from 23 to 25 September 2007 in Tunis,

Tunisia. The meeting was attended by the AfDB, the ECA, the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and countries representatives from Nigeria and South Africa. The meeting agreed on the creation of twelve working groups under the following themes: the RRSF, the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), ICP-Africa, Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA), the African Charter for Statistics, Measuring and fostering the progress of African societies, statistical associations, African statistical award programme, African statistical coordination committee (ASCC), joint statistical databases and publications, and consolidated African statistical programme. The meeting agreed that ECA should lead the finalization of the paper on the ASCC and that all working groups report to the ASCC on progress made.

12. Regional, subregional and national coordinators of the RRSF have been nominated or are in the process of being nominated. A website dedicated to the implementation of the RRSF has been created.

V. National Accounts and International Comparison Programme

13. Under this agenda item the Sub-Committee

Rec.12) Calls upon countries to provide adequate human and financial resources to the NSOs for the compilation of national accounts, and increase the collaboration between the NSOs, Central Banks, revenue Departments and other major data sources.

Rec.13) Requests ECA, in collaboration with international, regional and sub-regional organizations to provide adequate backing and technical assistance, including increasing provision of training, software, and manuals related to 1993 SNA, including the GFS and the Balance of Payments.

Rec.14) Requests ECA 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.

Rec.15) Calls upon AfDB to continue and reinforce its statistical capacity building support to member States building on ICP-Africa.

Rec.16) Calls upon countries to continue ICP as a regular activity of NSOs with special emphasis on data dissemination and quality improvement.

Activities undertaken:

14. A regional workshop for African Countries on the Compilation of Basic Economic Statistics was organized by UNSD in cooperation with Statistics South Africa in Pretoria, South Africa, from 23 to 26 July 2007. The purpose was to enhance knowledge and practice in the collection and compilation of basic economic statistics in African countries. Taking into account findings and conclusions of the first regional workshop, the United Nations Statistics

Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the ECA, organized a second regional workshop on compilation of basic economic statistics for African countries in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 16 to 19 October 2007 . It was a continuation of the efforts to enhance the knowledge and use of good practices in the collection and compilation of basic economic statistics in the region to meet the needs of policy-makers, the business community and the 1993 System of National Accounts and its current update.

VI. The 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (RPHC)

15. Under this item the Sub-Committee

Rec.17) Requests ECA and partners to provide technical assistance to African countries, to advocate for undertaking censuses and the mobilization of resources, especially within the platform of ASSD towards increasing participation of African countries in the 2010 RPHC, with special focus on post conflict countries, including DRC, Angola, Somalia, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, CAR and Sudan. It was further recommended that south-south cooperation be given priority.

Activities undertaken:

16. The third meeting of the ASSD was held in Accra, Ghana from 3 to 7 December 2007, on the theme “Best practice and exchanging experience: Africa 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses”. The meeting provided an opportunity for advocating that censuses are undertaken and participants shared experiences and best practices.

17. The ECA elaborated an addendum to the global principles and recommendations (P and R) namely “Africa principles and recommendations for 2010 round of population and housing census”. This document underlined Africa’s specific recommendations with respect to the P and R (Africa’s position) as its contribution to the 2010 World programme on population and housing censuses.

18. Two workshops on Census Cartography and Management were organized by UNSD in Lusaka, Zambia, from 8 to 12 October and in Rabat, Morocco, from 12 to 16 November 2007.

19. With regards to the financing of census activities, the AfDB has been working on mobilizing funds for Liberia’s 2008 population and housing census. The total cost of the census in Liberia is estimated at USD 7,659,834.

VII. Celebration of the African Statistics Day

20. Under this item the Sub-Committee

Rec.18) Recommends that the 2007 theme of the ASD be on employment in line with the recommendations of the 2006 and 2007 ECA Conferences of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and recommends ECA to provide the advocacy materials at the earliest opportunity, preferably one month in advance of the ASD to allow for better celebration at the country level.

Activities undertaken:

21. The theme of the 2007 African Statistics Day was: Improving employment and related indicators to better inform labour policies and programmes in Africa. Advocacy materials including posters and communiqué were designed and disseminated to countries and partners in a timely manner. The African Statistics Day was widely celebrated across Africa. It has been reported that in Liberia, the day has been declared a holiday by the President of the country.

VIII. The African Charter for Statistics

22. Under this item the Sub-Committee

Rec.19) Commends the AUC for initiating the development of an African Charter for Statistics, and recommends that the charter be in line with other statistical development initiatives including the RRSF and the StatCom-Africa to avoid wasteful overlaps in the implementation of various statistical development efforts on the continent. The AUC should ensure political advocacy and backstopping to statistical development efforts on the continent at the highest level.

Rec.20) Recommends that the AUC ensure the full participation of heads of NSOs and integration of legal opinion in the process of consideration of the Charter before submission to Heads of States. It was further recommended that the draft document be submitted in time before the validation meeting.

Activities undertaken:

23. The African Union Commission convened a validation meeting of the draft African Charter for Statistics in Rwanda, in June 2007. The meeting was attended by representatives of African national statistical offices, subregional and regional organizations. Work is undergoing to present for adoption the African Statistical Charter to an AUC's Heads of States and Governments Summit in 2008.

IX. Statistical Training

24. Under this item the Sub-Committee

Rec.21) Reiterates the ABSA recommendations on the statistical training activities, including harmonization of curricula, involvement of the STCs in ECA training programmes, advocacy for scholarship, networking of STCs and establishment of a lusophone STC, including creating new ones where appropriate.

Rec.22) Calls upon the ECA to set up and coordinate an African forum on statistical training.

Activities undertaken:

25. The importance of statistical training was underlined during the statistical coordination meeting held in Tunis, Tunisia. A working group dedicated to this theme was created. It was further proposed to revive the former Statistical Training Programme in Africa (STPA); and a working group led by ECA/ACBF was established to propose a strategic programme on human resources and training in statistics.
26. PARIS21 convened its first meeting on statistical training in Yaounde, Cameroon, from 18 to 19 September 2007. The meeting was attended by representatives of five statistics and demographic training institutions (ISSEA, ENSEA, EASTC, Makerere University, and IFORD), two representatives of national statistical offices, regional and international organizations. The meeting agreed on a set of activities to be undertaken under the overall framework of the RRSF.

X. Conclusion

27. The follow-up report incorporates the activities undertaken as actions towards the implementation of the recommendations of the fifth and last meeting of CODI Sub-Committee on Statistics. Due to the short time since the CODI-V meeting (8 months) only selected recommendations have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. A major recommendation is for the meeting of StatCom-Africa to be held annually and the establishment of thematic working groups.
28. The time factor also explains the lack of information on recommendations directed to countries like the recommendation (24) calling up on countries to provide adequate human and financial resources to the NSOs for the compilation of national accounts, and increase the collaboration between the NSOs, Central Banks, revenue departments and other major data sources.
29. Another major point is the recommendation (10) on the rationalization of statistical fora. In this regard, the present meeting should take position on the relevance of ABSA.