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for Africa**



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A Framework for Action
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Acronyms

AAPA	Addis Ababa Plan of Action
ABSA	Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa
ADB	African Development Bank
AFCAS	African Commission on Agricultural Statistics
AFRISTAT	Observatoire Economique et Statistique d'Afrique Subsaharienne (Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa)
BCEAO	Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Central Bank of West African States)
CCSA	Committee for Coordination of Statistical Activities
CEMAC	Communauté Economique et Monetaire des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (Central African States Economic and Monetary Union)
CODI	Committee On Development Information
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa
CST	Country Support Team
DISD	Development Information Services Division
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESPD	Economic and Social Policy Division
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FASDEV	Forum on Statistical Development in Africa
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICP	International Comparison Programme
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MULPOC	Multinational Programming and Operational Centres
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NEPSTAT	New Partnership on Statistics
NSS	National Statistical System
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SADC	South African Development Community
SNA	System of National Accounts
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (West African Economic and Monetary Union)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education and Science Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
WB	The World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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The Current Status of Statistics at ECA

1.1. Introduction

The Economic Commission for Africa has in the past months taken vigorous steps to revitalize its Statistics Unit in accordance in recognition of the challenges facing regional and national statistical systems emerging from increased global need for diverse statistical information for monitoring progress in implementation of various regional and international development initiatives.

The current revitalization effort takes into account the following principles: (i) ECA, as part of the United Nations (UN) Secretariat, should embed its work in Statistics within the United Nations statistical framework as adopted and regularly assessed and amended by the United Nations Statistical Commission; (ii) ECA needs to enlarge its partnership to other members of the international statistical community; (iii) ECA Statistics should strongly link its work to Commission-wide policy analysis activities ; and (iv) ECA Statistics should leverage its work by intensively using ICTs.

At the operational level, it is envisaged that ECA would facilitate the establishment of a new partnership with other international agencies with the aim of providing:

- Greater support to member States through regional new programmes or regional programmes which build on existing activities at the subregional level;
- The development of a corporate infrastructure for Statistics including coordination tools; and
- Robust, reliable and comprehensive data for up-dating socio-economic development indicators across Africa. (ECA is currently involved in the development of various regional reports and associated indicators, for example, the African Governance Report, the African Gender and Development Report, and the Enhanced Economic Policy Index (of the Economic Report on Africa).

1.2 The current status of Statistics at ECA

The ECA current status in statistics and related issues can be depicted through a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis.

1.2.1 Strengths

The following have been identified as the main strengths of ECA:

- Data compilation and dissemination is part of ECA mandate, as it is for the other UN regional commissions;
- Member States expect ECA to play the role given to it under the Addis Ababa Plan of Action (AAPA). They also expect it to be an authoritative depository of data on African countries;
- Over the years, ECA has built a competitive edge in statistical capacity building, technical assistance and data provision for African countries;

- ECA has developed extensive technical skills in different areas of statistics. Member States have benefited from these skills;
- ECA has the state-of-the art facilities and a lot of experience in organizing training sessions - workshops, seminars, short courses, etc;
- ECA has harnessed latest information and communication technologies for its work.

1.2.2 Weaknesses

The following weaknesses have been identified:

- There is a lack of common vision of what the statistical function should be within ECA;
- The statistical function has been weakened by shortage of professional staff resources caused by loss of statistical positions in divisions which have been responsible for the statistics function;
- The Statistics Team at ECA is by and large not considered the “*first point of call*” when data are required by substantive divisions. There is the perception on the part of data users at ECA that either the required data are not available in-house or if available are out of date. The divisions tend, therefore, to rely more and more on existing datasets of other UN sister agencies, notably FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIDO, INRISD, WHO and WTO) ; other regional and international institutions, such as the ADB, IMF, OECD, and the World Bank; and sub-regional organizations, such as BCEAO, ECOWAS, SADC, UMEOA, and UM.
- There is lack of coordination in statistical production. Divisions work in isolation; many of them collect their own data without reference to each other or to the Statistics Team for technical guidance;
- There are quality problems in data collected from countries by the substantive divisions including high rates of non-response;
- The relationship between the statistical work in the sub-regional organizations (SROs) and ECA headquarters is currently weak;
- Statistical information is not only scattered in the various substantive divisions but also there is no framework for sharing such information.
- The limited data in the regional multi-sectoral database is not available on the internal network and is unknown to professionals from some substantive divisions;
- ECA relies for data collection on African countries which have very poor national statistical systems;
- Little methodological work is going on for the adoption of international standards and for harmonization purposes;
- The general staff in statistics unit are generally underutilized.

1.2.3 Opportunities

African statistical development should benefit from the following opportunities:

- There is strong will on the part of the top management to revitalize statistics at ECA as part of the overall effort to chart a new strategic direction for making the organization more and more effective;

- The new African development agenda (MDGs, NEPAD, PRSPs,..) and needed emphasis on tracking progress of implementation have created a new demand for comprehensive and better development statistics
- ECA substantive divisions have a real need of data to support their analytical and research work and to produce sets of indicators on sustainable development, economic performance, gender inequalities, economic integration, and governance;
- UN sister agencies are specialized in data collection and dissemination in some areas: for example, FAO for food and agriculture data, UNFPA for population data, UNESCO for education data, etc; but there is no agency to pull together these data collection activities into a comprehensive, holistic system
- There is willingness on the part of most of the stakeholders to partner with ECA in the development of statistics in Africa;
- Advances in ICT have presented new opportunities for networking purpose and for data management.

1.2.4 Threats

- The vacuum left by ECA in the development of Statistics in Africa in recent years is being partially filled out by other organizations;
- There may continue to exist a multiplicity of sources of data without guarantee on the reliability of the data;
- There may be long delays in moving from commitment to implementation leading to the lost of credibility of the organization;
- There may be reduced demand for ECA data due to long absence and inertia;
- ECA may lose its competitive edge in statistical capacity building, technical assistance and data provision for African countries.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

2.1. ECA's Vision

- To become a key actor in analyzing African statistical development issues; providing quality technical advice to member States, promoting and harmonizing statistical concepts, standards and methods in Africa for sound policy decisions;
- To become an authoritative source of development information on Africa in support to member States economies and available to the international community for analysis, monitoring and evaluation of macro-economic policies, poverty strategies and follow-up of progress towards MDGs.

2.2. Mission Statement

- To promote statistical development in Africa and to provide users with quality statistical information.

2.3 Objectives

To empower national, sub-regional and regional statistical systems in their effort to generate statistical data and information to serve all stakeholders in Africa's development, notably, :

- Governments to: (a) assess policy and programme options aimed at improving the well being of the population, (b) monitor progress in economic management, poverty reduction and other public sectoral policies, and (c) govern and administer countries in a democratic and accountable manner;
- The private sector, to make rational business and investment decisions;
- Academics and researchers to support their capacity building, training and research work;
- The civil society to raise awareness on societal situations for action;
- Donors and international organizations to assess requirements for assistance and/or participation in development initiatives and to evaluate the effectiveness of the assistance given; and
- The general public to hold governments to account for their stewardship.

2.4 Strategic Directions

2.4.1. Streamlining the institutional framework

At its inception, ECA had a separate Statistics Division. The 1996 reform merged the division with another sub-programme to be called Development Information Services Division (DISD). In 2002 the statistical function was transferred to the Economic and Social Policy Division (ESPD), which was believed to be the natural home for

statistical activities. The declining fortune of the Statistical Unit could not be reversed in the new division.

The decline of the statistical activities at ECA during these last years has been ascribed to several internal as well as external factors, which should be overcome.

The decision to revitalize the statistical function at ECA will have obvious organizational implications, which should be addressed. The most fundamental need is to streamline statistical activities at ECA.

2.4.2. Using new technologies to leverage the statistical activities

By launching in 1996 the “Africa Information Society Initiative (AIS): An Action Framework to Build Africa’s Information and Communication Infrastructure”, ECA took a very important step towards reducing the digital divide Africa was facing and enhancing the digital dividend. Internally a lot has been done in putting in place the intranet that facilitates tremendously in-house information sharing, and ECA’s openness towards the world. The “ICT license programme”, for example, is available to provide all ECA staff with training on computer softwares commonly used in-house for several purposes.

The policy to adopt new ICT technologies at ECA is understandable given that ECA’s main business is information and knowledge production, dissemination and management. Nevertheless, in comparison with other regional commissions and organisations, ECA is still behind in terms of state-of-the-art database systems. To play its role at the regional level and to improve its substantive work, ECA, as a whole should develop compatible databases both at the Headquarters (HQs) and at its Subregional Offices (SROs).

2.4.3 Promoting partnership with statistical subregional organizations, UN sister agencies, international statistical bodies

ECA vision for the future is carefully explained in the document entitled “Serving Better Africa” developed in 1996. The focus of this vision was on partnership as a key element of the new strategy to fulfill Africa’s promise. In statistical development in Africa, partnership has been important for the statistical community, as the rational modus operandi under the auspices of the United Nations Organization, from its inception in 1945, and even after the entry of new actors on the scene during the last decade.

Therefore, as part of the UN Secretariat, ECA should be seen to embed its work in Statistics within the United Nations statistical framework as adopted and regularly assessed and amended by the United Nations Statistical Commission, while enlarging its partnership to other members of the international statistical community.

2.4.4. Providing the critical mass of professionals for the implementation of the statistical programme

Over years, the number of statisticians fell dramatically in parallel with the profile of the statistics function at ECA. The total number of professional posts (including

regional advisers) of the regular budget dropped from 28 to 8 between 1993 and 2003. The main reason was the restructuring of the UN system. The UNDP and UNFPA suspended their financial support to regional commissions, as they became executive agencies for their own programmes at the country level. In 1994, the UNFPA Country Support Teams (CSTs) were created and the ECA regional advisers funded by the UNFPA posted to those CSTs. In the previous year, 1993, all posts funded by UNDP were also abolished. Consequently, the number of extrabudgetary professional posts fell from 12 in 1994 to nil in 2003, with losses due to attrition and high vacancy rate contributing to the decline.

Therefore, as of December 2003, the Statistics team at ECA HQs encompassed two professionals, a regional adviser and five statistical assistants.

The revitalizing of the statistical function would not happen without the recruitment of a critical mass of professionals specialized in the various fields of concern.

2.4.5. Providing the financial resources for the implementation of the statistical programme

The implementation of regional statistical programme of activities requires financial resources. And in Africa the need for additional resources cannot be overstated. Indeed priority is seldom given to statistical activities by African governments, leading to, weak statistical systems, and donor-driven statistical programmes, etc.

ECA, as one of the arms of statistical capacity building in Africa, has an important role to play in supporting African statistical systems in boosting sound statistical programmes that meet the data requirements of the development agenda in Africa. To achieve this, adequate funding has to be mobilized.

2.4.6. Monitoring the progress in the implementation of the Strategic Framework for statistical development in Africa (STAT-AFRICA)

Stakeholders in statistical capacity building in the continent have agreed upon a strategic framework for statistical development in Africa, the implementation of which needs to be monitored. ECA will take the lead in this process through an institutionalised setting involving the whole African statistical system consisting of:

- At the national level, National Statistical Systems (NSSs);
- At the subregional level, AFRISTAT, ECOWAS Statistics Division, UEMOA Statistics Directorate, SADC, CEMAC, COMESA and EAC statistical units, and AFRITACs statistical component;
- At the regional level, ECA team and ADB division in charge of Statistics, the Sub-Committee on Statistics of the Committee on Development Information (CODI), the Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa (ABSA) and the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS);
- At the international, several international organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors who play an important role in: (i) the development of methodologies and frameworks for collecting and handling statistical data and the organization of

working groups to review them; (ii) funding statistical programmes and projects at regional, subregional and national level; and (iii) providing technical assistance.

(Note that CODI and the ICP-Africa regional seminars and AFCAS are the crucibles where all the NSSs are represented to share information and elaborate strategies for statistical development purposes. ABSA is a link between NSSs and ECA.)

ELEMENTS OF ECA WORK PROGRAMME IN STATISTICS

3.0 Rationale of the work programme

Having taken account of the work programmes of various stakeholders in statistical development in Africa and having in mind the principles of avoiding duplication and seeking synergy with others statistical programmes, ECA work programme in statistics will focus on the areas enumerated below:

3.1. Promoting, coordinating and monitoring statistical activities, including capacity building, in Africa

One of ECA roles in a partnership with stakeholders in African statistical development will be to provide its member States with a forum where they would build consensus on their vision on the relevant and emerging issues in the field of statistics. The CODI Sub-committee on Statistics and the Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa (ABSA) will be the arm to that end.

Indeed, a pre-requisite is to have a strong secretariat to be able to implement the relevant recommendations and proposals. That is the reason why ECA will ensure the critical mass of staff needed through recruitment and or secondment from partner institutions.

ECA's role in the promotion and coordination of statistical activities in the region derives from the United Nations Statistical Commission, the forum for the global statistical system under whose auspices the Coordination Committee of Statistical Activities (CCSA) was created. The main activities of CCSA covers issues related to:

- Duplication of statistical data collection;
- Mandating organizations to lead some activities (like the groups on specific themes of work) ;
- Coordination of expert group meetings, task forces, roundtables, etc;
- Articulation of the programming process to the international statistical programming.

To promote partnership among stakeholders in statistical development in Africa, ECA Statistics team will:

- Participate in all the international meetings dealing with coordination of statistical activities, especially for African countries;
- Organize regularly CODI meetings;
- Convene annually the Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa (ABSA) meeting;
- Call for an annual Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV);

3.2. Building a data hub at ECA for the provision of development data on Africa

With increasing focus on the MDGs, it is important that Africa's progress is reported on as a whole, both for the benefit of the national populations so that they know what progress their own country is making against Africa as a whole, but also in order to keep the international community informed and to stimulate wider popular interest in development processes.

ECA itself produces various socio-economic analysis and policy papers and the teams of experts working on this need access to high quality, timely and relevant statistical information. .

Finally, the African peer review mechanism (APRM) process is a new type of process for Africa, and as such can be expected to generate a lot of interest, as well as scrutiny. In conducting reviews it will be essential that there is credible and respected information available on countries. This may on occasions require an external judgment of the quality and integrity of the data provided by a country itself. One key element of success in this new process will be the capacity of ECA to be seen as the provider of accurate and respected information that would base these reviews.

This would require the development of a regional database and a household survey database, which can provide information needed for tracking improvements in welfare on the continent over time. The development of such databases would be undertaken in conjunction with the Institutional Strengthening Programme (ISP) Team that is already coordinating ECA knowledge management efforts.

A number of activities are involved in this process that are including:

- Identification of users' needs;
- Identification of data sources;
- Re-organization of the existing statistical information systems;
- Development, maintenance and networking statistical systems at all the levels;
- Promotion of the use of information and telecommunication technologies and geo-information for statistical production; and
- Building capacities at all levels to develop and maintain databases.

3.3 Providing aRegional Knowledge and Support for Household Surveys in Africa

While household surveys are at the core of the current development of welfare/poverty monitoring and evaluation systems, there is a strong need to support and enhance the indigenous analytical capacities, accelerate the knowledge creation processes in this field, and promote a wide access to it. .

With the implementation of such a project, ECA will meet several expectations formulated by ECA substantive divisions and member States. Through its statutory institutional channels and within its mandate, ECA will:

- Collect the existing survey data and documentation in Africa;
- Contribute to develop statistical activities by promoting user-oriented practices through the setting up of standards and advocacy for wide dissemination;
- Assist countries in the deployment of new tools and technologies;
- Consult member States in order to orient its actions according to needs and expectations of the later;
- Give direction on household surveys activities through the Advisory Board on Statistics in Africa and
- Develop new synergies within ECA and strengthen the in-house analytical capacity in particular in poverty analysis.

The strategy consists of:

- Building the infrastructure and capacity needed within ECA, taking advantage of the Africa Household Survey Databank tools;
- Collecting the household survey meta-information, data sets and documentation;
- Managing and harmonizing the household survey data and documentation;
- Disseminating and promoting the assembled information;
- Training and providing technical support to national statistical agencies and users; and
- Improving the dialogue between national statistical offices and users. This will be done through a strong partnership with the World Bank and other UN agencies an agreement from ECA member States.

3.4. Implementing the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA)

It is globally acknowledged that economic and social management of any country required statistical information for measuring economic trends, levels of well-being and monitoring poverty, public finance balances, and external balances situation, among others. To this end, the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA 93) provides an organizing framework for compiling comprehensive economic accounts for a nation. The underlying data needed for estimating national accounts, are useful as a tool for macro-economic policy formulation, economic analysis, and monitoring economic performance also underpin poverty analysis and the tracking of social development embodied in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Furthermore, in the context of economic relations, subregional groupings as well as international organizations have imperative needs for comparison of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and other development indicators across countries and over time. Quality and harmonized data on national accounts is key for multilateral surveillance and convergence programmes of the subregional groupings. International Comparison Programme (ICP) with a view of generating Purchase Power Parities (PPP) estimates was launched given the shortcomings associated with conversions based on market exchange rates. PPP conversions allow cross-country comparisons of economic aggregates, free of price and exchange distortions. But for computing PPPs, information on GDP and its breakdowns is required. Therefore non-accurate GDP data would hinder the implementation of the ICP.

Given these crucial needs, it is recognized however that implementing SNA in African countries that have limited or weak basic data sets will require actions that address current data gaps within a long-term strategic framework. .

As part of its global effort to enhance statistical capacity in Africa, ECA will continue to assist individual countries in the implementation of the 1993 SNA through the provision of advisory services, training workshops, development and/or dissemination of methodological guidelines, manuals and software and, ad-hoc research activities aimed at resolving practical and conceptual problems. In this context, the Commission will closely collaborate with regional and subregional organizations and economic groupings that have launched specific projects or activities in this area particularly ICP-Africa, AFRISTAT's Common Minimum Statistics Programme (PROSMIC is the FRNCH acronym), computer assisted compilation tools for the 1993 SNA, such as ERETES database already used by most of French-Speaking countries, etc...

In light of the detailed needs assessments that have been carried out over the past few years, the main areas of focus of ECA and the other partners assistance to countries will be as follows:

- Development of basic data, with emphasis on the organization and conduct of sample surveys on the informal sector;
- Selection of a reference year for the implementation of a comprehensive methodology for compiling national accounts as laid down by the 1993 SNA;
- Improving GDP Expenditures, including detailed methodology for compiling Gross Fixed Capital Formation;
- Measurement of women's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and development of a conceptual framework for integrating the gender dimension into national accounts;
- Elaboration of the relationship between business accounts and national accounts;
- Integration of the informal sector into national accounts;
- Compilation of institutional sectors accounts': Household accounts, General government accounts, The rest of the world account, etc.;
- Compilation of capital and financial accounts;
- Compilation of quarterly and regional accounts;
- Elaboration of Satellite accounts for the Environment, Tourism, Health and Education.

The above activities will form an integral part of a multi-phase field project aimed at accelerating the implementation of the 1993 SNA in the African region.

3.5. Supporting statistical training programmes

Research findings on human capital development and the evolution of developing countries make a case for training as a key strategy of sustainable development.

The ECA statistical training programme will have a two-fold objective:

- To provide support to statistical training centers (STCs);
- To provide the NSOs staff with in-the-job training courses in the areas that reflect the new trends and to facilitate experience sharing.

The first component of the programme will aim at:

- Providing the African Statistical training centres¹ with a network including some training centres outside of Africa;
- Providing consultants to African Statistical Training Centres in specialized areas;
- Disseminating information on training including publishing, on a regular basis, a Statistical Training Newsletter and a Directory of Training Centres in Africa;
- Developing training materials and supplying equipment in the form of computers, photocopy machines, books, and so on to facilitate teaching at the centres;
- Promoting partnerships between statistical training centres and other centres of excellence teaching statistics within and outside Africa;
- Assisting Heads of training centers to attend the major advisory council/board meetings;
- Providing technical advice regarding training materials and content;
- Setting up a Fellowships Programme and advisory services programme for the benefit of African countries.

The activities of the second component of the programme will consist of:

- Organizing and managing training courses for Heads of NSOs and other senior management of the statistical system;
- Periodically attaching or seconding member states' statistical personnel to statistical offices within or outside the region, where there are innovative activities in a relevant statistical area, or where a "best practice" has been established (examples of where this would be most useful are statistical coordination, environmental statistics and implementation of the 1993 SNA, poverty mapping).
- Implementing a staff secondment programme - experts will be seconded to member states to improve in-house operational capacity and carry out agreed training activities;

3.6. Co-ordinating the Peer Review Process of national statistical systems (NSSs)

During its third meeting in May 2003, the Committee on Development Information (CODI), a subsidiary body ECA, comprising representatives of all African national and sub-regional statistical services, the statistical training centres and bilateral and multilateral partners, made a decision on peer review of NSS by way of the following resolution :

“Recognizing that official statistics produced in accordance with the fundamental principles of statistics are necessary conditions to good governance, the meeting recommends that the member States should adopt a peer review process for their statistical capacities. In a first stage, countries on a voluntary basis and with the

¹ There are four training centres in the French-speaking countries: ENSEA, Abidjan; ENEA-DSD, Dakar; ISSEA, Yaounde for statistics and IFORD, Yaounde for Demographic training. The Kigali-based IAMSEA is not functioning anymore since the 1994 genocide. Discussions are ongoing to explore the possibilities of re-opening it. In English-speaking countries ISAE, Kampala; EASTC, Dar-es-Salam for Statistics and RIPS, Accra for Demographic training.

support of a group of experts provided by ECA and PARIS21 should engage in testing and adopting the tools and process of peer review of statistical capacities in order to adopt it in the framework of NEPAD commitments”.

Indeed the capability of governments to achieve, in particular, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), largely depends on their aptitude to assess the political, economic and social situation of their respective countries; formulate policies and programmes, elaborate appropriate strategies for implementation and monitor progress towards the objectives they have fixed. All these processes to be efficient will need an information system to backstop them.

In other words, democratic African societies willing to know themselves, respect the rights of their members and give their leaders and representatives the means to ensure their well-being, will equip themselves with quality information system that will guarantee transparency in actions, participation and accountability of the various actors.

In summary, official statistics provide the indispensable element of such an information system that will play a key role in:

- Definition of policies, the elaboration of strategies and programmes,
- Monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes,
- Advocacy on societal issues,
- Information of citizens for the control of human rights and politics actions,
- Corporate management.

Peer Review is one of the means to assess if a country has quality statistical information system. Peer review is understood here as a process where experts, that is to say data producers and users, from several countries and bilateral and multilateral institutions give their evaluation of the statistical system of a third country with its agreement.

PARTNERSHIP: A ROAD MAP

4.0 Introduction

Several actors are currently involved in statistical activities in Africa, creating the urgency to build synergies among all the stakeholders. ECA is proposing a new partnership that aims at: (i) promoting the use of statistical information in the definition, implementation, and monitoring of development and poverty reduction policies; (ii) integrating statistical development in poverty reduction and other country strategies; (iii) encouraging country-driven approach to the development of national statistical systems; (iv) improving coordination and collaboration of the different donors that support statistical activities to achieve a greater effectiveness in their aid under the supervision of national authorities; and (v) establishing a reporting system to monitor progress in capacity building in statistics.

This new partnership will build on already existing arrangements.

4.1 Evolution of Partnerships for Statistical Development in Africa

In the 1990s, the Sub-committee on Statistics of the Joint Conference for Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information specialists and the Committee of Coordination of African Statistical Development (CASD) were created in support of the implementation of the Addis Ababa Plan of Action (AAPA), to coordinate Statistics in Africa. The AAPA and the CASD came to an end in 1999. In the meantime, the Committee On Development Information (CODI) subsumed the joint Conference with still a Sub-committee on Statistics in 1998. At the same period, ECA created the Sub-regional Development Centers (SRDC), which subsumed its former sub-regional arms, the MULPOCs. Since January 2003, the new denomination of such centers is ECA sub-regional offices (SROs).

Thus, at the end of the 90s, the most prominent actors included :

- The subregional economic groupings such as UEMOA, ECOWAS, CEMAC, COMESA, SADC, which created statistical directorates, divisions or units to support their data needs for the multilateral surveillance aimed at the monitoring of the convergence of the economies in the framework of the monetary union or free markets.
- The Economic and Statistic Observatory for Sub-saharan Africa (AFRISTAT) established by the francophone countries in 1996 with the support of the French government.
- In 1999, under the auspices of ECOSOC, OECD, IMF, World Bank, and bilateral donors, a consortium comprising statisticians, policy-makers and donors denominated "Partnership In Statistics for the 21st century" (PARIS21) was created. PARIS21 became quickly a new forum for countries in transition and developing countries, especially African countries.

- More recently in December 2002, ADB launched the African component of the International Comparison Programme (ICP-Africa) aiming at not only the generation of purchase power parity (PPP) estimates that would allow comparisons of final expenditure on GDP across countries but also statistical capacity building at the country level

These actors may be classified under the following sub-groups:

4.2 The UN System

4.2.1. United Nations Statistics Division, Statistical Commission and Committee for Coordination of Statistical Activities

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) has a central position in the international statistical system. Thus, it is obvious that ECA Statistics component should work closely with it. More over the UNSD assumes the secretariat of the UN Statistical Commission (SC), the premier forum for the International Statistical Community. Thus, the following actions should be pursued by ECA within the framework of new partnership for statistical development in Africa:

- To effectively participate in the activities of the newly created the Committee for Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA);
- To find channels to convey African statistician points of view to the UN Statistical Commission. Choosing heads of NSOs who are already members of the Statistical Commission as members of ABSA will contribute to this objective;
- To jointly organize workshop on issues of common interest, as usual;
- To benefit from UNSD support in group experts meetings;
- To continue to benefit from the “Development Account” allocations.

4.2.2. Main UN sister statistical organizations (FAO Statistics Division, UNESCO Institute of Statistics, UNICEF, ILO, UNFPA CSTs, WHO, etc)

As a member of the UN Secretariat and its arm of the Africa region, ECA should closely collaborate with:

- FAO because of the importance of Agriculture in the African economies and the situation of food insecurity in most of the African countries;
- UNESCO because of the critical situation of education in the region;
- UNICEF for the critical situation of children in the continent and because of UNICEF’s contribution in developing the tool named “InfoDev” already adopted and used by some African statistical offices;
- ILO for the vital concern of statistics on employment and incomes in economic and social policies and programmes;
- UNFPA CST for their important role in technical assistance in socio-demographic statistics;

- WHO because of the importance of the HIV-AIDS pandemic and health in general in Africa;
- ITU because of the needs of indicators for measuring the impact of the Information society and monitoring of the progress towards goals that will be agreed by the Africa region;
- among others.

In pursuit of this, ECA should:

- Participate effectively in the African Commission on Agriculture Statistics (AFCAS);
- Closely collaborate, at the country level, in the institutional capacity building aspects of their work; and
- Work with all partners in supporting countries to produce the indicators needed for monitoring purposes.

4.3 . Other International organizations

4.3.1 . The African Development Bank

The primary purpose of the ICP, which is being spearheaded in Africa by the ADB, is to generate PPP estimates that would allow comparisons of final expenditure on GDP across countries. These comparisons are made in terms of detailed expenditure components of GDP obtained from SNA sources. Another important link between SNA and the ICP concerns the price data because the prices used for PPP calculation must be consistent with those embedded in the national accounts. To an important extent, therefore, the success of the ICP leans not only on the quality and relevance of the price data, but also on the quality and consistency of the underlying national accounts estimates. That is the reason why ICP-Africa is anchored on capacity building, with a view to improving both national account estimates and price statistics.

ECA should:

Work closely with ADB in the implementation of ICP-Africa activities, especially on the SNA 1993 component. ECA intervention should be consistent with the sub-regional strategies and should go beyond the ICP-Africa need; Organize fora in partnership with ADB.

4.3.2. The World Bank

A mission funded by the World Bank was undertaken from 21 through 31 January 2002, to assist ECA define a strategy and draft a proposal aiming at developing the capacity to manage and disseminate household survey and census data and documentation for the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

The mission output was a draft report that:

- Evaluates the hardware, software and telecommunication capabilities of the ECA;

- Evaluates the ECA capacity to handle and process statistical data and to provide training and technical support to national statistical agencies;
- Outlines the various components and infrastructure required for survey data management and dissemination activities at the regional level and
- Defines the ECA hardware, software and telecommunications needs along with the human resources and training components required for the implementation of a regional management center.

Based on this report, ECA should take actions in order to:

To implement an “ECA Knowledge and Support Center for Household Surveys in Africa” with potential partners; and mobilize the funds required for the implementation of the related activities.

4.3.3. The International Monetary Fund

The IMF invited ECA to closely work with it in its sub-regional project on General Data Dissemination System (GDDS).

ECA should find means to:

Participate in activities of the subregional GDDS project;
Promote the use of the GDDS assessment of the statistical systems in the development of strategic plans in ECA member States.

4.3.4. PARIS21 Consortium

Collaboration between ECA and PARIS21 is ongoing, especially, through the co-organization of workshops before CODI meetings, funding of participants in CODI meetings.

ECA should reinforce this collaboration and:

- Establish a memorandum of Understanding between ECA and PARIS21;
- Keep on co-organizing a pre-CODI workshop;
- Co-organize an annual Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV) gathering high ranked policy makers and other institutional users and the international statistical community to boost ECA efforts in relaunching statistical activities around the continent;
- Participate in all or most of the PARIS 21 task teams, especially in the task team on the implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA 93);
- Implement the resolution of CODI III on peer review process of national statistical systems.

4.4. Subregional organizations

4.4.1. AFRISTAT

AFRISTAT is the only subregional autonomous statistical organization in Africa, which mission is to support NSSs of African member States of the Franc Zone. Since its inception, ECA collaborates with AFRISTAT as an institutional member of its Scientific Committee and in participating in the meetings of its Board of Director as an observer. AFRISTAT, on its side, participates in the main ECA fora.

This collaboration should be pursued in the context of activities identified in the ECA work programme.

4.4.2. Statistical divisions or units of the subregional organizations

Subregional organizations such as CEMAC, COMESA, EAC, ECOWAS, SADC, UEMOA and WAMZ are deeply involved in statistical capacity building in their respective member States and in their domain of concern. Thus COMESA and EAC are promoting the use for EUROTRACE for the processing and dissemination of external trade statistics. UEMOA and CEMAC are closing working with AFRISTAT in order the harmonized their price and national account statistics and other economic statistics for the purposes of multilateral surveillance and monitoring the convergence of the economies in the framework of the monetary union or free markets. ECOWAS has just embarked in such exercise for the same reasons so does WAMI intend to proceed** with the WAMZ member States.

ECA is already collaborating with some of these subregional organizations and should intensify its participation to their statistical programmes.

4.4.3. Statistical Training Centres

Although training is key in statistical development in Africa, statistical training centres (STCs) are not always equipped enough to provide the services one can expect from them.

Some of the STCs collaborate quite well in the framework of The Conférence des Directeurs des Ecoles de Statistique Africaines (CODESA) with CESD-Paris, CESD-Lisbonne, Munich Centre and other organizations of the European Commission.

ADB, through the ICP-Africa will support financially and technically the STCs which already participate in all the ICP-Africa meetings.

ECA should build again a strong partnership with the African STCs and the non-African organizations whose main object is human resources capacity building in Statistics.

4.5 Other bilateral and multilateral agencies in technical cooperation

4.5.1. EUROPEAN UNION

4.5.1.1. EUROSTAT

EUROSTAT, in collaboration with the Munich Centre, is taking lead the in governance, in particular. ECA should:

- Closely collaborate in the field of National Accounts to exchange experience from their National Accounts Programme for the countries of the Mediterranean **** (pourtour) which is well appreciated by the beneficiary countries;
- Collaborate in the field of statistics and governance where it took an important role in exchange of experiences from different organizations all over the world. EUROSTAT is involved in the METAGORA Programme *** technically as well as financially.

4.5.1.2CESD

The European Centre for the training of statisticians from developing countries (CESD, acronym in French) is an execution agency for the European Union in the area of technical cooperation. African francophone and lusophone countries are the main beneficiaries of the interventions two of its branches, CESD-Paris and CESD-Lisbon. These two agencies largely contributed to the Human resources statistical capacity building in African countries.

In the framework of its former programme on statistical training in Africa, ECA has on records, a strong partnership with CESD-Paris. ECA should revitalize this cooperation with CESD-Paris as well as with CESD-Lisbon, which was set up more recently.

4.5.2.InWent – Munich Centre

The German government, the European Community and the CESD set up the non-governmental organization named Munich Centre for economic, environmental and social statistics, in the early 70s. The Munich Centre is a training centre for professional statisticians. Through its training sessions, the Centre promoted among others the 1993 System of National accounts, the manual of balance of payments, social statistics and more recently indicators governance. It is now part of a broader organization named Capacity Building International, Germany (InWent is the German acronym). InWent aims at human resources development through advanced training and dialogue.

The Munich Centre was one of the associate training centre of the former ECA statistical training programme for Africa (STPA). The Centre use to participate in the main meetings of the ECA Statistics team. This cooperation should be strengthened.

4.5.3.The US Bureau of the Census

The US Bureau of the Census is an old partner of ECA and still sends resource persons on request to any workshop organized by ECA.

ECA should continue the collaboration with International Programmes Centre (IPC) of the US Bureau of the Census in terms of participation in workshops organized by ECA as well as its forums on statistical development.

4.5.4 . DFID

DFID showed its keenness, at several occasions, to support ECA statistical team, especially in database development. This would be undertaken in the context of the ECA Institutional Strengthening Programme (ISP) and in conjunction with the World Bank, building on their experience of managing the African Live database. This database contains time series to mainly support the work of substantive divisions and more specifically the evaluation of economic performances, the tracking of the MDGs in African countries, the calculation of some indicators developed in ECA divisions.

Review studies have been conducted recently providing valuable assessment on past successes and failures and pointers to future needs and opportunities. The CODI outcomes will be an input as well.

ECA will seek DFID financial and technical support for the implementation of its statistical activities related to database management. This should be articulated with ISP project on Data Management Procedures.

4. 6. Other partners

Indeed there are other potential institutions with which ECA could partner. ECA will identify them and set up terms of collaboration with them.

4.7. Promoting a New partnership for Statistics in Africa (NEPSTAT)

In sum, to build synergies among the various actors, enumerated above, ECA is proposing a new partnership, for which it will act as a focal point, that aims at:

- Promoting the use of statistical information in the definition, implementation, and monitoring of development and poverty reduction policies, especially the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- Integrating statistical development in poverty reduction and other country strategies;
- Encouraging country-driven approach to the development of national statistical systems;
- Improving coordination and collaboration of the different donors that support statistical activities to achieve a greater effectiveness in their aid under the supervision of national authorities; and
- Establishing a reporting system to monitor progress in capacity building in statistics.

ECA will be the focal point for this new partnership.

RESOURCING

5.0 . Introduction

It is obvious that more resources both human and financial will be needed to boost statistics development at ECA. As stated in the diagnostic of the situation of statistics at ECA, the number of professionals decreased drastically in the 1990s as well as financial resources devoted to statistical activities at ECA.

5.1. Human Resources

5.1.1. Current status

The Statistics team is composed of:

- Three professionals:
 - Two statisticians
 - One statistician economist
- Five assistant statisticians:
 - One statistician (agricultural statistics)
 - One statistician (national accounts compilation),
 - One statistician (energy and industrial statistics and database development and management)
 - One statistician (price statistics, socio-demographic statistics, environment statistics)
 - A vacant post (trade statistics), and
- One regional adviser on organization and management of statistical systems.

For their own statistical work, some substantive divisions hired statisticians as fixed-term staff or consultants. Thus, three statisticians are currently working:

- Regional integration (Trade and Regional Integration Division);
- Governance statistics (Development and Policy Management Division)

5.1.2. Staffing for the biennium

The right skill-mix is key to the implementation of this action plan. There is need to strengthen the Statistics Team with the following specialists:

- National account expert
- Survey statistician
- Statistician Economist
- Database specialist

Already ECA has started the process of recruiting the additional capacity- interviews have been held and decisions on appointment will be made soon.

5.2 Financial Resources

The financial resources for the implementation of the work programme will come from the following sources:

- Regular Budget
- Development account
- Overheads
- Extra-budgetary resources

The drastic budget cuts in the UN system will not allow a full implementation of such a work programme. Then there is need for extra-budgetary resources to be mobilised.