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**Economic Commission for Africa**  
**African Symposium on Statistical Development**  
Thirteenth meeting  
Addis Ababa, 1 – 2 October 2018

## **Concept note and call for papers**

*“Strengthening population censuses and national accounts to support the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063”*

### **1. Introduction and background**

1. The Africa Symposium on Statistical Development is an annual forum that brings together the statistical community in Africa with a view to tackling strategic challenges impeding implementation of the African Statistics System. At the eleventh meeting of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development, held in Libreville in 2015, economic statistics and, in particular, national accounts were adopted as the focus for the following five meetings of the Symposium on Statistical Development, scheduled between 2016 and 2020.

2. The twelfth meeting of the Symposium was held in Tunis in 2016 under the theme “Strengthening basic economic statistics for the compilation of national accounts in Africa.” That Symposium was significant in that it marked the beginning of the economic statistics round of symposiums, served as an advocacy platform to raise awareness among policymakers and the African statistics community of the importance of, and challenges related to, the compilation of basic economic statistics in Africa, and served as a platform for monitoring and reporting on implementation of the African Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and the 2020 round of population and housing censuses.

3. Hosted by the Central Statistics Agency of Ethiopia, and supported by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the African Union Commission, the thirteenth meeting of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development will convene on 1 and 2 October 2018 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa. Statistics South Africa will act as the secretariat for the Symposium, which has adopted the theme “Strengthening population censuses and national accounts to support the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.”

4. The System of National Accounts serves as a systematic framework for economic statistics and provides a solid foundation and extensive database for planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The System of National Accounts is, moreover, a significant tool that can facilitate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in connection with environmental issues, such as in the case of environmentally extended supply-use tables. Although significant progress in that regard has been achieved at the regional and country level, it is time to leverage and scale up efforts.

5. Resolution 2015/10 on the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme, adopted by the Economic and Social Council in June 2015, recognized the increasing importance of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses for meeting the data needs of the follow-up activities to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and upholding national and international commitments. In the resolution, the Council urged Member States to conduct at least one population and housing census under the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme, during the period from 2015 to 2024, taking into account international and regional recommendations relating to population and housing censuses.

6. Strengthening population censuses and national accounts will facilitate the generation of key statistics on a wide range of Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

## **2. Purpose and objectives**

7. The purpose of the thirteenth meeting of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development is to facilitate the participation of African countries in the 2020 round of population and housing censuses and to advance the development of economic statistics and national accounts in Africa.

8. Specifically, the Symposium will underscore the importance of the 2020 round and the implementation of the System of National Accounts, and will provide an opportunity for participants to review progress and identify issues and challenges in that regard, share country experiences and best practices in addressing those issues and challenges, and formulate strategies for moving forward.

## **3. Organization of the meeting**

9. The thirteenth meeting of the Symposium will take place on 1 and 2 October 2018 at the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa. The Symposium will include the following:

- An overview of progress achieved and challenges to be addressed;
- An opportunity for countries to share their experiences;
- Presentations by directors general of national statistics offices on potential strategies for moving forward.

10. Further details on the topics can be found in the detailed work programme of the Symposium. The Symposium will be conducted with simultaneous interpretation between English and French.

## **4. Participants**

11. Approximately 200 participants are expected to attend the Symposium, including the heads of, and experts from, national statistical offices, ministries of planning, finance and economic development, and central banks, as well as representatives of regional, pan-African and international organizations, institutions and associations.

## **5. Call for papers**

12. Prospective participants are invited to submit a one-page abstract in English or French by 30 August 2018 on one of the following topics:

- The production of economic statistics to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- GDP rebasing;
- The compilation and application of supply-use tables;
- The compilation and application of environmental-economic accounts,

and to include the following elements:

- *Subject matter*: Which of the aforementioned statistical topics is addressed in the presentation? Why is that topic important?
- *Issues and challenges*: What problems and challenges need to be addressed?
- *Effective approaches*: What experiences and best practices should serve as input when formulating strategies to address those issues and challenges?
- *Outcomes*: What are the most important conclusions, and recommendations that can be drawn from those experiences and best practices?
- *Discussion*: What are the implications of those outcomes?

13. A review committee will examine the submitted abstracts and invite the authors of selected abstracts to make presentations at the Symposium. The papers/presentations should be based on the actual experiences of countries. Presentations should be made using PowerPoint, should not exceed 12 PowerPoint slides and should be between 10 and 15 minutes' duration. Please take note of the following deadlines:

#### **Timelines for communication and preparation of papers and presentations**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Description of action</i>
30 August 2018	Submission of abstracts (one page)
5 September 2018	Notification of selected abstracts
12 September 2018	Submission of initial draft PowerPoint presentations for review
16 September 2018	Feedback for improvement of presentations
24 September 2018	Submission of final presentations

Interested candidates are invited to submit their abstracts and presentations in English or French to Mr. Xiaoning Gong, Chief of Economic Statistics and National Accounts Section, ([xiaoning.gong@un.org](mailto:xiaoning.gong@un.org)) with a copy submitted to Mr. David Boko ([bokod@un.org](mailto:bokod@un.org)) within the time limits indicated in the table above.

## **6. Financial support**

14. When submitting their abstracts, authors should also indicate whether they require financial assistance to cover expenses associated with their participation in the Symposium, such as their travel and accommodation expenses, or a daily subsistence allowance. Only one author per paper accepted for presentation will be eligible for financial support and only presenters and researchers coming from African countries are eligible to apply for such support. Financial assistance will be provided to approximately 20 Symposium participants.

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