

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

Preamble

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

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

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

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

A. African Statistics Award

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the establishment of an African Statistics Award that will recognize the achievement in statistics of African statisticians to the benefit of Africa;
- (b) Commends the Executive Secretary of the UNECA on whom was bestowed an award for his efforts as a champion of statistics in Africa and for his major contribution in revamping the statistical function at UNECA;

- (c) Bestows *Africa Statistics Awards*, on behalf of the African statistical community, on five persons who had, over many years, played leading roles in the development of statistics on the continent namely Mr Julien Amegandjin, Mr Oladejo Ajayi, Mr Kweku deGraft-Johnson, Mr Lamine Diop, and Mr Pali Lehohla.

B. Bureau of StatCom-Africa

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Commends the outgoing Bureau of the Subcommittee on Statistics of CODI-V for their leadership and excellent work undertaken
- (b) Elects the following Bureau of the first meeting of StatCom-Africa:

Chair: South Africa
Vice-chair: Morocco
Second Vice-chair: Niger
First rapporteur : Uganda
Second rapporteur : Cameroun

C. Statistical Commission for Africa

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Takes note of the goals and objectives of the StatCom-Africa as the apex body in charge of statistics and statistical development on the continent;
- (b) Recommends that, in line with the statute for the UN subsidiary bodies, StatCom-Africa should meet every two years and serve as Africa's link to the global statistical system, through the UN Statistical Commission;
- (c) Agrees that, in the year when StatCom-Africa is not meeting, the Bureau of StatCom-Africa, in collaboration with the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) and the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC), will prepare a report to be presented to the African Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development and to the global UN Statistical Commission by the Bureau

of StatCom-Africa. In the year that StatCom-Africa meets, the Bureau will report to StatCom-Africa on the progress between the two sessions.

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

D. Statistical coordination

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of the African Development Bank (AfDB) on the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC) and endorses the establishment of such a committee;
- (b) Agrees that the membership to the ASCC should be expanded to include regional and sub-regional organizations, the Friends of ECA, and should report to the bureau of StatCom-Africa;
- (c) Requests the ASCC to ensure that their work programme is in line with that of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) which is a global version of ASCC, to avoid duplication of efforts;
- (d) Requests that Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASCC be prepared and that the Committee work out a reporting mechanism on the measurement, effectiveness and progress of statistical capacity building in Africa.

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

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of the AfDB on the implementation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics;
- (b) Recognizes that financing statistical activities is a challenging task in Africa and calls on the Forum on African Statistical Development

(FASDEV) meeting to consider this issue. It recommends that a mechanism be put in place to measure statistical development which would help donors monitor the progress made by countries and to provide support to those that need it most;

- (c) Reiterates the call of CODI that countries (which have not done so yet) design a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) as the overarching framework for statistical capacity development in the region. A study on the effectiveness of different National Statistical Systems (NSSs) already in place should be undertaken to inform countries on lessons learned from the implementation of the existing NSDSs.
- (d) Recommends that all NSDSs should include explicitly the strategies for the production of sectoral statistics.

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

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

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

G. Statistical Associations

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the report of UNECA stressing the importance of Statistical Associations in statistical advocacy and statistical development;

- (b) Requests that high level policy and decision makers, especially from Statistical Offices, Central Banks and Ministries of Finance, Planning and Economic Development be engaged in the activities of National Statistical Associations of their respective countries;
- (c) Requests that by 2009 every African country should revive dormant National Statistical Associations, or establish new ones;
- (d) Requests the NSOs to provide significant support to National Statistical Associations, including financing, office spaces, and logistical support;
- (e) Urges National Statistical Associations to increase the number of corporate members in the associations, so as to provide a sound financial base;
- (f) Urges Statistical Offices and Associations to increase their international networking with, and support from, international and bilateral organizations, including the International Statistical Institute (ISI), so as to increase their visibility and sustainability of funding;
- (g) Recognizes the need for the participation of National Statistical Associations in meetings of StatCom-Africa as they play significant roles in the statistical systems.
- (h) Requests that the UNECA, with the collaboration of other partners, revitalizes the dormant African Statistical Association, and that all National Statistical Associations be encouraged to join.

H. 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the reports of the secretariat of the Friends of ECA on the status of census undertaking in Africa and on the outcomes of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD);
- (b) Requests increased advocacy at the highest level to ensure the commitment of African governments to undertake population censuses in the 2010 round;

- (c) Requests ECA and Friends of ECA to develop a clear strategy for the conduct of censuses in post-conflict countries, including sharing knowledge on best practices; and support census undertaking in post-conflict countries and in other countries in difficult situations including urgent technical expertise required foremost by Sudan.

I. Millennium Development Goals monitoring

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

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

J. Basic economic statistics

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

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

K. Environment statistics

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Takes note with appreciation of the work undertaken in the area of environment statistics by UNEP, UNECA and UNSD to develop a core set of environmental indicators for data collection and dissemination in Africa;
- (b) Endorses the proposal by the UNECA secretariat that a task force on environmental statistics be established, with three main functions: to streamline the core list of environmental indicators for Africa; to prepare a work programme on environmental statistics for the Africa region; and to work closely with the Inter Sectoral Working Group on Environmental Statistics;
- (c) Recommends that countries be given the opportunity to participate in the methodological work involved in defining the appropriate set of indicators;
- (d) Requests UNECA to provide technical assistance to enable countries to develop their environmental indicators.

L. Employment statistics

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes with appreciation the reports of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on Key Issues Concerning Employment Statistics in Africa;
- (b) Urges countries to undertake regular annual production of employment statistics through censuses, surveys (especially labour force surveys), and administrative records;
- (c) Recommends that countries continue to use the official ILO definition of unemployment, in order to maintain consistency with the System of National Accounts (SNA), but that a variety of other indicators (on underemployment, underutilization of labour, etc.) be produced to give a more complete picture of the employment situation;

- (d) Encourages its members to participate actively and fully at the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) by identifying concerns relating to measurement of employment, and take steps for the ratification of the ILO Convention No. 160 on Labour Statistics (1985).

M. Creation of working groups on thematic areas

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Welcomes and endorses the creation of the following working groups:

- MDG Monitoring in Africa;
- Statistical Training and Capacity Building;
- Data Management;
- Informal Sector;
- National Accounts; and
- Gender Statistics

- (b) Endorses the specific recommendations from these groups as presented at the plenary.

N. Other issues

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

- (a) Takes note of the presentation of the African Union Commission (AUC) on progress made towards the finalization and submission for adoption of the African Charter for Statistics to African Heads of States;
- (b) Takes note of the information provided by South Africa on the 57th Session of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) to be held in Durban in August 2009 and calls upon all African countries to substantively

contribute to the success of this continental event. Efforts should be focused on encouraging women statisticians and young statisticians to attend the ISI in large numbers.

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

The Statistical Commission for Africa:

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

Annex:

Provisional agenda for the second StatCom-Africa meeting

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations

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

3. National accounts Statistics

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on National Accounts

4. Informal Sector and surveys

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Informal Sector

5. Data management

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Data Management

6. Statistical Training

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Statistical Training

7. Environment Statistics

Documentation

Report of the Task force on environment statistics

8. 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census

Documentation

Report on population and housing census

9. Coordination of statistics

Documentation

Report of the African Committee on Statistical Coordination

Report of the RRSF implementation

Report on the African Charter for Statistics

Report on the NSDS implementation in Africa

10. MDG monitoring

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on MDG Monitoring

11. Gender statistics

Documentation

Report on Gender Statistics

12. Employment statistics

Documentation

Report on Employment Statistics

13. Programme questions (African Centre for Statistics of the UNECA)

14. Provisional agenda and dates of the 3rd Statistical Commission for Africa (StAtCom-Africa III)