



AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY 2018

18 NOVEMBER

*High-quality official statistics
to ensure transparency,
good governance
and inclusive development*

BACKGROUND

African Statistics Day was initiated in 1990 by the Joint African Conference of Planners, Statisticians and Demographers, which is a subsidiary body of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Africa celebrates African Statistics Day every year on 18 November to raise public awareness of the importance of statistics in all aspects of socioeconomic and environmental life. This year's theme, *"High-quality official statistics to ensure transparency, good governance and inclusive development"*, highlights the value of official statistics in addressing transparency, good governance and inclusive development. Moreover, it is in line with the theme of the 2018 African Union Summit: *"Winning the fight against corruption: a sustainable path for Africa's transformation"*.

Corruption is associated with lack of transparency, weak governance and non-inclusive development and has a negative effect on national development through:

- a. Undermining the mobilization of government revenue;
- b. Jeopardizing the implementation of investment projects;
- c. Discouraging the development and growth of the private sector;
- d. Contributing to a misallocation of human resources;
- e. Contributing to worsening income distribution.

Empirically, high levels of human development are associated with low levels of corruption. Corruption jeopardizes inclusive social, environmental and economic development and growth. Good governance is one of the necessary pre-conditions for a prosperous and peaceful Africa and is at the heart of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, as stated in its third aspiration: *"an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law"*.

One of the objectives of the strategy developed by the African Union Advisory Board for combating corruption is to develop methodologies for analysing the nature and scope of corruption in Africa, so that a measuring tool for the nature, scope and impact of corruption can be available.

During the Assembly of the African Union Second Ordinary Session, member States adopted a convention on preventing and combating corruption¹, which was considered by the African Union Advisory Board to be the sole legal instrument in Africa to fight corruption. High-quality official statistics and particularly those that focus on governance, peace and security are vital in ensuring transparency, good governance and inclusive development in Africa. Few African countries, however, produce reliable and high-quality statistics on governance, peace and security.

PRODUCING HIGH-QUALITY STATISTICS

High-quality statistics can be expected when agencies responsible for producing official statistics adhere strictly to the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and comply with the African Charter on Statistics. In addition to abiding by professional standards, applying scientific principles, observing professional ethics and complying with rules of confidentiality, and in order to produce high-quality data, national statistics offices need to ensure that the following characteristics inform their approach:

- » relevance
- » sustainability
- » accuracy and reliability
- » continuity
- » coherence and comparability
- » timeliness
- » topicality
- » specificity

It is essential that the production, dissemination and use of official statistics are backed by robust national statistical legislations.

¹ http://www.auanticorruption.org/uploads/AU_ABC_Strategic_Plan_2011_2015_Eng.pdf

AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY 2018

18 NOVEMBER

*High-quality official statistics
to ensure transparency,
good governance
and inclusive development*

HIGH-QUALITY STATISTICS SUPPORT TRANSPARENCY, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

In recent years, tools developed by the statistical community have made it possible to provide decision makers with reliable statistics. Such statistics assist in formulating evidence-based decisions on good governance, inclusive development and transparency. High-quality official statistics contribute to political stability and a stronger voice and accountability; they also reduce and eradicate violence, improve the quality of regulatory measures, help establish the rule of law, and rein in the level of corruption.

By establishing comprehensive frameworks to monitor all flows of economic, social and environmental statistics, official statistics can track and stop the illicit financial flows that fuel corruption. Open access data can help monitor governance and improve the fairness, objectivity and reliability of official activities and policies. High-quality official statistics make it possible for governments to develop sound economic, social and environmental policies that prioritize the welfare of their citizens.

CONCLUSION

The media plays a vital role in disseminating statistical information on environmental and socioeconomic development. Similarly, it plays a crucial role in linking data producers and users, as it promotes data transparency and supports good governance that will lead to inclusive development.

