



# STATCOM- AFRICA-VI

13<sup>th</sup>



## UN-GGIM: AFRICA

## FASDEV-VIII



### EXPERTS ADOPT 'FORWARD-LOOKING' RESOLUTIONS ON STATISTICS IN AFRICA

by Ernest Cho Chi | photos by Wendwesen Tekle Temesgen

#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DAY

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**02 October 2018. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** — Representatives of African national statistics offices have adopted a series of resolutions aimed at enhancing the quality, timeliness and accessibility of data in support of National Development Plans (NDP) and the SDGs.

The statisticians committed to undertake the 2020 round of population and housing censuses in Africa in order to meet the demands for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want; Coordinate and mobilize resources for census-taking activities in Africa; Build mechanisms for linking geospatial and demographic census data; and develop a multi-language application for censuses.

Their final communique, which also highlights the need for countries to take ownership of data collection, production and dissemination in line with SDGs indicators, was described by Oliver Chinganya, Director of the African Centre for Statistics at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), as "forward-looking."

Mr. Chinganya said he was impressed by the level of participation ( 51 African countries), quality of discussions, and the fact that countries have committed, among other things, to "explore new technologies for data collection and production, taking advantage of new sources of data and information, new approach-

es to data collection, management, processing and dissemination and new partnerships among data producers and users."

The experts recommended that countries should conduct data availability assessments, formulate national strategies and work-plans, organize national statistics producer-user workshops, mobilize political and financial support for, and raise awareness on the importance of supply-use tables (SUTs), which provide the key accounting mechanism to ensure coherence between various approaches and sources of data.

The document also highlights the importance of integrated environmental and economic accounting as an essential framework that informs environmental and natural resources and their stock and quality; regular country-level evaluations to assess the progress on and challenges in the economic indicators of the SDGs every three years; and the need to develop metadata to explain and increase understanding of data and uncover discrepancies among various sources.

The 13th African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) was organized under the theme, "Strengthening population censuses and national accounts to support the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063."

Participants expressed appreciation for efforts being made towards the development of infrastructure and capacity-building for e-censuses in Africa. They also lauded the efforts made by ASSD in addressing continental statistics agendas, including censuses, civil registration and vital statistics, the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa, and national accounts and economics.

The symposium was organized in partnership with the ECA, UNFPA, AfDB, AUC, the Government of South Africa and other development partners.



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## INCREASE SUPPORT FOR STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT, MEMBER STATES URGE PARTNERS AT FASDEV MEETING *by Sandra Nyaira | photos by Antonio Fiorente*

**02 October 2018. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** — The Eighth Meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development (FASDev VIII) took place yesterday with member States at the end of the day calling on partners to increase financial support to member States, in line with priorities identified in their national strategies for the development of statistics.

Member States also encouraged partners to work with regional economic communities in statistical capacity-building, and to strengthen their support to African countries for the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and Africa's Agenda 2063.

Pan-African institutions like the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) were urged to continue assisting African countries in their quest to enhance their capacity in respect of identification and mapping.

Discussions followed presentations by representatives of the African Development Bank (AfDB), World Bank and the Partnership in Statistics Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) on the levels and trends of support to statistical development in Africa. Ethiopia and Senegal also presented their country reports.

The main objectives of FASDEV are to have an overview of statistical activities on the continent, including assistance, and training; set up a permanent system for the monitoring of statistical development in Africa; and strengthening modalities for cooperation with a view to leveraging on each partner's comparative advantage.

During proceedings, the level of support given to member States in the development of statistics was highlighted with the contributions of Ethiopia and Senegal being recognized.

Delegates discussed statistical development in Africa, including how they can make partner support more effective and efficient, among other issues.

All partners were commended for their continuous support to statistical development in Africa, including assistance to statistical training institutions. Particular mention went to the Governments of Sweden, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, in particular its Department for International Development, and Global Partnerships, for statistical capacity-building efforts in Africa.

The ECA, along with the AfDB, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were lauded for their commitment to statistical capacity-building and statistical production in Africa and support of national, regional and international development efforts.

And the PARIS21 secretariat was commended for its capacity-building efforts in the areas of coordination and monitoring, statistical advocacy, technical support, and technology awareness.

Mr. Tinfissi Joseph Ilboudo, Chief of the Statistical Development Section in the ECA's African Centre for Statistics (ACS), said he was elated by the high level of debate and commitment by member States and partners in discussing to how to up investment statistical development to support not only the full implementation of the SDG agenda but also Agenda 2063 and other national priorities.





## DIGITAL EARTH AFRICA TECHNOLOGY PROSPECTS CAPTIVATE UN-GGIM PARTICIPANTS

by Sandra Nyaira  
photos by Antonio Fiorente

**02 October 2018. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** — The Fourth Session of the Regional Committee on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa continued in Addis Ababa Tuesday with the morning session focusing on Working Groups of the UNGGIM and how to make them more effective.

Participants discussed challenges facing the UNGGIM Working Groups and opportunities that can be tapped into. They also looked at the groups' terms of reference and their desire for the Working Groups to participate in various expert group meetings at the global level.

They also focused on how they can translate the African Action Plan on Global Geospatial Information Management (AAP-GGIM) into concrete actionable projects. The AAP-GGIM is an implementation tool of the United Nations Geospatial Information Management in Africa focusing on the need to integrate geospatial information and statistics.

The UNGGIM has five working groups; Africa Geodetic Reference Frame, Fundamental Datasets and Standards, Institutional and Legal Frameworks; Capacity and Capability Development, and Integration of Geospatial and Statistical Information for Sectoral Application.

In the afternoon delegates went into a workshop on Digital Earth Africa and the regional data curve. They focused on the main challenge for the continent, which is how it can translate data into development as it seeks to meet the needs of its fast growing population, in a time of increased climate variability.

Participants learnt of the data cube technology which is meant help to address some of the Africa's greatest challenges and unleash its social and economic potential.

Digital Earth Africa aims to deliver a unique continental-scale platform to democratize capacity to process and analyze satellite data for better decision making across many areas, including

water, forest and coastal resource management, agriculture, and urban development.

It will track changes across Africa in unprecedented detail, and provide data on a vast number of issues, including soil and coastal erosion, agriculture, forest and desert development, water quality, and changes to water quality and human settlements.

*"It was a fruitful day and we hope to continue in the same fashion as the regional committee meeting starts tomorrow parallel to Statcom,"* said ECA's Andre Nonguierma, Chief of the GiSS Section.

The regional committee meeting will focus on the UNGGIM structure with a new bureau expected to be put in place. Participants will discuss, among other things, an integrated geospatial information framework for Africa which will define some of the overarching principles that member States should follow-up on to ensure geospatial information is prioritized in their development activities and plans.

The meeting in general is looking at policies, measures and steps that African countries can take to ensure a successful implementation of the UN-GGIM initiative in the region with the major objective of trying to fully tap into the capabilities of geospatial information technology to meet the African development agenda.



# THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DAY AT A GLANCE

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# INTERVIEWS

by Ernest Cho Chi

photos by Antonio Fiorente



**Oliver Chinganya**  
Director, ACS

I think STATCOM, which as you know is happening along side with UNGGIM for Africa and ASSD has met its expectation. In the beginning we thought we won't have many participants because the meeting is no longer held jointly with the African Union. Interestingly enough I think the people have found value in the kind of work ECA is doing in terms of providing support to countries on statistical development. The participation rate (51 countries) was quite impressive and I think countries will go back with a different perspective the work of ECA, which to a large extent, resonates with ECA's new vision for Africa.

We certainly don't want to be complacent with what we've achieved. Rather, we want to do much more in improving statistics, particularly in line with the 2020 round of census. When you look around the continent you see lots of lapses in terms of providing the required data for the SDGs. So I think there's progress but we need to work harder, particularly in line with harmonization and integration. I strongly think it's time to integrate statistics and geospatial. Policymakers want to see evidence-packaged documents to enable them make decisions. The idea of bringing together statisticians and geospatial specialists is crucial and will make a significant difference going forward.



**Hennie Loots,**  
Director, GeoSpace  
International

We've been supporting the African Symposium on Statistical Development since its inception in 2006. So we have been a sponsor all along. We provide technical support and services to national statistical offices in the census environment. Also, we recently launched a new software platform called Hexagon Smart Census - A fully integrated digital system that manages all tasks, posts, and roles during census taking. The App covers the entire census cycle from planning to the actual data collection and dissemination. This is obviously the perfect event for us to promote our new platform.



**Aberash Tariku**  
Deputy Director-General,  
Ethiopian National Statistics  
System Coordination  
& Operations

The thematic areas of ASSD and STATCOM are very important for Ethiopia because we want to learn from and share experiences on on-going housing and populations census. You know, as a country, Ethiopia is preparing for its fourth population and housing census, which will be conducted during this Ethiopian calendar year. So we really want to hear from other countries how they conducted their censuses, what are the challenges and best practices. Also, you know that different countries have different experiences on national accounts. So we hope to share and learn from each other on how to improve national accounts and jointly reflect on the way forward.



## COUNTRIES SHOWCASE PROGRESS IN STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT *by Ernest Cho Chi | photos by Wendwesen Tekle Temesgen*

**01 October 2018. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** — The 13th session of the African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) kicked off on Monday in Addis Ababa under the theme, “Application of economic statistics and national accounts in support of sustainable development.”

ASSD is an annual international meeting that brings together African statisticians together with regional and international partners to tackle economic, demographic and social themes.

Speaking at the two-day event hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), representatives of some member states shared their successes, challenges, and plans for statistical development in line with the SDGs.

South Africa’s Litshani Ligudu noted that SDGs have been aligned to his country’s National Development Plan (NDP) and that “an integrated indicator framework has been developed that aligns indicators of the African Agenda 2063 and SDGs to the NDP.”

Mr. Ligudu deplored the fact that “South Africa was unable to provide data on 49% of the SDG indicators from goal 8, 9 and 17, due to the lack of data to compile economic indicators.”

In his presentation on “Mainstreaming SDGs in the National Statistical Systems,” Daniel Maslowa from Tanzania said his country has also aligned the SDGs to its NDP, stating “a Sustainable Development Data Roadmap Process was introduced to assess the implementation of SDGs.”

He noted, however, that the country’s statistical systems are unable to meet its need for economic statistics because: existing systems are not harmonized; data collection is irregular; political commitment is limited; stakeholder coordination is poor; and the existence of data in “not easy to use format,” amongst others.

Mr. Maslowa recommended collaboration with non-state actors and the International Data Community, and the setting up of clear policy and procedural guidance for developing the national data ecosystem as some of the solutions.

A representative from UNFPA, Collins Opiyo, highlighted census methodologies known as ‘census hybrids’, as an alternative to traditional censuses.

Another emerging opportunity is UNFPA’s population data platform, driven by “the need to produce more frequent and timely statistics; (e.g. due to privacy concerns); and increased technical capacities to manipulate data sources” etc.

He cited statistical modeling that requires some data from surveys, GIS data and satellite imagery as an example of census hybrid.

The UNFPA official pointed out that the hybrid method could be very useful “In countries where traditional census is not possible due to insecurity; to generate intercensal estimates; and may also be useful to inform census cartography planning.”

Participants from Senegal, Nigeria, Togo, Central African Republic, Botswana, Morocco, Uganda, and Malawi were amongst the those that shared their country experiences. These countries, pointed to the benefits and strategies to successfully conduct GDP rebasing, to develop and apply supply and use tables, and to undertake environmental economic accounting. All these are crucial at the earliest stages of the making of sustainable development.

Mr. Xiaoning Gong, form ECA, share the capacity building programme that ECA is leading in supporting African countries in GDP rebasing as well as the development of supply and use table and environmental economic accounting.

In addition to economic matters, the symposium also tackles subjects pertaining to the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in Africa and improvement of CRVS on the continent.

The 13th edition of ASSD is taking place within the context of the Sixth Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa-VI) dubbed, “Enhancing National Statistical System Capacity to Support Policies for Africa’s Economic Diversification and Industrialisation.”

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