United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

AFRICAN CENTRE FOR STATISTICS

Monthly update of activities and events- MARCH 2024

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Africa

On 1st March 2024 at a side event of the 55th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, organized by ESCAP, ECA, UNICEF, UNFPA, Vital Strategies, and UNDP under the umbrella of the UN Legal Identity Agenda concrete decisions were made to extend the decade of repositioning Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (APAI-CRVS) to 2030. This paves way for accelerated efforts by stakeholders to realize universal registration of all vital events through strong partnerships.

2024 International Women's Day

On 6th March 2024, the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) participated in the pre-International Women's Day Gender Statistics Virtual Roundtable under the 2024 International Women's Day (IWD2024) theme - Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress. The theme recognized the crucial role of financing in closing the gender gap both for sustainable development and in keeping with Africa's development priorities as articulated in Agenda 2063.

The virtual roundtable event aimed at exploring opportunities for diverse sector players including the media, private sector, NSOs, public agencies, CSOs and development partners in Africa to invest in women. ACS presented Africa's continental perspective on the use of gender data to invest in women for progress under one of the three highly moderated expert discussions on: investing in gender data as a vehicle for driving progress for all, prioritizing gender-responsive budgeting and shifting to a green economy and care society. The paper highlighted the investments in gender data at the regional level, challenges that exist in investing and using data as a vehicle for change and highlighted proposals on what leaders can do to harness the power of gender data.

Development of register based official statistics workshop.

4th to 8th March 2024, ACS collaborated with officials of Statistics Denmark in the delivery of a capacity development programme aimed at capacitating staff from Statistics South Africa on the use of administrative data sources to produce official statistics and strengthening co-operation between Statistics South Africa and administrative data owners to showcase the advantages of using linkable administrative microdata in the production of official statistics. The mission facilitated the launch of a national small-scale pilot project that would assess the possibility of StatsSA succeeding in establishing an exchange of microdata containing the national ID.

Integrated geospatial information framework (IGIF) for Mali

4th to 8th March 2024, ACS held a national stakeholders engagement workshop in Bamako, Mali to provide national key actors from various Ministries, Government Offices, Academia, Private Sector an opportunity to review, refine, improve, and make ready the steps towards the development of the Country-level Action Plan on IGIF. It's believed that the action plan will provide detailed steps towards achieving the short-term and long-term strategic goals for strengthening integrated geospatial information management in the country. The workshop offered the opportunity to: i) Broaden and deepen consultations with the geoinformation community in Mali to collect and review relevant inputs and schedule desired working groups(s); ii) Elaborate a detailed diagnosis on actors, needs and priorities as well as on standards and interoperability; iii). Identify geospatial data custodian institutions in the country; identify fundamental datasets in the country; arrange visits to geospatial data custodian institutions and collect additional data; iv). Determine the necessary linkage of the IGIF with other national strategies such as the national spatial data infrastructures and statistical development strategies.

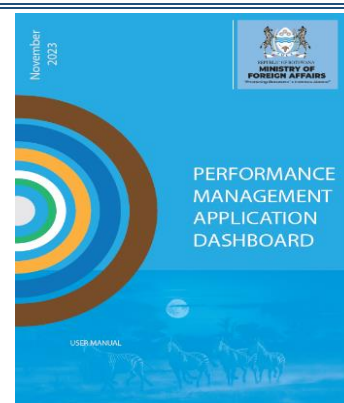## Work with the UN regional Hub on Big Data and Data Science for Africa

The UN regional Hub on Big Data and Data Science for Africa is a partnership between the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The main objectives of the hub are to facilitate cross-border collaboration projects that apply big data and data science to complement official statistics, provide knowledge on newly developed methods, algorithms, and tools, and offer training in the use of big data and data science for the community of official statisticians in Africa.

The Regional Hub for Africa undertakes various activities that are organized into four distinct workstreams or pillars. This includes advocacy/leadership, research, capability building, and the United Nations Global Platform. The hub has been a host to numerous collaborative projects and webinars, including the Web Scraping for CPI Collaborative Project, Automated Occupation Classification Coding Webinar, Mobile Phone Data Webinar, Earth Observations for Agricultural Statistics Webinar, and more, in collaboration with its global partners. For more information: Home | UN Regional Hub for Africa (uneca.org)

Performance Dashboard System Launched

ACS supported an initiative to develop a Performance Dashboard System to enhance the operational Performance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Botswana. The Dashboard's main purpose is to provide insightful data on the Ministry's performances based on evidence. It aims to monitor the Key Performance Indicators linked to strategic objectives, encompassing areas such as Consular Services, Financial Management, and Human Resource Development. This innovative platform also aims to empower Senior Management and the Executive to identify and tackle issues in implementation, leading to a more efficient and effective organization. see further information here.

R programming language for Young African Statisticians

4th to 14th March 2024, ACS in collaboration with ONS-UK had conducted a 2-week online training workshop on Introduction to R programming language for young statisticians to enhance their skills to effectively use data in their work, research, data analytics, and reporting. Thirty young statisticians participated in the training workshop from 25 African countries under the ECA's flagship initiative the "**Takwimu Young African Statisticians Programme**" that was designed for Young African Statisticians and data practitioners from all background. Takwimu is intended

to create a network of young male and female statisticians and data practitioners from African National Statistical Systems, Statistical Training Centres, Universities and research centres, private sector including those from national statistical associations and societies.

Quality Assurance of Administrative Data Capacity Building

5th to 7th March 2024, ACS staff joined UN Women in a workshop on quality assurance of administrative data capacity building workshop for key data holders and managers from ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) of the Ethiopian Statistical System in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop aimed to enhance the understanding and appreciation of senior officials in MDAs of the importance of quality assurance of administrative data, increase understanding of the Data Quality Framework and its use within administrative settings, and jointly craft an administrative data quality assurance road map for Ethiopia.

Strengthen collaboration with Eritrea.

On 24th March 2024, the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Eritrea met with the Director, ACS, to explore collaboration and support the Eritrean Statistical System. In the same vein, on 26th March 2024, the Minister of Finance and National Development of Eritrea, UNDP, and UNFPA conducted a fruitful dialogue with ECA facilitated by the United Resident Coordinator to discuss the NSO's Joint Triennial Work Plan 2024-2026 and ECA's potential areas of technical assistance for its implementation.

Following these initial discussions, the Minister of Finance and National Development requested that ECA undertake a comprehensive assessment of the Eritrean Statistical System. In this context, a scoping mission is scheduled for the end of April 2024.

Regional workshop on Statistical Business Registers (SBR).

20th to 22nd March 2024, ACS supported the African Union Institute for Statistics (**STATAFRIC**) in running a three-day regional workshop on statistical business registers (SBR) in Douala, Cameroon. This was under STATAFRIC's commitment to support countries and regional economic communities to integrate the African Charter on Statistics and the requirements of the second Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA II) in National Statistics Laws, National Strategies for the Development of Statistics and in Regional and Sub-Regional Plans for statistical development. The workshop brought together representatives of fifteen African countries including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic and Statistics Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Community of Sahel–Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), Statistics Finland and Statistics Denmark. The workshop shared crucial information on global developments in SBRs, insights into the progress made by countries and the challenges they face in establishing and maintaining SBRs.

10th Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (ARFSD)

ACS is in high gears preparing for the 10th ARFSD which will focus on the 2024 High Level Political Forum selected SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 and the corresponding aspirations of Agenda 2063/strategic objectives of the second ten-year implementation plan (STYIP) of Agenda 2063.

Please find more information HERE .

The Forum will take place in AUC (African Union Commission), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23rd to 25th April 2024. It will be held in a hybrid format allowing both in person and virtual participation. Side Events and Pre-Events will take place in UNECA Conference Center from 17 – 22 April 2024. ACS will facilitate the following side events:

- **18th April 2024, 09:00 -10:30 EAT** - Africa Progress Towards SDG 16.9: Legal Identity for All. The side event will provide an opportunity to acquire knowledge on the regional progress towards achieving universal legal identity and an in-depth review of the progress made by African countries towards achievement of SDG 16.9 ("Legal Identity for all including birth registration") based on recent data.
- **22nd April 2024, 11:30 – 13:00 EAT** - Data to Unlock the Relevance and Accuracy of Voluntary National Reviews (VNR). This aims to highlight the compelling reasons for countries to include data at the national and sub-national levels in their VNR Reports, emphasizing the importance of data-driven decision-making and showcasing the benefits it brings to sustainable development efforts.
- **24th April 2024, 09:00 -10:30 EAT:** Power of Data: Unlocking the data dividend for the SDGs and Agenda 2063. This will be a hybrid session on socializing the power of data initiative, identifying the data gaps and devising mechanisms for mobilizing resources to support national partnerships.
- **24th April 2024, 11:00 – 13:00 EAT:** Plenary round-table panel discussion on the transformation and modernization of statistical systems to produce high-quality data and statistics that can be used to track progress and reinforce national policies and plans to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

More from the 55th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission
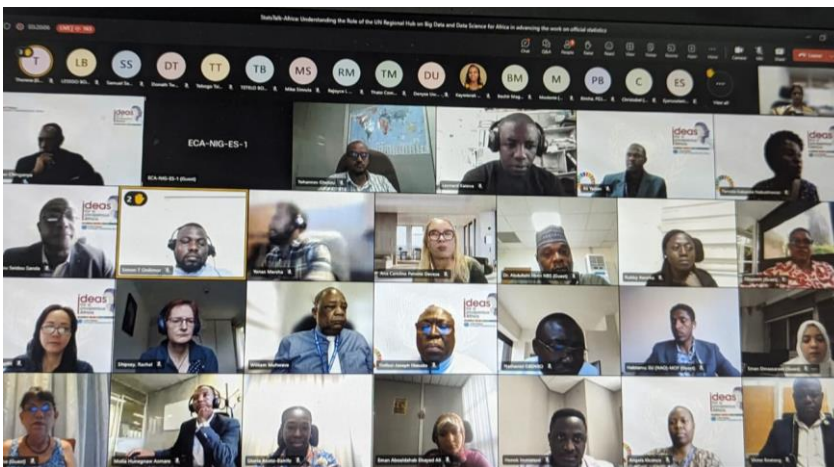
The 55th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) was held in New York from 23 February to 1 March 2024. The UNSC was established in 1947 as the apex entity of the global statistical system and is the highest decision-making body for international statistical activities with respect to the setting of statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national, regional, and international levels.

ECA representatives presented the African statistical position, perspective, and issues of concern were brought to the attention of the international statistical fraternity, and the UN Statistical Commission adequately reflecting the Continent's concerns and interests.

The contribution of Africa during the negotiation of the resolution on the size of UN Statistical Commission yielded results as the resolution was adopted by the Commission with very minor update from the zero draft. It is therefore proposed that the incremental process will reach the following result: 14 members from African States, 11 members from Asia-Pacific States, 10 members from Latin American and Caribbean States, 6 members from Eastern European States and 13 members from Western European and other States at the fifty-ninth session, in 2028. The increase in representation of members from Africa States more than doubled from 5 to 14.

The African Centre for Statistics (ACS) will follow up on the recommendation of the Ambassadors for ECA to lead in building a single database, which is also in line with a recent decision by the African Statistical Coordinating Committee comprising of AUC, AfDB and ECA.

13th StatsTalk-Africa monthly webinar series

On 19th March 2024, ACS convened its 13th StatsTalk-Africa monthly webinar series that provide a space for dialogue about data, statistics, and innovative tools with data experts and users. This particular webinar discussed the collaborative work instituted within the UN regional Hub on Big Data and Data Science for Africa including the ongoing capacity-building initiatives, projects, and planned activities.
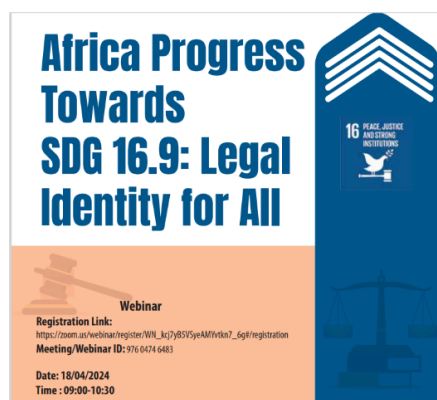
The webinar provided an overview of the Hub and its activities, showcasing additional data science initiatives taking place within ACS as well as highlighted the pioneering and award-winning solution presented by the UN 2023, led by Statistics Ghana. Notably, the Ghanaian team secured the first prize in the UN Datathon 2023 and received recognition in three categories: Best Youth Team, Best Visualization, and Best Presentation. The solution focuses on "*Local Access to Information in Ghana: "Localizing SDG Indicators and Computing the Novel Access to Information Index*."

For more details See:

- https://www.uneca.org/stories/big-data-and-data-science-to-support-africa-in-capturing-alternative-data-sources-while
- https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/statstalk-africa-understanding-role-un-regional-hub-big-data-and-data-science-africa-advancing-work

Access previous StatsTalk – Africa Series at HERE

- 18th April 2024, 09:00-10:30 EAT – **Side event** at 10th AFRSD Africa Progress Towards SDG 16.9: Legal Identity for All. Registration Link:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kcj7yB5VSyeAMYvtkn7_6g#/registration

- ECA in partnership with ESCAP will launch the **CRVS applied research training** (CART) initiative that focuses on enhancing CRVS systems through supporting applied research on strategies, interventions, and tools on 2nd April 2024. This is for 24 successful government employees from 12 countries in Africa.
- **e-Learning Courses.** Between May to June 2024, the African Centre for Statistics will organize an e-learning course of energy accounts.

- ACS has scheduled the **14th StatsTalk -Africa webinar series** on Tuesday 16th April 2024 15:00-16:30 EAT. Professor Lahiri will discuss the challenges of producing small area estimates using sample survey data alone and how the sample survey data can be effectively integrated with alternative databases in producing reliable small area estimates. Further an application on how survey data can be combined with geospatial data in producing improved estimates of crop acreage for small geographical areas will be highlighted. Including the challenges for development of Urban Spatial Frameworks in Africa. There will be showcase of Luanda, Angola case study which is to guide urban planning efforts towards the creation of economically vibrant, resilient, connected, and socially equitable cities. Here is the Registration link:

Related global statistical events

Related global statistical events included:

- 13 March: A quick update on the 2025 SNA (Economic Statistics)
- 18 March: Article on a LLM approach to time series nowcasting (Nowcasting and forecasting)
- Various: Members of the SDMX User Forum are actively discussing a wide range of SDMX-related topics. Head on over to the group to join the discussions (SDMX User Forum).

Thank you.

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