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**Fourth Meeting of the Committee on
Development Information (CODI IV)**

Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia
23 – 28 April 2005

**Report on the follow-up to FASDEV
recommendations**

Report on the follow-up to FASDEV-I

Table of contents

I. Introduction.....	3
II. Follow-up Activities.....	3
1. Establishment of FASDEV	3
2. Existing strategies at the international, regional, subregional and national levels and Information sharing.....	4
3. Production of a Reference Regional Strategy Framework.....	4
4. Support to the Elaboration of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics.....	5
5. Moving from Coordination to Collaboration.....	6
III. Conclusion.....	6
Annex 1: Communiqué of the first Meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV)	7
Annex 2 : Communiqué of the Meeting on Coordination of Statistical Capacity Building Work in Africa Held in Tunis from 31 January to 2 February 2005	8

1. Introduction

1. The Forum for African Statistical Development (FASDEV) was established following a recommendation made by the first meeting of the Governing Board of the International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa) held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Addis Ababa, on 24 July 2003.

2. The meeting of the Board was hosted by ECA Executive Secretary. During the meeting, the Board discussed how to further strengthen modalities for collaboration, with a view to leveraging on each partner's comparative advantage, and advancing the common goal of improving statistics in Africa. The Board resolved that a meeting to exchange information on the division of statistical work in Africa should be organized and the ECA Executive Secretary accepted to convene such a meeting, in partnership with the African Development Bank (ADB), the Partnership In Statistics for Development in the 21st century (PARIS 21) Consortium, and the World Bank.

3. Hence the first meeting of the so-called FASDEV took place at ECA headquarters, from 12 to 13 May 2004. The meeting reviewed and took action, through a communiqué endorsed by all the participants, on the following items:

- Establishment of the Forum for African Statistical Development (FASDEV)
- Existing strategies at the international, regional, subregional and national levels, and Information sharing
- Production of a Reference Regional Strategy Framework
- Support to the elaboration of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
- Moving from coordination to collaboration

2. Follow-up Activities

2.1. Establishment of FASDEV

4. The twenty-two international, regional and subregional organizations that attended the first meeting of FASDEV agreed to endorse the establishment of FASDEV and its functions stated as follows: (i) to have an overview of statistical activities, including assistance and training in Africa; (ii) to set up a permanent system to monitor statistical development in Africa, and; (iii) to strengthen modalities for collaboration with a view to leveraging on each partner's comparative advantage.

2.2. Existing strategies at the international, regional, subregional and national levels and Information sharing

5. In order to take stock of the existing and planned activities of all stakeholders in statistical capacity building in Africa, the actors were urged to provide information on their activities according to a template to be designed by the members of FASDEV and coordinated by ECA. PARIS 21 volunteered to prepare the draft of such a template. This draft had then to be tested by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT), and the United Kingdom Department For International Development (DFID) respectively as international, subregional, and bilateral organizations. Moreover, PARIS 21 is asked by the Tunis meeting¹ to collate the activities of all development partners in statistical capacity building available in documents. The result of this compilation was expected to be presented during the second meeting of FASDEV, scheduled to take place in October 2005.

2.3. Production of a Reference Regional Strategy Framework

6. The Forum agreed to contribute to the production of a Reference Regional Strategy Framework under the ECA coordination based on the draft presented (Statistical Development in Africa: A Strategic Framework) and the comments made in line with the Marrakech Action Plan on Statistics (MAPS).

7. The representatives of the primary sponsors of the FASDEV meeting, namely, ADB, ECA, PARIS 21, and the World Bank, joined by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) discussed, at the Tunis meeting, the modalities of the elaboration of the reference document. They agreed to hire three consultants to draft the document. The consultants are expected to work no more than 180 days among them in the period of 9 months starting April 2005.² Table 1 sets a tentative timeline for the assignment:

Recruitment of consultants	April 2005
Briefing session at UNECA, Task assignment	April 2005
Desk work, Selection of countries to be studied	April 2005
Field assessment	May-June 2005
First draft	July 2005

¹ Meeting on Statistical Capacity Building in Africa organized by ADB, ECA, IMF, PARIS 21 and the World Bank held in Tunis, from 31 January to 2 February 2005.

² The funding institutions (ADB, PARIS21 and World Bank) will determine the exact period and the number of work-months required for each of the three consultants.

Circulation of first draft among stakeholders	August 2005
Second draft	September 2005
Submission of final draft to UNECA, Debriefing session at UNECA	Late-October 2005
FASDEV meeting	Late-October 2005

8. As mentioned in the above table, the final draft of the Reference Regional Strategy Framework (this title may change at the end of the process) will be submitted to FASDEV during its second meeting to be held at the ECA Headquarters late-October 2005.

2.4. Support to the Elaboration of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

9. The Forum urged African countries to comply with the recommendation made in the Marrakech Action Plan on Statistics (MAPS) to design and implement National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDSs) by 2006, using the Guidelines elaborated by PARIS 21. It is worth mentioning that a similar recommendation was also made by the second meeting of the ECA Committee on Development Information (CODI-II) held in September 2001, and later by the Yaoundé Declaration stated during the second regional seminar of the ICP-Africa held in April 2003.

10. PARIS 21 organized three subregional workshop on the NSDS for (i) the East African francophone countries in Addis Ababa, from 2 to 4 December 2004; (ii) the West African francophone countries in Bamako, from 7 to 9 February 2005; (iii) the Central African francophone countries in Bamako from 10 to 12 February 2005. PARIS 21 also organized an Informal Meeting on Including Sectoral Statistics in National Strategies for the Development of Statistics. The NSDS workshop for Portuguese-speaking countries is scheduled to take place in Bissau, from 3 to 5 May 2005. These workshops aim at (i) presenting the rationale of this process and the content of the Guidebook, and (ii) assisting the representatives of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to prepare a road map for the elaboration of their NSDSs.

2.5. Moving from Coordination to Collaboration

11. Noting that (i) one of the impeding factors of statistical capacity building in Africa is the fact that the development partners did not coordinate their activities; and (ii) experience over years has shown that partners do not really want to coordinate their interventions, the Forum has agreed to introduce the concept of collaboration rather than coordination for more efficiency in the actions. Therefore, the Forum invited stakeholders to work towards developing and implementing joint programmes, once the countries had made available their NSDSs as a framework for the coherence of all the current and planned activities. There is a need to go deeper on this issue during the coming meeting of FASDEV.

3. Conclusion

12. ECA and all other primary sponsors of this initiative are committed to continue the process in order to create synergies and maximize the efficiency of the work done by all the stakeholders in statistical capacity building in Africa.

Annex 1: Communiqué of the first Meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV)

Representatives of donor institutions, UN specialized agencies, and regional and sub-regional agencies attended the Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV) meeting on May 12-13, 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Recalling that FASDEV was initiated in order to: (i) have an overview of statistical activities, including assistance, and training in Africa; (ii) set up a permanent system for the monitoring of statistical development in Africa; and (iii) strengthen modalities for collaboration with a view to leveraging on each partner's comparative advantage, the meeting:

- a) Appreciated the effort made by ECA in collaboration with ADB and PARIS21 to convene the FASDEV meeting;
- b) Discussed issues relating to statistical development in Africa;
- c) Agreed to:

1. Endorse the establishment of Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV) and its functions as stated in the preamble above, with ECA as the Secretariat;
2. Contribute to the production of a Reference Regional Strategy Framework under ECA coordination based on the draft presented and the comments made, in line with the Marrakech Action Plan on Statistics (MAPS), during the meeting;
3. Support African countries to design and implement National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) by 2006 using the PARIS 21 Guidelines and following the recommendations of CODI II, the MAPS, and the Yaoundé Declaration;
4. Take advantage of any existing strategies at the international, regional, subregional and national levels (such as PARIS21, ICP-Africa, GDDS-Africa, etc.), with a view to meeting the objectives of the Reference Regional Strategy Framework;
5. Work towards developing and implementing joint programmes (moving from coordination to collaboration);
6. Provide information according to a template to be designed with by members of FASDEV and coordinated by ECA;
7. Asked ECA to convene the next FASDEV meeting in February 2005 to consider and approve the Reference Regional Strategy Framework and to map the way forward; and
8. Call on all stakeholders to support FASDEV activities.

Annex 2 : Communiqué of the Meeting on Coordination of Statistical Capacity Building Work in Africa Held in Tunis from 31 January to 2 February 2005

Representatives of the African Development Bank (ADB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the UN Economic Commission For Africa (UNECA), PARIS21 and the World Bank met to discuss the coordination of their statistical capacity building work in Africa. They focused on national strategies for the development of statistics, advocacy, capacity building, price and national accounts statistics.

Participants considered their respective work programs and noted the progress that has been made. They exchanged information on their future work plans for statistical capacity building and expressed their satisfaction at the current level of cooperation and coordination among themselves. However, they also saw the need for a more comprehensive process for coordinating activities.

In line with the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics, participants agreed on the need to lay the groundwork to facilitate coordination of all statistical capacity building programs and take forward the recommendations of the first meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDEV), which took place in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, in May 2004. They requested ECA to convene a second meeting of FASDEV, no later than the end of 2005, to:

1. Consider and adopt a Regional Strategy Framework for Statistical Development in Africa;
2. Discuss National Strategies for the Development of Statistics in relation to the broader development agenda as expressed in NEPAD, PRSPs, MDGs, and other policy initiatives; and
3. Share information on the activities of all development partners in statistical capacity building in Africa as contained in documents to be collated by PARIS21.

The participants thanked the African Development Bank for hosting the meeting.