



STATCOM- AFRICA-VI

UN-GGIM: AFRICA



STATCOM-VI ENDS WITH MEMBER STATES BEING URGED TO PRIORITIZE STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

by Sandra Nyaira
photo by Wendwesen Tekle Temesgen

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Addis Ababa, 4 October 2018 (ECA)—The Sixth Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa-VI) ended in Addis Ababa Thursday with delegates urging member States to allocate more resources to support the production, dissemination and use of statistics for the implementation of national development plans, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Africa's 50-year development plan, Agenda 2063.

Participants, among them Heads of National Statistics Offices from 51 African countries, underscored that effective political leadership, national ownership and adequate resources were crucial for the continent to ensure the success of statistical transformation initiatives.

Member States were called on to find creative and innovative ways to overcome some of the key challenges faced by national statistical offices in their bid to establish statistical systems that function and serve the continent well.

The delegates urged development partners to help enhance the capacity of national statistical systems to continue to align with the growing demand for statistics in support of evolving national, regional and global development agendas.

African nations were also encouraged to mainstream geospatial information technologies as a basic framework for supporting statistical production and dissemination of statistical data.

"We urge the stakeholders on statistical development in Africa to work together to meet the increasing demand of data for all development agendas," the delegates agreed, adding there was an urgent need for national statistical offices to improve their quality of administrative data.

This can be done through investing in civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system and in disaggregating indicators for monitoring basic human rights to address inequalities.

On enhancing national statistical systems' capacity to support policies for Africa's economic diversification and industrialization, the meeting called on member States to collaborate in creative and innovative ways and create synergies across data ecosystems and forge partnerships among relevant stakeholders.

This would help countries overcome key challenges impeding the work of national statistical offices and help in the creation of an efficient and effective statistical system.

The meeting took note of the new strategic areas of the Economic Commission for Africa and endorsed its statistical programme. It urged the ECA to continue supporting member States in statistical capacity-building, working in close collaboration with the African Union Commission (ECA), the African

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AFRICAN GOVTS URGED TO INTEGRATE STATISTICS AND GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION

by Sandra Nyaira | photo by Antonio Fiorente

Addis Ababa, 4 October 2018 (ECA)— The Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management in Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa) ended Thursday with experts urging African leaders to prioritize dialogues that need to take place to ensure national statistical, planning and mapping authorities collaborated effectively in the development of respective data infrastructures and systems on the continent.

This, they said, would encourage a potential unification of national statistical offices and national mapping authorities bringing shared benefits to both offices.

Delegates noted that for Africa to effectively implement the SDG and 2063 agendas, decision makers needed to recognize that an in-depth knowledge of links among people, economic activities and geographic locations could promote a deeper understanding of key social, economic and environmental issues than is possible through an assessment of socioeconomic data alone.

They recommended that UN-GGIM: Africa be established as an overarching governance framework in the field of geospatial information management, science and technology to ensure it has capacity to adapt policies and strategic actions to address issues of particular relevance to Africa and also ensure that national bodies are capable of addressing Africa's unique concerns.

Participants called on the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC) and other pan-African institutions to work collaboratively in promoting and advocating the importance of geospatial information in the achievement of sustainable development objectives at national, regional and international levels. Also of crucial importance is the promotion of trade and regional integration.

The ECA and UN-GGIM: Africa were urged to continue the development of the African spatial statistical framework and guidelines for geo-enabling national strategies for the development of statistics.

Participants took note of their partners' statistical capacity-building programs and recommended that they foster synergies and coordinate actions in support of national statistical systems in financial, technical and human resources.

Delegates were drawn from member States with experts in the field from the continent and beyond also in attendance. ■

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Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF).

In their recommendations, participants also urged member States to undertake the 2020 round of population and housing censuses to support the implementation of the SDG and 2063 agendas.

Member States were urged to mobilize resources for the census activities with development partners also being called on to support the process.

In her closing remarks at the end of the four-day meeting, Ms. Leila Ben Ali Kraiem, Manager for the Statistics Section at AUC, said her team and the AUC will continue to "work closely with the ECA, the AfDB and ACBF on different programmes aiming to support the production of quality, reliable and timely statistics on the continent.

AfDB's Statistics Director, Mr. Charles Leyeka Lufumpa, assured participants the bank will continue to accompany member States on 'this journey to ensure we enhance the capacity of our National Statistical Systems to support policies that promote Africa's development'.

"We have to make sure that we implement the recommendations and resolutions that we have come up with following our successful deliberations," he said.

For his part, Oliver Chinganya, Director of the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) at the ECA, saluted the delegates for putting much effort into their work in the last four days as they sought ways through which to mainstream ownership of new or updated methodologies that can enhance Member States' statistical capacities.

"The overwhelming participation, attendance and engagement we have had throughout the meeting has been remarkable and I believe that this is something that we would want to take forward," he said.

Statcom-Africa-VII will be held in Addis Ababa in 2020.

Representatives of national, sub-regional, regional and international organizations, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, academia, research institutions, and the private sector also attended the meeting. ■

STATCOM-AFRICA'S NEW EXECUTIVE BUREAU

Delegates attending Statcom-Africa VI have elected a new Executive Bureau to spearhead the forum's quest for an effective and efficient statistical ecosystem on the continent. The following countries are in the new bureau;

- » **Chair:** Tanzania
- » **1st Vice-Chair:** Kenya
- » **2nd Vice-Chair:** Tunisia
- » **1st Rapporteur:** Zambia
- » **2nd Rapporteur:** Senegal

A committee on the sustainability of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) was also constituted. The members of the committee are South Africa, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Equatorial Guinea and Rwanda.

INTERVIEWS

by Ernest Cho Chi | photos by Antonio Fiorente



Ms Nwabisa Maya

Director: International Cooperation and Partnerships, Statistics South Africa.

ASSD Secretariat.

The planning for ASSD started in July with the secretariat and host (ECA and CSA), as well as development partners. We had an effective collaboration and Secretariat noted with satisfaction the tireless efforts of the host staff to make this symposium a success. From the venue to transportation as well as protocol and the content of the meetings, the logistics plans paid off. Participation was commendable.

The highlight of the event for me was the opening ceremony where H.E. the President of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia graced the event and the excellent speeches made by partners, which seemed to resonate on the importance and gains of the ASSD. I found the discussions very fruitful even though there was limited time to elaborate on the topics.

The book by Professor Hendricks was a mind-blowing discovery and reality. Countries came in their numbers and the representation was satisfactory. Overall, the ASSD was a success despite the time constraint. The discussion on the future of ASSD was pertinent and I look forward to working with the committee on this important matter.



Tinfissi-Joseph Ilboudo

Chief of Statistical Data at the African Centre for Statistics, ECA

As you know our continent faces a major challenge when it comes to timely and accurate data to inform policies that will support Africa's inclusive development. So it was really heart-warming to see so many of our experts turning up to attend and come up with concrete resolutions that push our governments to want to put more resources into the production of accurate and high quality statistics.

In terms of the overall organization of the meetings, I'm quite satisfied, especially because of the feedback from participants. The past few days were busy though very productive. We feel encouraged as stakeholders urged us and the other Pan African institutions – our partners – to continue working together in supporting Africa build its statistical capacity. I commend all ECA colleagues, partners and sponsors for contributing significantly to the success of this event.



Andre Nonguierma

Chief of the Geoinformation and Sectoral Statistics at the African Centre for Statistics, ECA

The UNGGIM Africa meeting went very well. We were able to review some of the activities we carried out over the past five years. We were also able to renew the executive board of the committee which will steer the process in the next two-three years. The event enabled us to foster the linkages and integration of geospatial and statistical data with the statistical community. The tone was set for these two communities to talk to each other in their processes of developing data infrastructure and services, especially in support of the SDGs.

It was a very successful and one of our most attended meetings thus far. So we are all fired-up to ensure that Africa is not lagging behind other regions at the global level. I am very satisfied with the level of participation, contribution and the renewed engagement and commitment of member-states to fully participate and provide the needed support for the implementation of our activities.



Xianoning Gong,

Chief of Economic Statistics and National Accounts at the African Centre for Statistics, ECA

Such a meeting with many Director-Generals of NSOs from many African countries is very important because they are very influential in terms of informing policy. The overall organization of the meeting was impressive despite some financial and time constraints. The level of participation too was really good. The discussions were very intense and although we did have some session delays and had to work beyond scheduled hours, it paid off at the end.

It was quite thoughtful and strategic to have ASSD on the first two days because it served as a technical backbone and set the tone for the rest of the discussions. I also commend the seamless collaboration between the ECA, the Secretariat (South Africa), the host country and other partners and sponsors. All the different organizations played their respective roles very well, leading to a successful event. It was also an opportunity for us to learn from stakeholders on how best to organize and structure the event in future, while remaining realistic given the uniqueness of each region and organization. I would also want to use this opportunity to thank the team that worked on the news articles, newsletters, photos and other communication-related content generated throughout this event.

THE 4TH DAY AT A GLANCE

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