



**Guiding Manual for Africa Symposia on Statistical Development:
2010 and Beyond**

Final Draft

**For Exclusive Use in the Organisation of ASSDs
May 2011**

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS, ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASSD	Africa Symposium/Symposia on Statistical Development
NSO	National Statistics Office
ECA or UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
AUC	African Union Commission
AfDB	African Development Bank
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
RPHC	Round of Population and Housing Censuses
PHCs	Population and Housing Censuses
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
NOC	National Organising Committee
PMS	Planning Meetings Schedule
ASCC	Africa Statistical Coordinating Committee
NSS	National Statistics System
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
StatCom - Africa	Statistical Commission for Africa
NASSDC	National ASSD Coordinator
GIZ	"Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)". German Society for International Cooperation, responsible for Sustainable development and International Capacity Building , a merger of Inwent with two other German organisations, namely the GTZ and the DED

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Representatives of the following partners deserve special mention for without their contributions the Manual would not have been of the quality it is:

- (i) National Statistics Offices (NSOs)
- (ii) The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
- (iii) The African Union Commission (AUC)
- (iv) The African Development Bank (AfDB)
- (v) The United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)

A. BACKGROUND

1. Following lack of satisfaction in 2005 by statisticians gathered in Yaoundé, Cameroon about African countries' state of preparedness to conduct censuses in the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (RPHCs) in line with the Marakech Action Plan for Statistics, they decided to meet again in Cape Town, South Africa to strategise for the 2010 RPHCs. The Yaoundé meeting was held in the wake of a report by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan to the General Assembly in September 2005 that showed glaring data gaps in monitoring progress made in Africa on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), The ASSD became the resultant brainchild of the Cape Town meeting and resolved among other things that African NSOs needed to cooperate to ensure that every African country undertook a census in the 2010 round.

2. One of the resolutions of the 2006 ASSD re-enforced the need for the African statistical community to meet on an annual basis to engage actively in the ongoing revision of the Principles and Recommendations on Population and Housing Censuses (PHCs)¹, to share best practices in the planning and management, execution, processing, analysis and dissemination of census data.

¹ Member States of the United Nations are recommended to undertake at least one population and housing census during decennial periods called rounds. The 2010 round of population and housing censuses covers the 2005-2014 period.

3. In addition, an important resolution that came out of the 39th Session of the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development held in Ouagadougou in May 2006 was that assistance should be provided to countries emerging from conflict. Furthermore, governments were called upon to make resources available for successful census taking. In carrying out this resolution, the ASSD becomes an important platform for the African statistical community in its desire to realise unprecedented statistical development efforts on the continent. Subsequent to this resolution another resolution was taken by Ministers responsible for CVRS in Africa in their first conference held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on the 13th and 14th of August 2010 to the effect that the focus of the ASSD from 2011 to 2015 should be on CVRS. Heads of NSOs adopted this resolution at the 6th ASSD held in Cairo, Egypt in November 2010.

B. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDING MANUAL FOR ASSDs

4. The hosting of this country-led initiative by one country after the other means that all 54 countries should take turns in hosting this event over an initial 54-year period. To enable the hosting country, the ASSD secretariat and other key stakeholders involved in the organisation of the symposium to work harmoniously and symbiotically deliver successful symposia, it is of critical importance that a Guiding Manual is in place. 5. The purpose of the ASSD Guiding Manual is **to provide a general framework to guide the organisation of ASSDs**. It takes into account standard procedures, protocol, corporate branding and process management that must be maintained at all ASSD. This manual does not attempt to describe all requirements and procedures for an ASSD session exhaustively, but deals with the most critical aspects and issues to be borne in mind when organising such an event. It attempts to help the organizers to organize systematically, synergistically whilst avoiding unnecessary mistakes, duplication of effort and clashes in stakeholder roles. To this end, the process to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders are outlined hereunder.

C. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

C1. ASSD Secretariat

6. The ASSD has established a Secretariat to act as its **core administration arm** to coordinate the entire organisation of symposia and support the

ASSD chairperson. The secretariat reports to the StatCom-Africa through the Bureau. Since the inception of the ASSD, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), through its International Statistical Development and Cooperation Division has played this critical role and its duties and responsibilities include the following:

- a) Facilitating the planning and budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of ASSD conferences;
- b) Ensuring effective liaison with all stakeholders by providing critical support and information to all key players and committees of the ASSD to ensure harmony and synergy among them;
- c) Compiling and safekeeping of strategic documents to ensure effective communication and the conservation of the ASSD memory;
- d) Facilitating the formulation of symposia themes and key messages;
- e) Coordinating the development of ASSD symposia programmes in line with the agreed themes;
- f) Ensuring that all stakeholders and committees of the ASSD understand their roles and responsibilities and execute them effectively;
- g) Establishing and maintain relationships with ASSD sponsors, partners and other fora working towards the development of statistics in Africa; and by especially providing strategic support to the ISIBalo Capacity Building Programme² at the continental level;
- h) Ensuring that recommendations/ resolutions, duties and responsibilities are followed upon by stakeholders.

7. The ASSD Secretariat (The Secretariat) maintains the responsibilities of executing the ASSD programme, communicating with delegates, document production and management, overseeing rapporteurs' team and tasks, maintaining the ASSD website and preparing all symposium reports. To ensure successful ASSDs, the Secretariat requires administrative and secretarial support from the host country during the symposium. It is of pivotal importance that the administrative team from the host country is identified as early as possible to ensure that a close working relationship is established with the Secretariat.

² ISIBalo Capacity Building Programme is an initiative that is aimed at creating a completely literate society in Africa by creating awareness about the role of statistics and advocating for statistical literacy through the mentoring of professionals and training of learners, educators and the general public in statistics.

C2. Patron

8. The ASSD is generally held under highest official patronage, usually that of the Head of State. An ASSD host country must make effort to ensure that the Head of State (or his/her representative) presides over the Opening Ceremony of the ASSD.

C3. National Organising Committee (NOC)

9. For the arrangements of the ASSD Session, it is advisable that the host country establishes a **National Organising Committee** which will oversee the logistics, communication, marketing, administration, security, protocol aspects of the ASSD in collaboration with the ASSD Secretariat. Much of the work in organising a session is administrative and it is therefore advisable to appoint a Session Coordinator who will work in direct consultation with the ASSD Secretariat.

C4. National ASSD Coordinator (NASSDC)

10. The hosting country should appoint a NASSDC who will be responsible for the overall coordination of the preparations and execution of the ASSD. In general, the NASSDC will be responsible for ensuring that the NOC works effectively and efficiently. Specifically, the NASSDC will convene NOC meetings and ensure that communication with the ASSD Secretariat is maintained. It is highly recommended that the NASSDC should be a relatively senior person from the NSO who is experienced in organising events of this nature. The NASSDC shall report to the Head of the NSO on all ASSD activities.

11. The duties and **responsibilities of the NASSDC** include and are not limited to:

- a) To provide operational leadership in organising the ASSD;
- b) To develop and manage the ASSD Plan for the hosting country;
- c) To convene National Organising Committee (NOC) meetings for the ASSD;
- d) To compile and keep records pertaining to the ASSD;
- e) To liaise closely with the ASSD Secretariat to implement the Manual for Organising ASSDs; and

f) To ensure the successful hosting of the event.

C5. Human Resource Requirements During ASSDs

C5.1. Interpreters

12. The number of interpreters will depend on the number of languages used. At minimum, **simultaneous interpretation** from English into French and vice versa is required at the ASSD Session. In negotiating the services of an interpreter's agency, the minimum requirements for the number of interpreters will be quoted by them as these are firmly established by the International Association of Interpreters. The host country must provide additional interpreters to those that will be provided by the ECA.

C5.2. Staff at Registration Area

13. Depending on the expected number of delegates, a group of bi-lingual and multi-lingual staff should work at the registration desk to register delegates, provide information, distribute papers and other material, give personal messages, etc. A number of hostesses speaking various languages should be available to assist delegates with information on shopping, on national institutions they may wish to visit, citizens of the host country they may wish to contact and many other (sometimes very unexpected) queries.

C5.3. Hostesses

14. The host country must ensure that a desk is established at the airport with competent people to welcome delegates and provide them with information on transport to hotels and other matters.

15. Hostesses will be required for the duration of the ASSD session to welcome delegates, provide hospitality services and assist with basic administration.

C5.4. Additional Staff

16. These may include persons to deal with matters such as:

- Budget and accounts
- Social programme
- Media relations
- Local transportation
- Allocation of meeting rooms
- Photocopying and printing
- Medical care
- Technical equipment
- Security

D.ASSD BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT

17. Whereas the actual symposium is usually the main focus of the ASSD, there are a few processes preceding and succeeding it that have to be properly managed. The whole process starts with some activities that can be described as constituting the **pre-planning phase**, followed by the **planning phase**, then the **actual event** and **post-conference phase**.

D1. Pre-Planning Phase

18. To increase the prospects of the ASSD's sustainability, **the Goree Island Declaration**³ commits, among other things, to **five-year hosting commitment** obtained from five countries at each and every annual symposium. This means that countries can declare their interest to host and assess their capacity to do so at least five years in advance. Although hosting is on a voluntary basis, once a formal undertaking to host has been made, every effort will be made to assist potential hosts, who will endeavor to host smaller events. This includes but not limited to exposing future hosts in the ongoing ASSD processes preceding their hosting. In addition, partners should be encouraged to host some events (workshops, expert group meetings, etc) to allow for the country to get used to hosting events.

19. The process of **commitment to host** starts with the ASSD chairperson making a call for expression of interest to host. The call is an invitation to countries to register their interest to host and is made in each annual symposium. Subsequent to the expression of interest, the ASSD Secretariat shall have a follow up discussion with the country that has expressed the intention to discuss the responsibilities of the host and related implications.

³ During the 5th ASSD held in Dakar, Senegal in November 2009, a declaration known as the Goree Island Declaration was adopted on the Goree Island. The Goree Island Declaration expresses the strategic steps to be taken through the ASSD to take the development of statistics in Africa to greater heights.

After the discussions, the head of the interested NSO will be requested to sign a **Letter of Undertaking to Host (LUH)**. The LUH will spell out the responsibilities agreed to by the host and other pertinent issues using the ASSD Guiding Manual as the benchmark. The signing of the LUH must occur at least two years before the hosting of the ASSD by the country in question.

20. Once the LUH has been signed, the Head of the committing NSO shall nominate a **National ASSD Coordinator (NASSDC)** preferably from their NSO. Organising the ASSD tends to be a full-time occupation of the NASSDC in the year preceding the event. It is therefore advisable that the NASSDC should be a person who will dedicate most of his/ her time to the organising of the ASSD. Furthermore, the NASSDC should be a senior person who can coordinate people from the national ministries of the country that will be involved in organising the ASSD.

21. Under the leadership of the NASSDC, a **NOC** must be constituted attracting membership from all key ministries in the hosting country. Although not exhaustive, the following is an indicative list of Ministries that may have a key role to play in the organising and hosting of the ASSD:

- (i) Health Ministry – To ensure health-related matters are adequately factored into the ASSD planning;
- (ii) Foreign Affairs Ministry – To ensure proper protocol and smooth traveling of ASSD delegates;
- (iii) Ministry of Police and Security – To ensure the safety of the ASSD delegates;
- (iv) Ministry of Tourism – To ensure that the country is properly marketed to ASSD delegates;
- (v) Ministry of Communication – To ensure that the ASSD is properly and adequately publicized;
- (vi) Ministry of Finance – To support the budgetary needs of the host country and
- (vii) Ministry in charge of the NSO (depending on national circumstances).
- (viii) Ministry in charge of the ASSD focus topic

22. Hosting NSOs are encouraged to identify **relevant ministries and partners** and to encourage them to participate in their NOCs. The ASSD Secretariat has an ex-officio status in the NOC. The Head of the NSO is the substantive chairperson of the NOC but may from time to time appoint any committee member to act as chairperson in their absence. The frequency of the NOC meetings will be determined by the NOC itself but,

the committee is encouraged to meet on a monthly basis to ensure that all loose ends are tightened up and the country is ready to host the event. The NASSD will provide a secretariat service to the NOC. On behalf of the NOC, the Head of the NSO as its chairperson must report on the activities of the NOC to the body or Ministry responsible for statistics in the country.

23. The duties and **responsibilities** of the NOC include:

- a) To provide strategic direction in the organizing of the ASSD;
- b) To report to the Ministry or body responsible for statistics in the country on the activities of the NOC;
- c) To pronounce on the state of readiness of the country to host the ASSD;
- d) To perform a post-symposium debriefing and share lessons with succeeding host countries
- e) To liaise with the ASSD Secretariat on preparations of the symposium

D2. Planning Phase

24. Preparing to hold a symposium is a critical step intended to identify all the key activities to be undertaken to ensure a successful symposium. Planning is a shared responsibility between all stakeholders but specifically the ASSD Secretariat and the host country. It is of pivotal importance that operational **planning starts at least nine months before the actual symposium**. Deciding on critical milestones to be achieved on the path to the delivery of the symposium, deciding on the frequency of planning meetings, and determining the requirements for a successful symposium from logistical, scientific and social programme points of view are some of the essential components of the operational plan.

25. The ASSD Secretariat in consultation with the hosting country must kick-start the planning process at least nine months before holding the seminar. A **kick-start meeting** must be held to, *inter alia*, consider the lessons learnt from the previous ASSD sessions, produce a schedule of activities indicating the key milestones to be notched leading up to the symposium, agree on a schedule of meetings, agree on roles and responsibilities using the Guiding Manual for Organising ASSDs (the ASSD Manual). It is advisable that the kick-start meeting must draw participation

from NSO representatives that were involved in the organization of previous symposia.

26. Central to the operational plan of the symposium is a schedule outlining **key milestones** to be achieved as well as responsibilities agreed upon by all responsible stakeholders. The Manual must be relied upon for guidance when allocating responsibilities and all responsible parties must sign the operational plan agreeing to take care of the responsibilities assigned to them.

27. It is prudent that the participants in the planning kick-start meeting also outline **a Planning Meetings Schedule (PMS)** that gives the required number and frequency of all the preparatory meetings to be held before the actual symposium as part of the operational plan. The preparatory meetings provide an opportunity for the host country, the ASSD Secretariat and other partners to periodically assess progress and ascertain the state of preparedness to hold a successful ASSD.

28. All **planning meetings will be chaired by the NASSDC** with the support of the ASSD Secretary. The hosting NSO should provide secretariat services to the preparatory meetings by, among other things, preparing agendas for meetings and compiling minutes thereof.

29. The ASSD Secretariat shall, from time to time during the preparations of the ASSD symposium, produce a state-of-readiness report to be submitted to the Africa Statistical Coordinating Committee (ASCC)⁴ (and other stakeholders and posted on the ASSD website.

30. The operational plan should be as **exhaustive as possible** in its coverage of what needs to be done to ensure the success of the symposium including how such things as the conference venue, goods and services, accommodation and transport will be procured and provided to delegates; how invitation of guests will be handled how guests will be assisted to meet the visa and inoculation requirements of the host country; how the security and safety of delegates will be ensured.

⁴ The ASCC is a committee constituted by main Pan African institutions with significant statistical activities (namely the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union Commission (AUC), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and sub-regional institutions (AFRISTAT). It aims at coordinating statistical capacity building in Africa in the framework of the Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF) and the Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (ShaSA). It reports to the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa)), the Bureau of Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom),

The operational plan must further elucidate plans regarding funding and sponsorship arrangements, scientific programme issues such as the theme of the conference, Pre-ASSD workshops, call-for-papers, the social programme and marketing the ASSD. Guidelines for managing the above issues are provided below.

D2.1. Logistics Arrangements

31. The host country with the assistance of the ASSD Secretariat must endeavor to secure, **at least nine months** before hosting the symposium, **a venue** for the symposium in the form of a building designed for large conferences and which meets the basic requirements as outlined below. Whereas the ASSD Secretariat plays a key role in deciding the appropriateness of the venue and the accompanying requirements, the financial responsibility to secure same is that of the host country.

32. A **comprehensive budget**, outlining all items to be procured right from the preparatory stages of the symposium to the closure of the project must be developed during the early stages of the planning phase. It is of critical importance that the budget must indicate the party responsible for each budgetary item.

33. A table with an indicative list of major conference cost drivers to be budgeted for and responsible parties are presented below. The list is not necessarily exhaustive but all efforts must be made to identify all budgetary items early enough in the planning phase.

NO	Budget Item Description	Responsible Party
1	Conference materials for delegates (including conference bags)	ASSD Secretariat
2	ASSD Branding, promotional material and session packages	ASSD Secretariat
3	Printing cost of all documents and other materials, including the proceedings	ASSD Secretariat
4	Opening and closing ceremony necessities	ASSD Secretariat
5	ASSD symposium venue with ancillary offices and services	Host Country

6	Interpretation services & equipment English/French	ECA
7	Interpretation services & equipment Arabic/Portuguese	African Union Commission
8	Secretariat facilities including office supplies, and technical equipment, etc	Host country
9	Local advertisements and communication	Host Country
10	Internet Café	Host Country
11	Photography and video	Host Country
12	Local transportation (airport, hotels, venue and social events)	Host Country
13	Social programme	Host Country
14	Gifts for delegates	Host country
15	Banners advertising the ASSD symposium	Host country/Secretariat
16	Accommodation of key personnel from the host country	Host country

34. The ASSD has made it possible for other parties interested in furthering the agenda of Africa's statistical development to participate and provide support. The support offered has taken many forms but mainly in kind, technical and financial. The ASSD Secretariat is encouraged to work closely with the hosting NSO in identifying and mobilising technical and financial support from various potential partners.

D2.2. Hall for Opening Ceremony

35. The formal opening of the Symposium should either be held in the plenary room or auditorium of the conference facility or in an assembly hall. The size of the hall should be adequate to accommodate all delegates and the persons accompanying them, as well as official guests from the host country. The current norm is a **capacity to take at least 400 people**. The opening ceremony room must have allowance for a flag ceremony. Access to the room should be obtained at the venue to facilitate arrangements for the opening ceremony. The room should be equipped with interpretation booths and equipment, with a high table

with a flower and other tables should be able to accommodate flags. There should be space at the back of the stage for a banner.

D2.3. Scientific Meeting Rooms

36. The number of parallel meetings is to be decided for each session by the ASSD Secretary in consultation with the National Organising Committee taking into account the scientific programme. As a general rule, **one plenary room and three breakaway rooms** are required. Each break-away room must have the capacity to seat at least 120 people, with tables to allow note-taking. Apart from proper seating arrangements with writing support if possible, each breakaway room should have an LCD, flip chart and equipment for simultaneous interpretation in English and French as a minimum. The room should be equipped with interpretation booths, equipment and stationery.

D2.4. Exhibition Space

37. Space for the **exhibition of posters and documents** must be arranged in the conference venue. This may be a large room, corridor or similar area which permits the presentation of papers on display boards. The recommended minimum size of the space is 200 square meters. This space should be able to accommodate 15 exhibitors.

D2.5. Committee Room

38. At least one room with a seating capacity of **10 persons** is required. The room should be equipped with a boardroom table with chairs around it.

D2.6. ASSD Partners Offices

39. A number of adjoining rooms are needed for the ASSD Executive Committee Members. This should include rooms for **the ECA, AUC, AfDB, the chairperson of the ASSD, the ASSD Secretariat and the NOC**. The aforementioned offices should accommodate at least ten delegates, be appropriately furnished with internet access and serviced at all times throughout the ASSD session. It is also desirable that the ASSD offices have attached, or in their immediate vicinity, a Boardroom with a capacity of about 20 persons for meetings.

D2.7. Communications Room

40. An office must be secured for the Communications team to deal with the media and production of Symposium Newsletter(s). This should have a seating capacity of ten, equipped with computers, printers and internet.

D2.8. Administration Room

41. A room to house at least ten **administration staff provided by the host country must be secured**. It will also form the focal point for all general typing, printing, photocopying, faxing, etc. The room should be equipped with computers, copiers and printers.

D2.9. Registration and Enquiries Area

42. The **Registration and Enquiries Area** should be an open area located in a central place in the conference building. It should be equipped with six to seven tables. It should serve the purpose of registering delegates, settling financial matters with delegates, distributing documents, facilitating communication with and between delegates, and providing information on social programmes and the like. It is convenient that in the registration area there should also be a desk for travel arrangements, transport enquiries and referrals for medical care. It is important that a service is provided to confirm the onward flights of delegation and compile a worksheet of departure dates and time for the airport shuttle. More often than not, this is to give delegates peace of mind, without which, they become restless, reducing the efficiency of the ASSD session.

D2.10. Facilities for Delegates

43. It is essential that one large central lounge area is available for delegates to relax and to meet with other delegates and accompanying persons. The ideal location for this is usually at or near the hotel reception area.

D2.11. Free Internet Café

44. An **internet café with no less than 10 computers** and a printer must be provided for the use of delegates. It is advisable that the café is monitored so that delegates do not exceed a 15-minute period at the café in order to allow as many delegates as possible to access the facility.

D2.12. Coffee and Dining Area

45. A designated dining area must be provided where one morning, one afternoon tea and one lunch will be served to delegates as part of the daily conference package. The above requirements should be taken into account when deciding what rooms to rent in the conference facility. For instance, if there are more meeting rooms than required, it is better to rent all of them rather than leaving a few available, if these rooms were let to other non-ASSD meetings held during the session, this would be extremely disruptive and should be avoided at all costs.

D2.13. Accommodation for Delegates

46. The host country, in consultation with the ASSD Secretariat, is responsible for arranging appropriate hotel accommodation for the delegates in accordance with their wishes during the period of the ASSD session. Depending on local conditions, provisional block **reservations of hotel rooms should be made at least three months before** the symposium is held. The host country should evaluate the hotel situation, gather the necessary information as to the number and variety of rooms available, level of prices and reduced rates for session delegates, distance from the conference facility, transport facilities, etc. The importance of early booking cannot be overstressed. Consultation with the ASSD Secretariat is necessary to estimate attendance so that all delegates receive satisfactory accommodation.

47. The ASSD sessions are attended by statisticians with differing economic backgrounds, and **reservations should not be made only in luxury or first class hotels**. It should be realized that the financial means of all delegates are not the same and rooms should be reserved in hotels of different categories.

48. A guide of hotel prices should be sent to participants and should have a cut-off date to allow for block-booked rooms to be confirmed or cancelled. Hotels usually require that a **contract be signed** to secure the required rooms for the delegates' accommodation. The host country, and specifically the NASSDC, in consultation with the ASSD Secretariat will facilitate the signing of the contract based on confirmations received from delegates which should ideally be finalized at least a month before the session. The host country must scrutinize the financial and legal implications of the contracts before signing.

49. **The AfDB has generously covered the flight and accommodation** costs for some delegates, especially the Heads of NSOs and Census Managers previously. The AfDB is encouraged to continue to do so.

50. The GIZ's sponsoring of delegates from Statistics Training Institutes during the 5th ASSD is also commended. To this end, **GIZ is also encouraged to continue sponsoring people from Statistics Training Institutes in Africa** to participate in ASSDs

D2.14. A Store Room

51. A room should be secured with the venue to be used by Secretariat to store equipment, stationery and materials.

D2.15. Medical/ Emergency Services Room

52. A room equipped with two beds, equipped with first aid, medical examination equipment and medical staff should be set aside for dealing with medical and emergency issues of delegates.

D2.16. Prayer Room

53. An open room that can accommodate twenty people with mats and no furniture should be set aside to cater for prayer needs of delegates.

D2.17. Translators Room

54. One room that can accommodate five people, equipped with 2 computers, a printer and internet should be allocated for use by translators.

D2.18. Newsletter Room

55. For newsletter production, a room equipped with a computer, printer and internet that can accommodate 5 people should be secured at the venue.

D2.19. Secretariat Room

56. A room that can accommodate 15 people, equipped with computers, printers and internet should be arranged for the Secretariat.

D2.20.VIP Holding Room

57. One room that can accommodate 20 people, equipped with lounge furniture and coffee station should be prepared for VIPs to be taken to after registration before the sessions begin.

D2.21. Speaker Preparation Room

58. A room that can accommodate twenty people, equipped with computers, printers, desks and basic office stationery should be arranged for session chairs.

D2.20. Procurement of Goods and Services

59. In addition to the venue and accommodation, there are goods and services that are required for a symposium to successfully take place. A **comprehensive list of these goods and services** must be compiled by the ASSD secretariat in consultation with the NASSDC. It is recommended that attempts must be made to procure the goods and services in the host country. The host country shall bear the costs of the goods and services under their responsibility.

60. The **process of procurement** involves identifying the goods and services required, identifying a suitable number of potential service providers, requesting for quotations from the potential service providers, negotiating payment terms, deciding on the most suitable service provider, placing orders for the required goods and services and finally paying for the goods and/or services. It is very necessary that the process should be managed as effectively as possible including ensuring adherence to procurement procedures applicable to the host country as the responsible party for the procurement of local goods and services.

D2.21.Transport Arrangements

61. The transport needs of the delegates can be divided into **air transport and ground transport**. Nearly all delegates not based in the host country use air transport to and from the symposium. Once in the country, the delegates' needs range from airport pick-ups to transport for commuting between their hotels and conference venue and to attend to pertinent events related to the conference.

62. As mentioned earlier in this document, whereas some delegates are responsible for their air fares, the AfDB has traditionally and generously paid for the air fares and accommodation of Heads of NSOs and Census Managers. The AfDB is encouraged to continue to do so and include five members of the ASSD Secretariat and 10 Young African Statisticians in the group of beneficiaries of their generosity.

63. The host country is responsible for organizing and paying for the local ground transport needs of the delegates for as long as those needs are related to the symposium.

D2.22. Invitations to the Symposium

64. The ASSD is mainly a forum for African Statisticians to discuss issues relating to statistical development on the continent. Although the focus has hitherto been on mobilizing countries to undertake censuses in the 2010 RPHCs and sharing pertinent experiences, there is enormous potential for **the scope of the ASSD to expand** in view of the increasing need for statisticians to play a key role in the African decision-making value chain in the advent of the African Union, its NEPAD programme and other Pan-African development initiatives.

65. The ASSD chairperson and Head of hosting NSO have the responsibility to invite all delegates in line with the scope and objectives of the ASSD. The invitations must be extended at least four months before the holding of the seminar.

66. The **invitation letter** to delegates must state the dates and theme of the conference bring to the attention of the invitees the role they are expected to play in the symposium while providing the invitees relevant information they need to know to help them decide and travel with the most minimum of hindrances. Among the information to be availed to invitees is information on host country visa requirements, inoculation requirements, to mention but a few. **Invitees must be requested to confirm their participation at least two full months** before the date of the symposium to allow for the timely finalization of logistics.

D2.23. Diplomatic Invitations

67. The host Government invites, well in advance of the ASSD Session all countries and inter-governmental and international organizations with which they maintain diplomatic relations, to be represented by official delegations of their embassies/organizations present in host country. A list

of the countries and organizations which have been invited through diplomatic channels should be forwarded to the ASSD Secretariat. Acting on behalf of the Executive Secretary, the ECA will be responsible for inviting affiliated dignitaries in Africa.

D2.24. Invitations by the ASSD Secretariat

68. The ASSD Secretariat should, not later than four months before the ASSD session, extend invitations to:

- All NSOs in Africa;
- All international and national organisations affiliated with ASSD and selected other non-governmental organizations, with the request that they be represented by a delegation. A list of such institutions shall be mutually established by the NOC and the ASSD Secretariat.

D2.25. Invitations by NOC

69. For technical sessions of the symposia, the NOC may invite statisticians from the host country's **National Statistics System (NSS)** to attend the session. Their number shall be fixed in consultation with the ASSD secretariat, but should never exceed half the number of delegates from abroad. The host country is responsible for all costs in this regard.

70. Where need be, the host country should endeavor to **assist to procure visas for delegates on arrival.**

D2.26. Safety, Security and Health Arrangements

71. The safety and security of delegates is of extreme importance during their stay in the hosting country. The host country must endeavor to put in place all measures that will ensure the safety and security of the delegates while in the host country both within and outside the precincts of the conference venue. To this end, the host country must make available to the ASSD Secretariat for dissemination to all delegates **information that will ensure that they take all necessary precautions** to ensure their safety. The information must be captured as part of the ASSD information brochure and website by the ASSD Secretariat.

D2.27. Funding and Sponsoring the ASSD

72. The ASSD welcomes all sponsorships made in good faith and intended to advance the development of statistics in Africa. The contributions of

the AfDB, ECA, GIZ, the UNFPA and other partners are commended in this regard.

D2.28. Scientific Programme

73. The theme of the conference provides the point of departure and convergence for the conference discourse. It shapes the scientific programme. After consulting with the ASSD chairperson, the NASSDC and the ASCC and StatCom-Africa Bureau, **the ASSD Secretariat must share the theme of the conference** with main stakeholders and delegates at least six months before the conference.

74. Once the theme has been announced, the ASSD Secretariat must **develop the scientific programme** and the 1st draft scientific programme must be posted onto the ASSD website for comments at least two months before the actual seminar. The ASCC and StatCom-Africa Bureau must approve the final scientific programme at least a month before the symposium.

75. To adequately prepare for the symposium from a scientific point of view, the ASSD Secretariat may convene at least **two Pre-ASSD workshops** focusing on the theme of the symposium, subject to availability of funds. One of the workshops must target the French-speaking cluster of countries and the other must target the English-speaking countries. Development partners are called upon and encouraged to sponsor the pre-ASSD workshops.

76. The ASSD secretariat will identify and invite **speakers to submit papers** relevant to the theme of the symposium and papers must be submitted to the Secretariat at least two months before the symposium.

D2.29. Advertising the ASSD

77. The ASSD Secretariat, in a bid to timely and easily avail all pertinent information to stakeholders shall update and maintain the ASSD website housed within the Stats SA domain in a timely and accessible manner. No effort must be spared to alert stakeholders to the existence of this website.

78. A day before the beginning of the symposium, the host country is encouraged to place at least four big banners advertising the symposium at strategic places in the host city. At least one banner must be displayed at the most appropriate place on the perimeter fence/wall of the conference venue and at least one outside the NSO and one in the opening ceremony hall and one at the airport.

79. The host country may advertise the symposium in the local media at its own expense.

D3. Actual Seminar Phase

D3.1. Registration-

80. Following a **call for nominations** to countries and organizations to attend an ASSD session, nomination forms will be compiled and a database created by the ASSD Secretariat. The names will also be forwarded to the NOC. No registration fee will be charged to invited African countries. Nomination forms will be sent out to the potential delegates and when nominees respond, personalized invitation letters will be sent out. The database will be continuously updated upon receipt of nomination forms and will then be used to procure flights and accommodation.

81. A **list (computer printouts) of expected delegates should be prepared in advance** for use by the reception staff. On arrival, the delegates will be checked against this list, which includes details on payment of fees (where necessary), hotel bookings, accompanying persons, etc. The registration of delegates on their arrival takes place on the day before the scientific meetings begin.

82. Delegates will then be handed their **conference materials** including the ASSD scientific programme, name badge, the Information Bulletin and a map of the host city, invitation cards for special guests to the social events depending on the situation, memo-pad and ballpoint.

83. It is useful if a General Information Desk is set up, particularly during the first few days. This desk should be occupied by someone who is thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the session organization.

84. Arriving delegates should be able to find out easily how and where they are to register. The registration may be organized alphabetically or by registration number (included on the registration card). Language problems should be taken care of.

85. The **receptionists should be very carefully briefed** on all matters with which they may be confronted, and this should not be left until the last moment. If specialized staff from outside are recruited, it is not sufficient, for example, to schedule a briefing session on Registration Day at 8.00

a.m. if the registration opens at 9.00 a.m. The senior staff who will have to give the instructions will then invariably find themselves occupied with many last-minute problems, while the first delegates will undoubtedly arrive an hour too early. Everyone involved should have been told before then exactly what their job involves.

D3.2. Communication and Marketing during the Symposium

D3.2.1. Symposium Newsletter(s)

86. **A Symposium Newsletter** will be produced on a daily basis or once-off depending on local printing circumstances. The most efficient means of keeping all delegates informed about what is going on during the session is to publish a newsletter. It will include amendments to the programmes, announcements of committee meetings and of social events, and news about papers and other reports available. The ASSD Secretariat is responsible to coordinate the production of the Newsletter.

D3.2.2. Previous ASSD Report

87. Although it can be downloaded from the ASSD website, resolutions and recommendations, of the previous ASSD will be printed and made available to delegates by the ASSD Secretariat.

D3.3. Opening Ceremony and Protocol

88. The Opening Ceremony of an ASSD Session is traditionally organized in a grand manner. It is on this occasion that the host country welcomes the African statistical community and affiliates and opens the Session. The Ceremony is presided over by the Executive Secretary of the ECA, Chair of the ASSD, AUC Chairperson, the AfDB President and the Minister responsible for Statistics in the host country. The actual opening is undertaken by a high dignitary, usually the President of the host country or his/her representative.

89. The NASDDC and ASSD Secretariat must ensure that all protocol issues are observed. Training should be given to the Secretariat to acquaint them with the protocol of the host country.

90. Simultaneous interpretation should be provided at the Opening Ceremony.

84. To endorse the significance of an African gathering of this magnitude, the Presidential Address is preceded by an African Flag Ceremony. The

Opening Ceremony is often brightened by a special performance that shows some national cultural features of the host country.

91. All delegates and those accompanying them are invited to the Opening Ceremony by an invitation card provided at registration. The NOC also extends invitations to guests from the host country, including heads of foreign diplomatic missions. Identification of VIPs will be facilitated by colour-coded invitation cards to ensure that protocol is observed.

92. Seating arrangements are not standard and may be decided by protocol officials of the host country in consultation with the NOC. Usually some front rows are reserved for distinguished guests, members of Council and honorary members, while part of the auditorium may be allocated to delegates, leaving the remainder free for other guests. Some persons who can identify special guests should be designated to direct them to their seats.

93. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the host country should be consulted on matters of protocol. To ensure a smooth procedure, the Executive Secretary of the ECA, Chair of the ASSD, AUC Chairperson, the AfDB President and the Minister responsible for Statistics in the host country and VIP's from the host country meet before the ceremony in an **antechamber or VIP Holding Room**. This provides an opportunity for introductions after which the group enters the hall **en cortege**.

D3.4. Documentation of Proceedings

94. The ASSD Secretary is responsible for putting in place arrangements that will ensure that the proceedings, discussions and conclusions of each and every session are properly documented. Both English and French coverage must be striven for.

D3.5. Social Programme

95. The main objective of the social programme at ASSD Sessions is to provide an opportunity for the delegates to meet each other and personalities from the host country in a relaxed atmosphere. This should not be underrated: many professional relationships between statisticians from different parts of the world have originated through contacts at parties or on excursions. On the other hand, care must be taken to keep the social programme within reasonable limits. The social programme will comprise three main components:

- a) A **welcome reception** offered to all delegates on the first night of the ASSD Session;
- b) A national-themed **gala dinner** on the third night of the ASSD session.
- c) A **sight-seeing excursion** for the delegates

96. Apart from the ASSD session delegates, the invitation list of the first two functions is left to the **discretion of the NOC**. As the social programme is the host country's extension of hospitality to the delegates, the host country is fully responsible for the costs related thereof.

D3.6. Pre-ASSD Communication and Marketing

97. The ASSD Secretariat must prepare and distribute the following documents:

D3.7. Information Bulletin

98. Details about the session and vital information about the host country are announced by the ASSD Secretariat by means of an Information Bulletin published in at least English and French. The host country may make available at its own expense the Information Bulletin in other languages it deems necessary. In compiling the Information Bulletin, the ASSD Secretariat will work very closely with the NASSDC.

D3.8. Closing Ceremony and Protocol

99. The Closing Ceremony of an ASSD Session is also traditionally organized in a grand manner. It is on this occasion that the host country hands over the baton of the ASSD to another country, which will have been pre-determined in advance.

100. The ceremony is presided over by the host country's Minister responsible for Statistics or their representative. To endorse the ASSD tradition, the outgoing host country will hand over the ASSD drum (appropriately marked with gold engraving) to the next host country. The exchange of gifts will take place, symbolic of African culture and cementing of relationships. The representative of the next host country will make a formal invitation to the statistical community to attend the next symposium. Like the Opening Ceremony, the Closing Ceremony is often brightened by a special performance.

D4. Post-Seminar Processes

101. There are a number of activities that should be executed after the seminar has been concluded. These include the compilation of the symposium's report by the Secretariat and the NOC, developing of a Recommendations/Resolutions Implementation Plan by the Secretariat, the holding of a debriefing session by the host country and performing financial reconciliation no later than two months after the symposium.

D4.1 Symposium Report

102. Two kinds of reports must be produced no later than two months after the holding of the ASSD symposium. The first is an **executive report** to be written by the ASSD secretariat capturing what transpired during the ASSD symposium including the adopted resolutions. The second is an **Evaluation/Debriefing report** covering the process of organizing the symposium, what worked and what did not. The latter report is the responsibility of the host country and should be informed by the Debriefing workshop that the NOC should organize after the symposium.

D4.2. Conference Resolutions Implementation Plan

103. An **Action Plan for implementing all resolutions** of the symposium must be developed by the ASSD Secretary and a mechanism put in place to get all responsible parties for the actions to do what is expected of them. The ASSD Secretariat must report on progress made with respect to the Implementation Plan in subsequent symposia.

D4.3. Debriefing Workshop

104. For transparency and accountability, the NOC is expected to hold a Debriefing workshop to evaluate the preparations and holding of the actual symposium to draw lessons to be shared with future host countries.

D4.4. Financial Report

105. A report accounting for how allocated funds were used must be prepared by the NASSDC and the Secretariat and shared with all symposium funders.

E. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

106. An **announcement board** should be placed in the Registration Area. A **closed circuit T.V.** system with monitors all over the Session area is recommended. This provides an easy way of announcing the beginning of meetings and social events, and forwarding short messages. One person from the Session Secretariat should be designated to operate the system, and messages should be only submitted to this person.

107. For the poster sessions, special **display boards** are needed on which authors can place the materials they have prepared

108. Similarly for the **Exhibition area**, special display boards, chairs and a table must be provided for exhibitors. In consultation with the ASSD Secretariat, exhibition packages will be offered. Funds derived from exhibitions will be used towards helping to cover overhead running costs of the ASSD Session. The NOC may wish to arrange for one more **exhibitions** of materials of interest to delegates. Such exhibitions can take different forms and it is fully at the discretion of the Organizing Committee to decide which type of exhibition they prefer.

109. It is recommended that a **photographer** be employed by the host country for the main events of the conference, such as the Opening Ceremony, receptions, registration, scientific meetings, etc. Pictures may also be taken of groups of delegates, and of "behind-the-scenes activities" in the Organizing Committee's offices, etc.

110. It is further recommended that the Opening and Closing Ceremonies should be captured on video.

111. It is also recommended that a systematic collection of press cuttings on the session be arranged. A set of such cuttings (or photocopies) is used by the ASSD Secretariat for archival purposes.

Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

112. It is important that the planning, execution and closure of each ASSD session are closely monitored to deal with slip ups and avoid late discovery of unpleasant surprises. To this end, close monitoring and reporting are key to the project's success, seamlessness and synergy among all stakeholders and processes.

113. Whereas the ASSD Secretariat is accountable to the StatCom Africa, it is expected to be involved in the activities of the NOC to advise it, keep abreast of developments and periodically report to the StatCom Africa on the state of readiness. The NOC, through the NASSDC, accounts to the Head of the hosting NSO and invariably the political principal responsible for statistics in the host country and the Head of State.

114. It is important that the schedule of meetings drawn should take into account the reporting linkages and that meetings are synchronized such that all the parties are kept informed throughout the process to enable them to play their role effectively.

115. At the least, the NOC meetings may take place on a monthly basis following the planning kick-start meeting. It may be necessary to increase the frequency of these meeting to at least once per month in the three months preceding the actual symposium.

F. CONCLUSION

116. There has been a joint financial commitment by agencies like AfDB and Statistical Commissions like United Nations and ECA to help fund the symposia. Statistics South Africa, on behalf of the government of South Africa and in its capacity as chairperson of the ASSD, committed itself to provide financial support for the five-year period from 2006 – 2010.

117. The drafting of a budget must be the first concern of the host country. It is not feasible to provide a standard format for the budget because much will depend on the local situation and on the financial support received from generous sponsors.

118. Promotional material; such as banners and session bags and other stationery requirements are usually provided by the ASSD Secretariat.

119. It should be borne in mind that the main objective of the Guiding Manual is to provide general guidelines necessary to the realization of successfully hosted symposia. Stakeholders are encouraged to try and stick to its provisions as far as possible. In spite of this and its centrality in pursuit of perfection, the Guiding Manual is not intended to be rigidly prescriptive. Variations in the organizing of symposia cannot be ruled out. There is no one-size-fits-all methodology for hosting ASSDs given the different dynamics of the different contexts within which the symposia are held.